

1143
La G 692

1143

Sermon preached by Mr. F. L. Gosden at Galeed Chapel Brighton
Sunday morning, 1st October 1967

"Ye are they which have continued with Me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto Me." Luke 22. v 28-29

The Lord Jesus had almost completed His work on the earth and His more immediate sufferings and death were imminent and He is here speaking unto His disciples. He looked upon them in love, He acknowledged their loyalty, their love to Him: "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations." But as we often say, so it is important ever to remember, that the word of God is of no private interpretation. This "ye" will always be in existence. Even at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace; and that present time will ever be present, whatever conditions may obtain in this world, when things may even get worse than they are now, which I believe they will. However dark, whatever confusion, whatever convulsions, whatever evils shall be in this world, this, this always will be true. At this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of graces and it is that remnant to whom the word is spoken here. Therefore, we must believe that it is spoken to some in this chapel.

You look at it. Realise the glorious, infinite One who speaks it: "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations." I wonder to which of us in this congregation this word belongs. These temptations represent the sufferings, the afflictions, the tribulations through which the Lord Jesus passed, and if we follow Him, we shall. have to follow Him whithersoever He goes. There was one that came to the Lord Jesus and said, "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest." The Lord said unto him, "Foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." What about it now? Will you come now?

There was Ruth. When Naomi said to them both, "If you follow me you will have nothing for your pains but tribulation, and sorrow, and affliction," Orpah said, "Well, I have had enough then, I shall go back to my country, to my kindred and to my gods." Ruth said, "Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee; where thou goest I will go, where thou lodgest I will lodge, thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations." It sets before us all the enemies of the church. It sets before us the roughness of the way – calamities, enemies, disappointments, everything that opposes a pilgrim in his journey through the wilderness. Yet there are those who, having life, have grace in their hearts to continue.

You noticed in the reading that there were some who went out, and it gives the reason why they went out: "They went out from us because they were not of us, if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us, but they went out that they might be manifest that they were not of us." But why did not some go out? Why did some continue? We not only have here the reason why some discontinue and go back, but we have the reason here why any continue and endure unto the end. This is the reason. "But ye have an unction from the Holy One and ye know all things." "Ye are they which have continued with Me in my temptations." And so the apostle says to the Philippians, that church that was very near to his heart: "It is given you on behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but to suffer for His sake." O the test it is to continue! It is the greatest test. Time has worn out the religion of thousands; it will wear out the religion of thousands more. Time is the greatest test: "Ye are they that have continued with Me in My temptations."

Well then, it is well to consider the reason, the secret why anybody continues. For there is every reason to give up, there is every reason in self for despair, there is every reason in the world for despair. The only reason that any continue is because God begins. If God did not begin your religion

it will end, you will end it. There will come a breaking point. You look at the case of Judas. Very solemn it has been to me because he was a preacher. He was sent to preach, and he preached the truth. You might say, "How do you know he did?" We know he did because God sent him. God would never send a man to preach and allow him to preach error. But the solemn thing with respect to Judas was, he never had the life of God in his soul, he never had grace in his heart, he did not possess one of the truths that he preached, and a breaking point came. His easily besetting sin was covetousness. He went along all right until he came to that test and he could not stand it. And if you have no root, if the Lord did not begin a work of grace in your heart, there will be something that will discover that you have no root, like the three hearers; some had no depth of earth, some had no root, and others were choked with thorns, cares of this life and the lusts of other things; it all faded away

"Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations." What a tremendous thing it is when you look at the opposite. You take ones life; for when you are born again, then the conflict begins. It does not end, it begins, and one reason is because the true light shines when you are born of God. The understanding is illuminated; things are then seen in God's light. The world is seen as it is. Things are reversed. The dead go down with the stream, wind and tide are with them, they are in a broad way, an easy way. But the moment one is born again the conflict begins. Everything in nature is in opposition to grace.

"Ye are they which have continued with Me" through all oppositions, all disappointments. Let us look at a few things that must be endured. In the first place, as we were reading just now, there will be a coming out of the world, for when we read of continuing there must be a beginning, and the first effect of a new life is separation: "Come out from among them and be ye separate, touch not the unclean thing, and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." So that the beginning of a work of grace is exactly the opposite to the modernist's cry of reunion: Union with anything and with anybody. But the Scriptures show us that a right beginning is separation. This is very unpalatable, very unpopular, but this separation is of a particular nature. It is a separation which unites. That may appear to be a contradiction, but if we are rightly separated by the grace of God from everything that is evil, we shall be united unto Christ in the Gospel, and united unto His living people. So that it is important to consider whether we are thus separated from antichrist, from ourselves, from a body of sin and death in ourselves, and from all earth, and that we are united unto the Lord Jesus and to His people, the living in Jerusalem. If we have this beginning, we shall continue. "For he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved," and that will give you the secret of the text, why any continue.

You look at that text for a moment, for it is in the text before us: "They that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Well, there are two 'shalls' in that text. There is the secret, those 'shalls' are God's, not ours. Those 'shalls' are filled with omnipotent power, they are filled with divine immutability, they are filled with divine sovereignty. That is the secret of continuing, or enduring, and you can reverse that text. The text is, "They that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Turn it round the other way and you get the same thing. "They that shall be saved, the same shall endure unto the end." So they are a people that shall be saved, that are saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. That people who, in the covenant of grace, were given to the Lord Jesus to redeem, they are His by donation, and those same people, the exact individuals, He came to save, so that they are His by conquest, by a conquest of grace; and that people to the last individual, He purchased with His own precious blood. "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations." They continue with Him in His sufferings, in His temptations, because they live by faith. Faith which is God's gift. A faith that sees unseen and eternal things which only faith can see; a faith which receives the Gospel in its power. No natural man can do this. "A natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, they are foolishness unto him, because

they are spiritually discerned." But this people have the secret of the Lord in their hearts, a secret life communicated when the Holy Spirit quickens them. "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins." Therefore they live by faith, not by sight. Faith's view, as revealed by the Holy Ghost, of God in Christ is such that they endure, with Moses, as seeing Him Who is invisible. Moses endured that way, and he continued. He continued in spite of the roughness of the way, he continued and was willing rather to suffer reproach with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

"Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations", My afflictions, My sufferings, and then there will be a continuing with Him experimentally. The inference here is this, that it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom of God. It infers that there will be oppositions, that we are passing through a hostile wilderness, and therefore there will be something to endure. Otherwise there would be no meaning in the text at all. He did not say just continuing with the Lord Jesus in all His triumphs, though this is true, blessed be His name; but if you follow Him in the Word of God, as "Despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," yet "ye are they which have continued with Me," borne reproach with Me. Ye are they who have taken joyfully the spoiling of your goods. What was the reason why they did not give up when their goods were spoiled? A natural man would, a man whose business might be ruined, be unscrupulously wounded, and perhaps be brought to poverty. Why should they continue and not give up? because they knew, in themselves, that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance, a kingdom, a substance a treasure which neither rust nor moth doth corrupt and men cannot break through and steal. So they received joyfully the spoiling of their goods, they continued.

There is something very blessed in watching a pilgrim continue under pressure and load, especially in some periods of their lifetime. I dare say some of you can feel it in your own experience, in your own case, how you are enabled to continue when your heart and flesh seem to fail.

But the Lord Jesus suffered the contradiction of sinners against Himself, and in our measure we shall be called upon to do the same. He continued, "Ye are they." Let us just refer to our opening remark. I wonder if the Lord is speaking to anybody here, that it can be said of any, "Ye are they which have continued" and are continuing "with Me in My temptations," in My sufferings. Are you willing? Are you willing, or does it bring you to a standstill? Be honest in your heart. Paul was willing. He said, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, the fellowship of His sufferings, to be made conformable unto His death, that I might win Christ and be found in Him." Let everything else go, everything else. He continued. Losses? He suffered the loss of all things and counted them but dung that he might win Christ and be found in Him. What an object of faith!

"Ye are they which have continued," under all conditions, under all circumstances. Look at Job, how he continued. His wife was no help to him, indeed his case looked desperate, and it was. The Lord allowed Satan to shake him to pieces. The Lord allowed Satan to do anything with him but take his life. He was bereaved, stripped, afflicted, and tormented. His wife said; "Why continue? Curse God and die. I would not have anything more to do with a God that treated me like that." But Job had the root of the matter in him, had the life of God in his soul. "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations." There are many influences; it is not easy, it is not mechanical, it is not automatic; it is a living principle of faith and grace in the heart.

There is also another trying condition in which to continue, when perhaps those of whom you have thought well have proved apostate. O how solemn is the 13th John, where Judas Iscariot went out and it was night! Those disciples had never suspected him at all. In fact they had great confidence in him to give him the bag, he was the treasurer. O what a shaking it must have been when he proved to be a traitor! "But ye are they which have continued," notwithstanding so many go back and walk no more with Him. It was so when He was here upon earth. When the Lord Jesus pressed

home upon some of those that followed Him and looked as though they were real disciples. But He pressed upon them, "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the son of Man ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom." They said, "This is a hard saying, we cannot receive this." They went back, walked no more with Him. The Lord knew it. The Lord knows those that are His. He knew they would go back, He knew real disciples would not. But He loves to elicit from His people a confession of faith, and so He said to His disciples, "Will ye also go away?" "Peter answered, Lord, to whom shall we go?" It was a beautiful answer, a humble, an honest answer. He did not say, "What! **we** go back? We have been with you all this time, we have learnt so much about religion, **we** go back?" Ah, he said, "To whom, if we do go back, who shall we go to, where shall we go?" Thank God if you come to that point.

"Ye are they which have continued with Me" in my worst things, not my best things only – afflictions, sorrows, persecutions, reproaches. "To whom shall we go?" Have you got a substitute for Christ? If you have, then you are ignorant of Him. But this was real faith. O how often this has come into my heart:

"Thou, O Christ, art all I want,
All in all in Thee I find!"

Blessed person! They will continue, because they can see that in everything and everybody else there is no foundation. Here is no supply, there is no life in any other, there is no heaven. You look away from Christ and you look to death, darkness, and despair. "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations."

There are some other difficult places to continue. When the Lord is pleased, for wise ends, to hide His face and to be silent and to bring you into darkness and not into light, as He did Jeremiah. He does this for instruction sometimes, for chastening. Well now, how difficult it is to continue in darkness, continue when your iniquities abound, continue when you feel destitute and desolate and derelict and wrecked. That is hard work, my friends. But what a great thing it is to have that faith that will continue there! Underneath will be this persuasion:

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good."

None! And you will be brought to it, and therefore you will continue, even if it is by groaning. Jonah continued in the belly of hell. Why did not he give up? He brought himself there by disobedience, but he said, "When my heart fainted within me, I remembered God, and my prayer came in unto His holy temple. He remembered God, his faith remembered Him, and though he was in darkness, in the depths, he continued, he looked toward His holy temple. "Ye are they." Are we among them? Does our experience, our life, correspond with the Word of God?

Then you look at those worthies in the 11th of Hebrews. See how they continued. Abraham was called. God called him alone, and whoever He calls He calls alone. He does not call a multitude. When there were 3,000 conveted at once, each one of those was called alone in their experience. And he was called to go he knew not where, and he went forth by faith, and he continued. He continued, even when things were so dark that the darkness was as Egyptian darkness that could be felt. When he saw nothing but a smoking furnace, nothing but sorrow and confusion, he continued. The Lord went with him on pilgrimage. The Lord had given him a promise: "Fear not Abraham, I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." He believed it, and he lived by faith.

"Ye are they which have continued with Me in my temptations, and T appoint unto you a kingdom." This is the other side, and sometimes this will help you to continue – the prospect. Moses endured because he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. His faith believed it. The recompense

of the reward is heaven, "an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." And he believed it, had the earnest of it; and if you have a little of heaven let down into your soul you will continue. Well, there is nothing else worth considering, and certainly nothing worth losing your soul and losing heaven for.

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom." It is an appointed thing, as are all the blessings of the Gospel. He speaks to mourners. It is "appointed to give unto them the oil of joy for mourning, beauty for ashes, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." O what a portion the people of God have! If once your eyes are opened to see it, if once the true light shines and reveals those things that are eternal, you will continue, you will endure. It will eclipse the world. It will make the most fine gold look dim, and the best garments to be moth-eaten.

"Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom." It is the same thing as we have in the 12th of John: "Fear not little flock," not because there is nothing to fear, there is everything to fear. But when faith looks away from those things that are fearful and looks to the omnipotent God in Christ to His infinite wisdom and sovereignty, then: "Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." I give you it. You think you will never come unto it, but it is your Father's good pleasure to give it to you, and it is appointed. And when was this appointment made? - in the covenant of grace. Every appointment was appointed there, therefore the covenant is ordered, or appointed, or timed, in all things. It is a mercy if we can truly feel and observe by the dealings of God with us that:

"All our times are in His hand;
All events at His command."

"I appoint unto you a kingdom." That kingdom has two parts to it: not two kingdoms, but two parts. One part of the kingdom is here. It is the kingdom of grace in the heart, and the kingdom of grace in the heart here includes all the authority of Christ Jesus in the church of God. He makes His people to be kings and priests unto God, and therefore the church of God is the kingdom of God on earth. O to feel the heavenly authority of Christ in the Gospel, as the Holy Ghost may bring that kingdom into your soul in a work of grace! Sometimes you will feel it in divine worship: "Ye are come unto mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem." While that ultimately is heaven, yet it respects the kingdom of God below, and sometimes you will be brought to that kingdom, you will feel it. You will lose sight of everybody else in the chapel, it will be your own heart, your own case, and if you are blest there will be an earnest of heaven in your soul, and you will say, although you will be surprised to find your soul saying it: "I have come to mount Zion, I have come to the city of the living God, I have come to the heavenly Jerusalem, I am there." You will find the kingdom in your soul.

So you see, there are two parts. "Ye are they which have continued with Me" in my worst things - in My sufferings, My sorrows, My afflictions, Why persecutions, My reproaches, My spittings. "But I appoint unto you a kingdom." These two verses show the two sides to real religion, and if you are in the 28th verse, my friends, you are also in the 29th, and when you feel it you will agree with Paul: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." Not worthy to be compared with it! What a wonderful person is a child of God, who has the kingdom of God in his heart! O what is to be compared with it? We read in Zechariah, "they are men wondered at," and if any of you here, and I must believe there are some, who have this kingdom of God in your heart; you are a wonder, a miracle of grace, possessing the true riches of Christ, unsearchable riches.

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me." Same kingdom as the Father hath appointed unto the Lord Jesus. Now we need to be careful here. The Lord Jesus is co-equal, co-eternal with the Father, the second Person in the glorious Trinity, and as the Son of God, nothing could be appointed to Him, for all things are His, equally with the Father and the Holy Spirit. There is no kingdom that can be appointed unto the Lord Jesus, except this – it is His mediatorial kingdom that His Father hath appointed Him, and in order to obtain that kingdom He overcame. And that shows the blessedness of that word in the Revelation, and it belongs to these. You follow it up and look at this: "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom...To Him that overcometh," that is, to him that continueth, to him that endureth unto the end, "will I grant to sit with Me in My Father's throne, as I also overcame." And the Lord Jesus continued; He did not fail, He endured, He endured sufferings, He endured the curse of God in His holy soul. He was made under the law. He agonised in Gethsemane. He took that cup with a trembling hand: "If it may not pass from Me without I drink it, Thy will be done." He overcame. And see the union here: "To him that overcometh," to him that continueth, to him that endureth to the end, "will I grant to sit with Me in My Father's throne, even as I also overcame," or continued, I did not fail, I was not discouraged, "and I am sat down with My Father in His throne." Sacred union! And it will take in the union of the Lord Jesus here below, union with Him and fellowship with His people, as we have it in the next verse really: "And I appoint unto you a kingdom as My Father hath appointed unto Me, that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom." His kingdom, I say, is here, it is in the church. It is in the hearts of His people, and O how sacred is that union! I wish I could express it.

So when we meet together around the Lord's Table, you see the connexion. And if we are spared to meet around His table this evening, you look at these three verses, and see whether this is how you have come. Are you among those that have continued with the Lord Jesus in His worst things, to count the reproaches of Christ, the worst things of Christ, better than the best things of this world?

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom as My Father hath appointed unto Me, that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom." Well, may the Lord grant us such a beginning, and then we shall have a glorious end.

Amen.