

21.570 x substance of Prayer Meeting Address given by our Pastor

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If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. James 1. 5.

Notwithstanding times of felt desertion due to grieving of the Spirit, also to temptations of the adversary; notwithstanding things that so afflict God's people here below and that are sometimes inexplicable and may become chronic, and this is expressed by the Psalmist, "If thou be silent to me - Lord, if this silence goes on - lest if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit." That is a unique form of desertion, felt desertion, not true. The Lord never deserts the objects of His choice and love. Notwithstanding in extreme times for the soul so dark, distressed, troubled, this cry will find a place in your soul and you will be glad the dear Psalmist felt, expressed, and God wrote it in His eternal Book for your comfort. "Lord, be not silent to me: lest if thou be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit." That is one of the darkest, lowest places a child of God can come into. There is joy in the morning.

I will say two things. All those who are chosen of God, the gift of the Father to His dear Son and the purchase of Christ's agony, who possess divine grace and the indwelling of the Spirit of God, two things the Lord will make you powerfully, satisfactorily conscious of, notwithstanding all your felt desertion. The first is, you will know dark, black days, and He will make you conscious that He loves you, loves you. There is nothing greater in the earth than for the Lord to shed abroad His love in your soul. What is your face like then? what is your body like? You say, "I am far better because my poor soul has been blessed." He will make His love known to you, as in the sweet Hymn that is a favourite of mine. "I love thee well, My child," not because you have been a good boy or girl. This will break your heart. The second thing He will make known to you is, though you may be as those James had in his heart to write to, the twelve tribes scattered abroad, the Jews of the dispersion, not large groups or Churches; two or three here, two or three over there, 'scattered abroad'. One of the temptations of

Satan is he will say you are forgotten, scattered. The Lord will make you conscious of the remarkable, glorious truth we could never live without: He remembers you in everlasting love. It means your soul, body, spirit, family, circumstances, age, afflictions, exercises, projects, trials, life, everything. He remembers all. This is a glorious truth. Take the language in the Hymn. "Midst all His vast concerns," the whole universe, the millions in Great Britain, the world population. "Midst all His vast concerns" and you are as a speck. "He could not me forget." We mentioned recently the case of Henry Sayers who died aged 86 at Leatherhead. The dear man of God had lost his wife, and there was just a simple thing, he lost his pension book and was so distressed about it. In a remarkable way it was found and faithfully delivered to the right quarter, and this broke him down, "For he careth for you." He remembers you. Dear heart, what do you want more than "He careth for you"? Those two truths I name in connection with the introduction.

James was writing to the poor scattered remnant, the twos and threes in lonely outposts forgotten by the majority, not by God. He sent His servant to write to them. Here are truths concerning the path to Heaven, a manual of instruction, all you need to know for your comfort and good on the way to Heaven. The language is positive, startling to human sagacity. "My brethren," full of love to them. They were not forgotten, not passed by, not left out. This has been a feature of organised religion. To some, great partiality is shown, while others are passed by. It is a sad spirit. It is not long before those people are promoted. James says, "My brethren." They are not forgotten. I have long felt what a loving word will do to the struggling and poor so they know they are not forgotten. It is laudable when the Lord gives that sweet spirit. He did not pass by any. All who needed Him, lepers, little children, He did not forget any. This has ^{been} a major sin and fault and folly. What about it? The Lord will not pass by a sinful worm. Have you proved it? Have you felt,

"Great God! how infinite art Thou!
What worthless worms are we!
Let the whole race of creatures bow,
And pay their praise to Thee!" ?

It is good to be in such a low place because the Lord comes and looks on a poor worm. "Fear not, worm Jacob." Do not fear getting smaller: the

Lord will not forget you.

"My brethren." You are related in Christ, in the Covenant, eternally one in Him. The Psalmist goes straight to the subject which is tribulation. There are a host of various experiences of tribulation and temptation in the path of a child of God; no two are alike. That is why a soul has said in the pew on a Lord's Day morning, "The Lord will not come where I am. We are in divers tribulations, deep, dark, unheard of." The minister has come where you are by the Spirit. "My brethren, here is a word for you in various tribulations. In the Prayer Room there may be no one in exactly the same place as you. This is the word: it was something they had fallen into; they were unaware of until they found themselves in it. It is like a hole in the road: there is an element of the unexpected: they had not an inkling of it and they fell in. Here is a word for you. "My brethren, I want you to reckon." If there was one thing it would be heavy, but there is more. "Count it all joy." Joy? You had never thought of it, with all your temptations, fears, trials, difficulties, troubles. "Reckon it all joy," and reckoning is faith, not carnal reason. You may say, "All these things are against me, why count it all joy?" There is a secret: it is to have the dear Lord's presence. If Christ is standing by you and blesses your soul you will count it all joy. Why? There is a three-fold reason. Dispensations are sent, though mysterious, in love to your soul, to do you good, to make you fruitful in the Church of God and to prepare you for Heaven. It issues from love and in the experience of it there will be joy. Do you think Job felt joy when he said, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold"? And David in the midst of trouble, "But I trusted in thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God. My times are in thy hand." He did count it all joy. And the issue is joy; it ends in joy. You are in a path that will almost kill you. Don't begin to look at an album or you will be staggered when you see how you looked twenty years ago. But the issue will be joy. You will not mind how old and worn you are so long as the Lord gives the blessed issue of joy.

"Knowing this," what you are passing through is the trial of faith. You say, "These things that I am in are real, and I shall not be bringing forth wind." Does that instruct you? If I know I am in the trial of

faith I feel a measure of joy in my soul because the end will be good. Trials activate the sweet grace of patience, and you will never know the blessed efficacy of it until you know you have got something worth waiting for. The Lord assures that you will not wait in vain, and patience is one of the sweetest graces on earth. You believe the issue will be, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." It is the trial of your faith. The things I am speaking to are very deep. God shows you that all you are passing through is the trial of faith. You have got something from Heaven and "Divine decrees remain unmoved." Hell, sin, man can do nothing with it. God will perfect it. "Let patience have her perfect work." Let her alone, don't hinder, quietly wait.

"If any of you lack wisdom." One of the things concerning it is, as with the word of God by the Spirit it comes where we are. I lack wisdom. I am not indifferent, with a hard heart, but with a soft heart before the Lord. You are in things God has put you in and they are divers, and you need the wisdom of God in them. It is something for you to handle, not to take as a boomerang and throw it from you. It is at your door and you need wisdom. Wisdom means for the Lord to reveal to you in a dark path what His will is, and having done that to give you grace to obey, and every step is a step of prayer and faith to obey the Lord in the wisdom given you. You will be confounded at every step. Nothing you do has the desired effect; it makes things worse until you get to the end of your wisdom. That is a good place. "Neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee." The Lord looks kindly, lovingly on you. You will go to God and be stripped of all creatures. You will feel if only there was someone you could ask! God will say, "No: you are to walk this path alone and look to Me, not to the flesh." He says to this soul, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." You will do it wherever you are, ask of God, keep asking. There will be an expectation that the Lord will appear for you because He has promised. Presently you will begin to learn what visions and revelations of the Lord mean. He will show you what to do. He will speak words you never heard before. I was once in a dilemma in treating a patient. The infection was spreading and I was at the end

of my wisdom. The Lord spoke, and He said something I had never heard of: oil of cade. The first application of it was a miracle. "If any of you lack wisdom" You do not know what to do. Jehoshaphat didn't. "let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally." I saw before my eyes and ransomed soul the Lord Jesus perform one of His miracles as when He was here. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." Will He give an insufficient answer? No. "that giveth to all men liberally, - an abundance of wisdom - and upbraideth not." He will not reproach you for being so ignorant. He will honour you for asking and He will bless you. The Lord use the word tonight for the solid comfort of any in distress, and He shall have a revenue of everlasting praise. Amen.