

752
La D389

752

LIBRARY OF THE
GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS

52/M

Sermon preached by Mr. J. Delves at Ebenezer, Clapham, on Wednesday evening May 7th, 1952.

Text: John 6, 37

"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out".

It has pleased God in His great mercy and condescension to place in the Scriptures a number of warm and confirming invitations. I believe it may be said rightly that almost, if not all of those invitations, are marked by three distinct features. One is the authority of the Person inviting. It is this which lays such value upon the invitation. We may safely feel that the character of God gives every gospel invitation an authority and a value beyond all our conceptions. Do you not really feel that it is an amazing condescension on the part of the glorious infinite God, to extend an invitation to a poor helpless, unworthy sinner? It is great condescension! It is a great mercy too, that He should ever be disposed to invite unto Himself poor, lost, ruined, sensible, needy sinners.

A second point consists in the character of him to whom the invitation is extended. It is extended, beloved friends, to every one without exception who has a case for God, who has in his heart an empty place which only He can fill. It is very sweet, at times, to notice in the Scriptures how these characters are linked with the invitation. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." O how wonderfully free is His gospel! How free is His invitation! It is not confined to a few millionaires, but extended to every poor bankrupt beggar who knows and feels that he has nothing to pay. What a wonderful Scripture that is in the parable which describes the case - "When they had nothing to pay". Whether they had been 500 pence debtors or 50 pence debtors, it was when they had nothing to pay, He 'frankly' - I have felt so attracted to that adverb - "frankly forgave them both". Every vessel of mercy will find true, what Mr. Hart

says

"'Tis perfect poverty alone,
That sets the soul at large;
While we can call one mite our own,
We have no full discharge."

The third point is the assurance of acceptance in responding to the invitation. Where is that affirmed more sweetly than in the Lord's own words here? "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me"(not he will, may or may not - be accepted - no) "I will in no wise cast out." O if that word could ring in some of our ears all night, it would be a wonderful night! I will in no wise cast out. Whatever objections you may raise against yourself will not stand in the light of this, but never dare to raise an objection on the ground of the Lord's faithfulness, or His ability, or His willingness. It is all so wonderfully free!

"Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;"

Well, you cannot be much more knocked about than that, surely, but what about such?

"Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, joined with power:
He is able
He is willing; doubt no more."

O, say you, you are leaning towards the Arminians. No! Never! No, this is just an expression emphasising the freeness of the gospel, and the readiness of the Lord Jesus to show compassion to a leper, and to heal the wounds of a poor thing who may have fallen among thieves and been left half dead. So in the Scriptures we have these invitations that are, as it were, inset like jewels in a crown. We may go on to the end of the Canon of Holy Scripture and see them standing out almost to the closing word. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." O, how we need grace, not only to view rightly the value of these invitations, but to lay hold of them, and carry them to the Lord in prayer, plead them before Him, and give Him no rest until 'He establish judgment' in your heart.

Well, here is a wonderful word, not to be carelessly considered, but designed to encourage and confirm every sensible sinner who is a needy case, Just before, the line of demarcation is drawn by the Saviour. "But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not." In another place, speaking of such, He says, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep." But poor people who come suing for mercy for Jesus's sake must be of His sheep, else they would never be coming. "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to me:" and what a remarkable 'shall' that is. One of Jehovah's shalls, firmer than the hills themselves. They "shall come"! A number of times in the Scriptures we have this shall. It is, as it were, stamped with immutability, because it is of God's shalls, and His shalls can never, never fail, never! O if we could lay hold of this word to-night, some of us, some of you who feel to be in a fainting condition, yet even so, with the last grip that you may feel to have, cling with that, grip this promise. It will never fail you. You will never fall into hell with this promise in the hand of faith, never!

Here in the first place, we notice, is the gift of the Father to Christ. It draws a line, because we know it does not embrace everybody; it is not a gift incorporating the whole of mankind without exception, although it is a gift which evidently includes people of every nation, kindred and tongue, because such were seen by John in his wonderful revelation. It is a gift of the Father to Christ of a Church, a Church of which He is the glorious, mediatorial Head, and all whose members are His mystical body. He is the great Head of this Church chosen in Him before the world was. It takes in every vessel of mercy from the fall of Adam till the "Headstone is brought forth with shoutings crying Grace, grace unto it." It will not leave one out, although indeed it may have some very, very solemn considerations; but yet it will not leave one out who was really chosen. Judas was with Christ and preached and did many things, but he was never registered in heaven as a vessel of mercy, for there is no evidence that he ever really felt his need of the Lord's mercy. Some of you here do feel your need of the Lord's mercy, doubtless, and this is the great point.

But what a gift! O what a gift! a gift incorporating all that were eternally loved, some now in heaven, some on earth, some yet to be born, and some in this chapel. "All that the Father giveth Me." But this gift did not end simply with a gift. A friend may make you a handsome gift, of say, some choice ornament that you may put on your mantelpiece, to look at and appreciate the giver, but there it ends, so to speak; it does not place any accountability on you with respect to it; it is just a gift. But the point I want to clear here is, that when the Father gave all these people to Christ as a gift to Him, it did not end simply with the gift. It was a gift which involved certain conditions, and conditions beyond all that we can conceive. Why were they given to Him? They were given to Him to redeem, to save, to pluck as brands from the burning, to rescue from the flames of hell, to deliver from the wrath to come. They were given to Him. This gift devolved great responsibilities upon the Lord Jesus Christ and yet how freely He received the gift, knowing what it involved only too well, knowing that it would mean intolerable sufferings on His part, yet how freely and how willingly He received the gift, even as we were singing on Sabbath evening:-

"This was compassion like a God,
That when the Saviour knew
The price of pardon was His blood,
He pity ne'er withdrew."

He knew exactly and precisely what the gift involved and yet He received every one in that "Covenant ordered in all things and sure." This gift involved the dear Saviour's becoming His people's Surety, assuming human flesh, for in the purposes and decrees of God, although not yet born, they were seen to be lost. God foresaw the fall as clearly before the world was, as He did when the Saviour expired on the cross.

"He saw me ruined in the fall,
Yet loved me notwithstanding all;
He saved me from my lost estate;
His loving-kindness, O how great!"

He became, in the fulness of time, openly His people's Surety, that is, He made Himself responsible for them, became accountable for all their debts. The gift necessarily involved this.

Some of you know much more about law than I do, but you know what

a Surety is and what it means. A responsibility is involved, by a Surety becoming accountable for debts owed, and if the person for whom he is surety fails to pay, he can be held to payment. Should indeed one so fail, it could be a great blow to him who became surety, not having expected perhaps that he would ever become liable for the debt, or have to pay it. But when the dear Son of God became Surety for His people, He became Surety knowing that they would never be able to pay the debt and that it would all be charged to Him - and so it was! Every particle of the debt had to be paid by the Surety, the gift involved this, and He knew only too well what it would involve and yet how willingly He freely took the responsibility. It involved laying down His life, shedding His blood, responding to the claims of justice, removing the curse, suffering the penalty of a broken law, suffering the penalty His people deserved. This was all involved in the gift, and what a consideration this is, how it enhances and brings to light the Saviour's love. What wonderful love it was thus to espouse His people's cause. They were given to Him and He assures us here, that of all those who were given to Him none should be lost, no, not one! "This is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." "All that the Father giveth me." All. Every one whom He giveth me shall come to me.

Here we come into an experience that is as a result of the gift in the believer. This coming flows out of the giving - they come because they were given to Him. Now this coming, which constitutes a great part of a living soul's experience, is an evidence in the first place, of election; the power of the gospel being felt in the heart and soul of one quickened from death into life, works in this way. This is how the apostle could feel assured of the election of the Thessalonians. "Knowing, brethren beloved" he said, "your election of God." But how did he know their election of God? "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;" That is how he knew of their election and this is my point here, as you will see, that there is a close link between God's eternal choice of a sinner and that sinner coming to Christ. The two things are linked together -

all that the Father giveth Me shall come to me. Are you, and am I, coming to Christ? Have we been emptied from vessel to vessel, brought down feelingly to a state of nothingness so as to realise all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags? If that is so, and we are coming to Christ by prayer and faith, putting our trust in Him for our soul's salvation, and renouncing all, as dung and dross for His sake, that bears an evidence of divine election. They shall come! Many things may be a cause of their coming, instrumentally; one is the blowing of the gospel trumpet. It is said, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." Are we really coming to Christ in prayer and in faith? If that is so, then we are coming because we were chosen, and here again this word will stand forth like a beacon light before faith. They shall come and in coming they will in no wise be cast out.

In this coming is not only an evidence of election by God of such an one from eternity, but it is also an evidence of faith; for although you may not feel to have got much faith, if any, or may feel as John Warburton said, that it is going spark out, still if you are coming to Christ, you have faith in Him or you would never be coming to Him; for you would not come to a Person in Whom you had no confidence or faith that He could do anything for you. In short, this coming is the confidence of faith in the sufficiency of Christ. You come because you have a need of Him; and what a mercy it is that nothing more than that is actually called for as an evidence.

"All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him."

This feeling of the need of the Lord Jesus is brought about by the work of the Holy Spirit in your soul, in showing you your lost condition, your fall and ruin by nature, and need of a Saviour. It is a great thing really to feel a need of Christ and so be dealt with as to feel that you cannot do without Him. O, some of you here, what would be left in your religion if He were taken out of it? There would be no life left in it,

no foundation left in it. But if you cannot do without Him, then He cannot do without you. "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." They must come, they come of necessity.

"Few, if any, come to Jesus
Till reduced to self-despair."

Are you despairing in yourself? Have you come to the end of it all, as it were? Do you feel just as though you cannot really continue much longer, even in this seeking? What a fitting condition it is then for this great One to come! And is there not a promise that He will come? "He shall come down", it is said, "like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth." Do you feel like mown grass? If you have been in the country and have seen the meadow mown and the grass or hay gathered up on the field, you see the mown or shorn grass, the roots that remain, exposed to the scorching sun; and if that continues long, the roots wither and become dried and parched; they are calling for the rain, and this is how some poor things, under the withholdings of His grace and the blessings of His gospel, are, just like this mown grass. parched, dried, withered and burnt by the sun, as we read in The Canticles where the church says, "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me:" But it is that the Lord shall come down like rain upon the mown grass -not a terrible storm, but a gentle, effectual, refreshing rain. Have you ever known that? Has He come at times in the silent watches of the night like the dew of heaven upon the soul? "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me: and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

They come. And what do they come with, these poor people? Why, they come with their souls' case, with the burden as pressing upon them, the burden of their sin, their leprosy.

"With my burden I begin;
Lord, remove this load of sin,"

Is that how you come? Are there times, when being thus weighted and troubled and burdened on account of conscious guilt, you feel a necessity to venture to the Throne of Grace for mercy and for pardon, for Christ's sake? They shall come! Sometimes these people have to come to Christ with their circumstances, their difficulties, some particular trial or affliction, some hard and heavy thing that they may have to be

living in, or walking in, or experiencing. No bar is put upon these things in regard to one coming to Christ - however weary or laden with sin, such an one is welcome. "Come unto Me," He said, "all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Come unto Me. They shall come. Who are really coming? They may have to come sometimes with difficulties or mountains that lie before them - things they dread; perhaps something in the home, or business, or family. Whatever it may be, whatever presses upon the heart, that occasions a need for Christ; and at times, at least, when you get near Him with your weight and burden and difficulty, a sweet relief can be felt. They shall come! They come because there is no one else they can go to in their distress, in their need. Who can help them? "Lord, to whom shall we go?" said Peter, "Thou has the words of eternal life!" And then this - "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." Is not that a wonderful word? Is not that very confirming? O, say you, it does not help me because I have been trying at this labour for a long time and seem to get no nearer. O well, keep pressing your case all your life long. If you get an answer before you die you will have an eternity to praise Him for that answer - and should it be a lifelong struggle with you, before you feel the Lord respond, it will be well worth that struggle. But O the Lord in His condescension, often comes quickly to His people in response to their cry. "Call upon Me" it is said "and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things". "Call upon Me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."

"I will in no wise cast him out." I would like to conclude this sermon -if such it can be called - with particular emphasis upon that - In no wise will I cast him out - in no wise! Not, they shall come and some will be rejected and some refused, no, in no wise, no, in no wise shall he be cast out! How confirming this is to waiting souls, especially if even now you may feel the Lord's frown is upon you. In no wise will I cast him out. A fulness of grace is in Him.

"Christ has blessings to impart,
Grace to save thee from they fears;
O the love that fills His heart!
Sinner, wipe away thy tears.

Why art thou afraid to come?
Why afraid to tell thy case?
He will not pronounce thy doom;
Smiles are seated on His face."

Who can tell how welcome they are, who come to Christ? "This Man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." You cannot tell how welcome you are to Him in your coming. O but say you, I am not worthy, I am not worthy that He should take notice of a poor thing like me. But they are just the ones He does take notice of. Jacob was not worthy - he said so. "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies,..... which Thou hast shewed unto Thy servant;" and yet the Lord blessed him greatly, more than he could ever have anticipated. None would come for their worthiness.

But you say I am so poor and destitute, so vile and sinful. That constitutes the fitness to come to Christ. David felt like that. "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me." But I have been trying at this business so long I feel to be fainting. Jonah was like that yet he looked again; though he felt to be cast out of the Lord's sight, he would look again toward His holy temple. He said, "Though I am cast out of Thy sight, yet I will look again" - and you will look again; and if you say, I have looked so many times -yes, look again. "Yet I will look again toward Thy holy temple." But so many have gone before me and obtained blessings and still I do not get one. That was what the poor man said waiting at the pool; all those 38 years he waited. There must have been heaps of people go in when the angel came and stirred the waters. It was very disappointing for him to go on so long, yet in the end the Lord healed him of his infirmity very sovereignly, without his touching the water. He can come, and he will come, in His own way. They shall come to me and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out. I felt a desire to confirm the Lord's people this night. I hope you may be able to receive it because these words are not my words;

if they were, you could throw them back again, but they are the Lord's words and I would suggest that you never play with them. No; they have the stamp of heaven upon them. Here then are the 3 great points in this verse, eternal election in the gift, effectual calling in the coming, and final perseverance in the acceptance and preservation and salvation of all that come.

May we be found among them!

Amen.