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Sermon preached at "Ebenezer", Clapham, by Mr. J. Delves on
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"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all,
how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

Romans 8.32

This is truly a wonderful chapter! The apostle emerges, as it were, from the experience of bondage, of sin, to the blessed liberty of the everlasting, glorious gospel. There is a very striking change of language between the concluding part of chapter 7 and the opening verses of chapter 8. In chapter 7 is a man groaning under the power of indwelling sin, which prevented him from doing the good that he would do, because of the evil that was in him. Here is a man groaning under the workings of sin in his members, in his body - and this did so ferment as it were in his very soul, as to cause him to say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But when the apostle broke out after this manner, it was not because he could see no way of deliverance, for in the next verse he says, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." So you see, it was not so much the apostle himself but it was "the law of sin" in him that was continually "warring against the law of his mind," the natural against the spiritual, the flesh against the spirit. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin". But this is the striking part - from this he breaks forth after this way, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." And this is something more than a general observation.

He proceeds to affirm his personal standing in this liberty. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" - that is, the gospel in its liberating efficacy in the soul - "hath made me free from the law of sin and death", as much as to say, This is what it has done for me. O what a mercy if we can come to a point like that and say that this law, that is the law or teaching of the gospel,

hath made us free from the law of sin and death! The law, the moral law, is said to be "the ministration of condemnation", which it must necessarily be in every case to a sinner, because it can do nothing other than condemn him, having no power either to forgive or justify; but the gospel has power to do both. It reveals a full forgiveness and a free justification. "There is therefore now no condemnation", and where there is no condemnation, there is no separation. So the chapter ends with a chain of challenges, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?" No, nothing can separate Christ from the sinner whom He loves and nothing can separate this sinner from Christ. Any of these things could separate a dead professor, but they cannot separate a child of God from that eternal living bond that unites the Head and members in an indissoluble union. O what a mercy it is to be embraced within the language of this chapter, and to feel that even for us there is no condemnation and therefore, no separation. Everything else comes within the compass of this; the evidences of divine grace, the effectual working of the Holy Spirit in the soul, the graces of faith and hope and love, all come within the compass of this, because all is in Christ.

So then, here, in the words I have read as a text, the apostle assures us - that is if we are believers - that we have the gift of all things in Christ. It is like this - if we have Him we have everything. "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" This is the wonderful secret of a true religion which is "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

It is noticeable how in the context the apostle frequently refers to the Father - refers to Him as ordering all things for our good in His divine purposes. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." That may seem an impossible thing when providence is adverse, when afflictions abound, and things appear so crosshanded, but we see,

as it were, only one link in the chain. God sees the end of a thing from the beginning. Moreover, if all this teaching, correction, discipline, chastening, affliction and trial is designed in a believer's pathway to prepare him for the heavenly land, to wean him from earth and its things, all must, in the issue, work for good; and we are sure that it will to all who love God and are the called according to His purpose. The Father is referred to in His foreknowledge of all their persons - "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." This predestinating decree of an immutable God is the fulfilling of a set purpose to predestinate - to predetermine by an immutable will that can never be altered or revised subsequently, but which is firmly set and fixed in the purpose of the Trinity. These people being foreknown by Him, are conformed to the image of His Son - not to the world and the vanities of it - but they are conformed here to the suffering image of the Son of God. This means necessarily, a path of tribulation, more or less, and if it is to be glory hereafter with us, it will, in some measure, be a cross here; for if there is no cross, there will be no crown.

The apostle refers to the Father, too, in His calling of His people according to His own purpose and will, with an invincible and effectual calling; but in the text the Father is referred to in the highest evidence of divine love that can possibly be made to sinners. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all", a truly remarkable statement this! The Lord Himself draws attention to the same truth in the gospel of John - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." So, John writes in his epistle, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." This is truly an amazing consideration to us - a profound mystery! So must it ever be, but yet it is a believable truth. We can understand why He did not spare the angels that sinned, but cast

them down under chains of darkness for ever. We can understand why He did not spare guilty Sodom, where such awful wickedness prevailed. We can understand why He did not spare the rebels in the wilderness who revolted against His word and laws. We could understand it if He did not dispose to spare us - guilty sinners before a holy, heart-searching God - deserving to be banished to perdition, but O, how can we understand this revelation of distinguishing love in 'not sparing His own Son'? We have the case of Abraham who was commanded to offer Isaac, when the Lord said to him, "Take now thy son, thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest, and offer him up". See how the Lord pressed it home there - "thine only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest". Not Ishmael, not the son of the bondwoman, but the son of the free woman, the child of promise, the child that was the living answer to so many prayers - take him, and offer him up. But faith was strong in Abraham; he obeyed the divine command to the last point, until the Lord appeared for him from the heavens, (when his hand was stretched forth to strike the fatal blow) saying, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou anything unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, from Me." As though He would say, By this act of obedience I know that you put Me first and that your love to Me is even above your love to Isaac. But O when we think of the love of the Father to sinners, all beside just pales into insignificance. What wonderful, distinguishing love is this!

"He spared not His own Son." He was ever His Son before the world was; the Son in whom He delighted, in whom He was well-pleased - yet He did not spare Him. He was in His divine nature His Son, co-equal and co-eternal with His Father, possessing inherently every perfection of Deity; yet still He did not spare Him, He in whom His soul delighted from all eternity, "brought up with Him", daily His delight"; yet He did not spare Him. O what an instance of distinguishing love is this!

History records the case of a family during a famine in Germany, where were four children being brought to the verge of

starvation. The parents, very reluctantly and painfully, discussed parting with one of their children for food, but when they considered the eldest they said, O no, we cannot part with him, he is our firstborn; no we cannot part with this one. Then came the second and he was such a striking likeness of his father that they said, No, we cannot part with him, we cannot sell this one, we must keep him. The third a girl, a delightful child, the image of her mother; they considered her and said, No, we cannot part with her, she is our only girl, we must keep her. Then came the youngest and they said, No, he is our Benjamin, we cannot part with him. So they decided, rather than part with one of their children, they would all perish together. But this great, infinite, glorious God, the eternal Father, notwithstanding the delight He ever possessed in Him, the Love He bore toward Him and the mutual love that was ever between them as Father and Son, yet He did not spare Him. He did not spare Him!

May I bring this point home particularly because it is such a striking instance of His grace? He did not spare Him! "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all". And here, too, I think we may see throughout the whole of His life on earth, He was not spared anything that was necessary to the complete redemption of the Church. No, He did not spare Him! He did not spare Him in the circumstances of His birth, for they were indeed mean in their nature - here He is, born in a manger, destitute of even ordinary comforts that are usually expected at such a time. Having "no room for Him in the Inn" the incarnate Son of God was brought forth into this world and laid in a manger. He did not spare Him early persecutions either, for in His infancy Herod sought His life, so that His parents fled with Him into Egypt till they were "dead who sought the child's life".

He did not spare Him the temptations in the wilderness, which were a great strain upon His human powers, for we are told those temptations were real sufferings unto Him, though the devil "found nothing in Him." He did not spare Him a life of poverty. "For foxes

have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." He had not the provisions of this life. No, He did not spare Him. He did not spare Him the reproach and blasphemies that were continually cast upon Him in the days of His flesh. If He worked a miracle they would slander Him in the face of it and say, that He "cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils". He was not spared bitter opposition, shameful ill-treatment at the hands of men. In all this the Father did not spare Him; His life was not made easy and attended with all possible comfort.

He did not spare Him the agony of Gethsemane, the load, the intolerable load of imputed sin; He did not spare Him the awful conflict there between the powers of sin, death and hell, so that as Hart describing it, said, He had "strength enough, and none to spare"^{Him}. He did not spare Him those bitter groans pressed from/when blood fell from His sacred brow. We may shed a tear occasionally for Him but He shed tears of blood for us - that is, if we do belong to Him, if we are the purchase of His blood. He did not spare Him a mock trial in the Judgment Hall, mocking, buffeting, scourging - He did not spare Him the death of the cross. "He that spared not His own Son."

And is it not also amazing to contemplate, to meditate, the unbroken fortitude that possessed the Saviour all through His estate of humiliation - He did not turn back. "Therefore have I set My face like a flint" it is said in prophecy; "Behold, the Lord God will help Me, therefore shall I not be confounded". "He poured out His soul unto death". He was with the wicked in His death and He made His grave with the rich. In all this He did not turn back. "He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem".

Well, beloved hearers, you say, What is the point of all this? Well, the point is, if He did not spare His own Son but delivered Him up for us all - that is all His chosen people, every one, if He delivered Him up for them, "Shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" In other words, would He give His own Son for unworthy sinners and then deny them all the blessings that are in Him to the Church? O no! Would He give the greater and then deny the less? No! The great point here is that the Father gives all

things with Him - or in Him. He that spared not His own Son, but gave Him up, delivered Him, shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? This is in the form of a challenge, a question, Shall He not do this? Has not the church all spiritual blessings in Him? Do they not flow richly and freely through His precious death? And if we have Christ formed in us the hope of glory, then have we every blessing in Him including heaven itself. All things are ours if we have Him. "Shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" The gospel is freely given - it can never be bought. I believe, what a friend once said at Brighton, is true, It is a pauper's gospel. So it is. It is a gospel for bankrupts - for those who have nothing to pay. Well then, what is the condition? There is no condition in one sense because all is freely given - and yet there must be some preparation for it. What is that? Well, conviction of our guilt, of our sin; there must be this. A need, a longing, a hungering, a thirsting, a panting for this living bread and this living water. "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." Part with your rags for this, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

"Shall He not?" Will He withhold other blessings of His grace if He gives His own Son? God forbid. Other things are freely given; they are all in the gospel. But there is this too - He will keep us waiting, watching and praying, applying at a throne of grace for the communication of these great blessings of the gospel. Shall He not also with Him - with Him - so it is not a case of saying, If you have these other things you cannot have Christ, or if you have Christ you cannot have these other things. O no, a believer has all things with Him. This is the confirming point, Shall He not also - with Him freely give us all things?

Well, what things? What things are they that the Father gives with Christ, with His own Son? Well, one is the great gift of His Holy Spirit. See how the Lord speaks of this Himself. "If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that

ask Him?" And here let me say that we cannot receive Christ without receiving the Holy Ghost too; neither can we receive the Holy Spirit without receiving Christ, for He is the Spirit of Christ. Moreover we may see how this good Spirit was promised and was duly given.

"The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in My Name, He will teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Moreover in this very chapter the apostle speaks particularly about this great gift of the Holy Spirit, and of what He does in the experience of believers.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God".

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Well, this is a wonderful gift; and I believe at times, we shall feel the moving and operating within us of this good Spirit in His sweet anointing, softening the heart. He is given us as a Teacher. "The same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie." "The anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you." Does it? He will give then, this good Spirit.

Not only so, but in the gift of Christ, and with Him, He will give all needful, temporal blessings. O yes! Paul writing to the Philippians assured them of this. In reply to their practical kindness to him he said, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." "For my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." All temporal mercies are His gifts and they are free gifts too. But you say, O well, everybody has all they need of the things of this life for their bodies and so on. Yes, that may be, but this is a very different thing from the exercise of faith in a believer, who receives even the bread on his table as coming from the good hand of a covenant God; especially when he feels like the poor woman who had but a crust of bread and was so filled with the goodness of God, that she said, All this and Christ! It is only this that can really sanctify our temporal mercies to us.

"Every grace and every favour
Comes to us through Jesus' blood."

But what else? A free and full forgiveness of all our transgressions. O say some of you here, it may be, If only I could receive that, if I could get that blessing I know it would be well with me. I should have all I need then, but I am just bound by my sins. Well, if you feel like that, go with your sins to Christ, go with your burden, your distress, your bondage, your chains, your darkness. This blessing is given with Him and is a free forgiveness.

"Mercy never can be bought
Grace is free and all's the Lamb's"

Moreover it comes freely and one day you may have a sacred sense of this blessing of heaven flowing into your heart. O such a token! The burden removed, your conscience purged and your spirit set free, so that you can say with Paul here "The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Sweet liberty this! When this liberty flows in, it flows freely - absolutely so. "When they had nothing to pay, He frankly forgave them both". And it is free to sensible sinners, to repenting backsliders. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." But this mercy will never make sin cheap - it does not lead to licentiousness, but sanctifies the soul to Christ; and when you get this you will love Him and hate yourself and hate your sins. But here it is. "Shall He not with Him also freely give us" this blessing? Do not despair of this. If your sins lie as a burden upon your spirit, confess them before Him, for "If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness".

Well, is there anything else? Yes, for with Christ He will give a perfect righteousness, such a righteousness as to present a poor, sinner in himself defiled, "without spot" - making it possible even for the Lord to say, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." And this righteousness is given. What is it? It is Christ's obedience to the law of which He is the end on behalf of

every believer in Him. Christ has become "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth". The law cannot pass the cross and strike a sinner whose faith is centred in the blood and righteousness of the Redeemer; the law finds its end there; it is satisfied.

"Hell is vanquished, heaven appeased:
God is satisfied and pleased."

And here is this justification, this righteousness, this perfect robe, against which all our goodness is but a lighted taper compared to the sun in its full shining in the heavens. O what a righteousness is this! "Shall He not - shall He not" give this? Yes, for He is "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS". Is that all? No, for we are assured that with Him, with Christ, He will also give eternal life. "I give unto My sheep eternal life and none shall pluck them out of My Father's hand". No, because they have eternal life in Him, and there is no separation from that. This eternal life is not just an eternal existence (for the damned in hell will have that) but this eternal life is the life of Christ in the soul, immortal life, eternal felicity, eternal life in its beginnings, and is begun here in the life of grace. But O, think of the prospect! "Shall he not" give this with His own Son? Yes, because it is a blessing which is in Him and in every member of His body in union with Him.

Then just this in conclusion. He will give with His own Son, with Him, the gift of an unfading inheritance, an inheritance that will never fade away. Never! To this the Lord's people are "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation", kept to this, "To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God." Here are the mansions; Jesus has gone to prepare them; here they are. "In My Father's house are many mansions". And if He has not withheld His own Son, will He withhold these? O no, because it was for this purpose that He came. By His death He has opened heaven's doors to a coming sinner and by His resurrection has secured their justification in Him.

O then, may we have grace to lay hold of this and to feed upon this. May He nourish our souls.

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

Amen.