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Sermon preached by Mr J H Gosden
at Galeed Chapel Brighton
on Wednesday evening 11 May 1921

JOHN 16 v 33

X "These things have I spoken unto you that in Me
ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have
tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have
overcome the world"

There are two kinds of people here who will immediately, if they consider, think this word has no place in them. There is that kind of people, one would fear, that has all the peace, or at least seeks it, out of the world, and such people will not have room for a peace that is not out of the world. They find, if not an experience of peace here, a zealous prosecuting the search after it in the things of this time state, and it is a solemn thing to be in such a search for, persisting in it, and being found in it at last, will bring the person, the searcher, into eternal woe, for the love of the world is enmity to God. "No man can serve two masters". No man can seek peace in two places, from two different sources. The other kind of people who will object that this word has no place in them will do so on the ground that it is too kind a word for them, too great, too comfortable. There is a people taught of God who cannot conceive how it is possible for God to speak kindly to them, and would never conceive it themselves until the great God presses in this kindness by the power of the Holy Ghost. It is a wonderful thing that God can be kind to sinners, and that He can speak kindly to sinners, for the word of God is not as the word of man; not helpless sympathy in a bad case, but an effectual word, a word meaning fully all that it says, and effecting all that it says, without exception, in the persons to whom it is said. These are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the likeness of the invisible God, the Man, God's fellow, in an exact equality with the Eternal Father in His divine nature, yet a Man conversing with men, disciples, coming and eating with sinners, and here in this, and the preceding chapters, speaking most compassionately, and wisely, and mercifully, kindly, to His poor, sorrowing disciples. Faithfully He speaks to them, tells them many

things that they knew not, as they were able to bear those things; tells them what He is about to do, to leave them, and the reason of His leaving them for their good, and what shall come upon them when He has left them - persecution and trouble. And another thing that shall come to them, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter from Himself and the Father to teach them, to take of His things and show them to them and to help them, and help them to remember what now He has spoken to them. These and many other things the Lord Jesus had been saying to the disciples, and this is left on record in order that we, as many as receive the word of God by the Holy Ghost, that we may have comfort of the Scriptures and have hope. These things have I spoken unto you which, had I been silent concerning them, they would have left you in a state of consternation, sorrow, and darkness, and liable to despair when the things which I have spoken to you of shall come upon you. The Lord Jesus Christ in His wondrous love and complete, perfect knowledge, and faithfulness, and compassion never omitted saying a word that was necessary to His disciples. There is no omission in God. We sinners filled oftentimes with trouble and conflict, and fear, and weakness, and indwelling sin, think that God is short, that He omits to do things, speak things that we should like Him to speak, but there is nothing short in God. Christ was a full Saviour, and the great prophet, and fully fulfilled all His office capacities when here upon earth, as He does now. Perfection stamped everything; every thought, every utterance, every step, every act of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"These things I have spoken unto you". If we believe then, the Lord Jesus Christ, we should hang upon His words. If we were not so carnally minded we should consider as invaluable every syllable that the dear Redeemer spoke, even although we might not be able to say He spoke all the words that we read He spoke, to us. It is a great thing to receive the Scriptures as the Word of Christ, and at times one is led a little to wonder at, and admire, the wisdom, and the faithfulness, and the compassion of the Lord in His utterances in the days of His flesh, and He is the same now, no less near to us, no less capable of communion with us. We are apt to think that these disciples who could touch Him, who could hear audibly His sacred voice, would have a clearer, and nearer access to Him and He could more easily communicate His mind, and love, and purposes to them than

to us. O, but in these chapters He shows the fallacy of this, makes provision against the notion of this in the minds and hearts of His people when He has gone from them, for, says He, it is expedient that I should go from you, for if I go not away the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost will not come to you, but if I go away I will send Him to you. And indeed He also tells them the reason why He would go away, and why the Comforter should come, namely that many things He had to say to the disciples they could not then bear, but the Holy Spirit shall, line upon line, here a little and there a little, speak His words, the things that He saw of the Son and the Father, as they were able to bear it. And all these things which He said, with all the profound meaning, with all the living determination of love in them, with all the faithfulness in them, with all the certainty of their exact completeness, and fulfilment in the disciples, and in all the Lord's disciples, these things were spoken in order that they, and all disciples, should in Him have peace.

"These things I have spoken unto you that in Me ye might have peace". Peace, what a great, what a sacred and blessed thing is peace. Not any kind of peace. In the world men may have peace; naturally peace is a good thing. Would that we had peace in this nation amongst men, but this is a holy peace, a worthy peace, an unshakeable, an unalterable, peace, an eternal peace. "That in Me", in Christ, "ye might have peace." This would show us that there is no peace apart from Jesus Christ for, although, as I have said, there was no omission in anything that the Lord did or said, there was nothing superfluous in what He did or said, or in what He is. He fills immensity, fills all things. There is nothing superfluous in God, nothing superfluous in Jesus Christ. No. And if He is to be the peace of His people, if they are to have peace in Him, they will find peace nowhere else out of Him. And He is the peace of His people and they are to find - and He speaks things to them that they may find - peace in Him. I would a little, as helped, speak of this peace: "That in Me ye might have peace."

First I would say this, that it is peace with God. Jesus Christ is God and there is no peace for a sinner with God apart from, outside of, Jesus Christ. No peace that is holy, that is allowable by God, that shall not be broken up, but that which is in Jesus Christ. We

have no right to peace, our consciences being guilty, our persons being, our minds being, polluted, our very natures being corrupt in the view of a holy God. In the consideration and remembrance of Him, and of eternity before us, I say we have no right to peace in ourselves, no expectancy of it when we are taught of God. The Apostle Paul knew this peace, but he knew where it was. In the chapter, the 7 Romans, which I read, you have a conflict arising from the new birth. He had in him two natures one conflicting with the other, and it does not appear that at the time he wrote that chapter he had very much experience of peace until he comes down to the last verse, and then you see him, as it were, entering into the haven of rest, into Jesus Christ. Immediately prior in the stormy waters of the conflict he says, as all believers at times say, feeling what they are, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then the peace came, then he was wafted into his harbour and said: "I thank God through Jesus Christ." It is a peace with God, a holy, and a just, and a perfect peace with the eternal God. Peace with the law of God. Paul delighted, as he tells us in that chapter, delighted in the law of God after the inward man, and a poor sinner, with guilt in his conscience, the law charging home upon him his sins, he cannot delight in the law of God that condemns him. Why, he is fearful of that law; the terror of God in it makes him afraid, and there is no peace for him night and day because of that law, because of his guilt under it. But Paul, and the Lord's people, are brought into a liberty from that law in its condemnation, and are brought to delight in it. Paul delighted in the law of God after the inward man; he did it by faith; delighted in the holiness of it, in the goodness of the commandment. He delighted, not because he thought he could obey it fully, and completely; did not delight in himself as a law-keeper, as one who was gradually piling up a beautiful building of righteousness, of good works, in which to dwell securely; that was not his peace, that was not his delight, but he delighted in the law of God after the inward man, by the new nature, and that was by faith. He delighted in it, the holy principle wanted to keep it; delighted in all that God had said. Whether you take that to be the moral law or the ceremonial law, or the law of liberty in Christ Jesus, or the holy Word of God, we must say that the new man of the heart delights in every part of the law of God even in that law which condemns the unbeliever. But peace with respect to the law's condemning sentence

is in Him. "In Me ye might have peace", and it is a great peace. It is written in the Psalms "Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them". You see, love to the law of God cannot possibly exist in the heart of any person apart from Jesus Christ who is the end of it for righteousness to those who believe in Him. "In Me ye might have peace". This peace is peace in respect of God, God's condemnation of you, because that condemnation has found a place in the Surety, in the Substitute, in the Person who is the peace, in whom peace is to be had, Jesus Christ. "In Me ye might have peace". And so it is written in the following chapter of the epistle to the Romans, the 8 chapter, "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His Own Son - this Man Jesus Christ - in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit". That is peace, a fulfilled law, a completely fulfilled holy law, the law of God, in Christ, is peace when it is seen by faith, and when it is entered into by faith. "In Me ye might have peace".

And this means peace with respect to eternity, with respect to one's estate. You know what it is to have unrest with regard to an earthly estate in these days. How unstable, and shakeable, and melting away things are in these days upon the earth. Who can say that what he possesses is stable? who can have peace in his possessions in this day? Even a natural man finds no peace in those things which, particularly in these days find to themselves wings and fly away, but in this peace which is in Jesus Christ, a great peace, there is peace with respect to one's estate for time and for eternity. Peace with respect to the eternal God. Why, in Christ there is laid up for the church, for every believer, for every poor sinner brought to believe in Jesus Christ and to repent of his sins, there is laid up for him an eternal inheritance, and it is secured, and the peace that reaches the heart and fills the desire and comforts the conscience is this, that this inheritance is secured in Jesus Christ who is the peace, and as He says in the opening of this sacred word to His disciples: "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you

unto Myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." The faith of this, the assurance of this, the sacred testimony of this by the Holy Ghost, the manifestation of the dear person who speaks this to you, will produce peace, rest, concerning your estate. And it comprises all things, this peace, for if in Christ we have peace, then nothing shall offend us; nothing, that is to say, shall disturb us. We are disturbed, but not in Christ. It is when we are in, as it were, in the ocean, when we are on voyage, when we are far from our harbour, when temptation assails, when the winds blow, when persecution comes, when fears run high, then we do not find much peace, but there is a harbour, and the peace remains; the stillness, and calmness of the harbour is the same at all times, and it is accessible. It is accessible in this time state, this peace. The Lord Jesus spoke it in this time state though He is beyond all time, outside all time, has an "eternal now" in His divine Person; yet He spoke it in this time state in order that men could find this peace, might hear His words whispered now by the Holy Spirit as they were conveyed into the hearts of the disciples at that time, and find peace in His utterances. O, if we do believe that Jesus Christ is risen from the dead, and has, by His death, procured peace between the law of God and us, and gone to heaven to prepare, by His intercession and His position there, a place for us at the Father's right hand, and indeed at His Own throne, it will be peaceful for us.

And this brings a peace with other things, circumstances. "That in Me ye might have peace". Nothing then will disturb you, for in Christ you have a peace that will pervade you. A conflict does disturb us, but the storm of conflict in the hands of the Lord Jesus, in the hands of the blessed Spirit of Christ, has this effect, to drive us home closer to Christ who is our peace. Is not that the effect of the conflict such as Paul speaks of in the 7 Romans. "When I would do good evil is present with me". "O wretched man that I am". I would keep the law of God, I would love the Lord with all my heart and all my mind and all my soul. I would find all my powers running after Him, and eagerly stretching out for His word, and walking absolutely in all His ways blameless. I would find all my thoughts, and desires, and aspirations centering in Himself. I would never allow a sinful thought to enter, in the beginning of it even, into my mind. I would never do anything that beclouded my soul, or vexed the Holy Spirit of

God. "When I would do good evil is present with me". And this is the conflict but, my friends, when the conflict wears us out, and when the Holy Spirit discovers to us afresh this sacred harbour of rest and peace and calm, then O how grateful it is for one to find the Lord Jesus the same, the door to Him open, and His peace as full and pervasive as ever it was before. O, it is a great thing now and again to be brought to the desired haven of rest and peace in Jesus Christ. Yea, He comes to people and is their peace when He comes to them. He comes to defend them and so give them peace from those that puff at them. Joshua found someone puffing at him when he would pray, and so do the Lord's people oftentimes find an enemy puffing at them, and they have no peace in their praying. O, the suggestions of the devil in prayer, the unrest that he makes. How he stirs up nature; how he comes and makes quite a storm even when one would pray. But the Lord Jesus comes and fulfils at times wondrously the holy promise concerning Him - When the Assyrian comes in like a flood, this Man is the peace. He lifts up a standard against him, the standard of His Own Person, of His Own love, of His Own almighty power, of His Own victory over the devil, and over sin, and hell, and death. He becomes afresh to the soul peace, and the soul finds his enemies rebuked. He finds, at times, comfort in this peace. A token for good is in it. When the Lord comes and discovers Himself to be the same, why, how you delight in your portion then, and how comfortable it is to rest in Him. O, it is peaceful. Nothing will disturb you then.

And then it is peace with the will of God in Christ; it matters not what God does with you. If you can find an entrance into Christ by faith you will have peace with what God does in you. It is not easy for one to say this, for the Lord deals strangely with men, but wisely, and justly, but you will know what this is to have no quarrel with what God does when you see that He deals with you in Jesus Christ. It dispossesses your mind of all prejudice, of all rebellion, and stubbornness against the Lord's way. Then there is a sacred sense, a passive sense of repose in the will of God, for it is the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush; He wills to do one good. Whatever He brings upon the soul, whatever He brings upon the person, whatever He puts in one's circumstances, whatever He allows to come upon one's relatives, into one's concerns, there is no quarrel with the will of God when this peace is enjoyed in Jesus Christ. Then the

person wants to be at God's disposal, and is at peace with Him in that disposal of him. It is a great peace to be saved from that rebellion of ours which we have naturally to desire to dispose of ourselves. O there is no peace in it for we are unwise, short-sighted, dark, benighted, sinful, wretched creatures and had we the management of ourselves and our affairs for five minutes O what a solemn place we should be in. There is no rest if the Lord gives one up and leaves us alone as He did Ephraim - Let him alone, he hath joined himself to idols. What a solemn place; we shall not have peace, or rest, or satisfaction then; only that will be, in the issue, if we are the Lord's, for our good, though very solemn. If the Lord takes us in hand for that, having shown us what we are, and what we should come to if left of Himself, how glad we shall be to be able to say: "Let us return unto the Lord, for He hath torn and He will heal us. After the third day He will revive us, and we shall live in His sight." What a great thing that this peace cannot be moved, cannot be altered, but remains for the people of God.

"These things I have spoken unto you that in Me ye might have peace." One thing the Lord spoke to them was that whatever they asked in His Name He would do, and when that word is spoken by God into our hearts, it does bring peace. It gives to us, as it were, a gracious detachment from all earthly resources and especially from ourselves and our own supposed powers, and enables us, in some sweet sense of peace to go to Him whose ocean fullness of all supply is opened by that promise to our needs. "That in Me ye might have peace" against every necessity, every need, of whatever kind it may be.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation". The Lord Jesus Christ did not leave this part out or put it in the background; did not, as it were, allure His disciples into some delusion, that they should consider that they should always enjoy peace, that they should always experience peace, that nothing should be conflicting with them. Rather He distinctly shows them the need of their trouble in this world. "In the world ye shall have tribulation", and in their tribulation the things He had spoken to them were to be for their guidance respecting the finding of peace. And one thing in tribulation will give men peace more than all else, and that is a real persuasion that the Lord Jesus Christ went before in the tribulative

way. "In the world ye shall have tribulation", O, "but in Me peace", for I went before you, I trod the tribulative way; yea, much rougher and darker was His way than ours is. He suffered for sin; our greatest suffering, if we are the Lord's people will be for sin; He suffered for sin in a tribulation that was more terrible than any of us can ever conceive of. "In the world ye shall have tribulation". Does it offend you to have tribulation in this world? Just consider my friends, that the only people who have tribulation for sin in this sense are the Lord's people who have peace reserved in Christ for them. To rebel against the conflict is to rebel against their own mercy. It is solemn to feel the wretchedness that Paul felt, and we have much more need to feel the wretchedness than he had who was a gracious Apostle, but O, my friends, better infinitely to feel that wretchedness and that tribulation going on within us, than to be left in a false peace, for it will make the peace of God in Christ very sweet and grateful to us. "In the world ye shall have tribulation". Some have the tribulation of afflictions, some peculiar afflictions in their persons, some trouble in their families. A tribulation may be that which David had for he grieved greatly because his house was not so with God as himself would desire; over Absalom how that poor man grieved. And so the Lord's people find great grief in these things, and they go to make up tribulation. "In the world ye shall have tribulation". "They that will live godly shall suffer persecution" the word says. Persecution - We do not know much of that experimentally outwardly today, but there it is in the Scriptures. Is it that we do not live godly that we do not suffer this persecution? Should we, if we did not screen ourselves, not suffer more persecution? Is there not some, at times, being ashamed of Christ and of His word that screens us from this persecution? But O my friends, if you have been as guilty as I have in this particular, you will find, coming upon the back of that, a persecution within, a tribulation within of a guilty conscience that will be far more, and worse, than all the scorn that might have been heaped upon you had you not so have been ashamed of Christ and His word at that particular time. "In the world ye shall have tribulation".

And this tribulation is to work for good. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose". All the things put together, the mercies,

and the afflictions, the trials, and the fears, and the conflicts, the weakness, everything that the saints come into shall, by the over-ruling, eternal hand of God work together for their good, and this is the good, to drive them, to draw them, to Christ; bring them closer to Him in this, bring them to esteem nothing but Christ; to come to the mind at last which Paul came to when he said - "I am determined" - and O, what a deal it takes to bring one there - "I am determined to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified".

"In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" How can one be of good cheer? Cheerfulness in religion is a difficult thing where religion is real and sin is felt. O, but what is this victory of Christ? "I have overcome the world". What is that to do with us? Jesus Christ in heaven spoke this, speaks it now; He is the same. "I have overcome the world". What is that to us? For whom did He overcome? He was the Creator of the world; by Him all things were made that were made. "I have overcome the world" for you, is implied in this word, for you. You have tribulation, but I have overcome tribulation for your good. It shall not overcome you, for I have overcome it. "I have overcome the world". What a great thing it is to have a conquering Lord who is Almighty, who has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. How it sustains the patience, and the strength of the soul at times to believe this. Just now and again you may enter into this peace. It is a great thing in the midst of a storm to be brought to a sweet harbour of peace in Christ. He is ever near my friends, the peace is the same, the victory is complete. Jesus Christ is enthroned in glory, we are in the world, we have tribulation, much conflict - should have more were we more godly - but Christ is in heaven and there He is preparing a place, as some of us hope, and believe, for us, and He says, "I will see you again and your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

What poor people they are who have no lot or part in this sacred word, in this dear Redeemer, in this victorious King, in this everlasting, unchanging Friend and Lover of His people. And how shall one know that one has an interest in Him, a part, and lot in Him? In these last words of Christ's before He left the world, going out of

it by way of tribulation, and crucifixion, for His people, He speaks largely of the work of the Holy Ghost. Who He is; the Comforter, the Remembrancer. What He shall do; take of His things and show them to His people; and He says "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name that will I do" and this is one thing, perhaps more than all other things put together, the Lord's people ask in the Name of Christ, and that is to have indubitable evidence and constant tokens of their interest and union to Himself. May the Lord grant His blessing and pardon what has been amiss.

AMEN.