

Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel Brighton
on Sunday evening 22 April 1923

1 CORINTHIANS 1 V 30/31

"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus who of God
is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and
sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it
is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the
Lord."

The source of vital religion, the blessed stream of it in the short track of time, and the illimitable, wondrous ocean of it in eternity, are in God, and in God alone. O, it is great to have a good religion, to have the true grace of God, and the more grace you have, the more trouble you will have, because sin is madness in our hearts. "The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil". Full of madness, and every opposition that is offered to it by grace provokes it; hence the constant trouble that sin brings to pass in the people of God. But the source of true religion never fails, and the streams of that river that makes glad the city of God never fail. The endless ocean of bliss to which every child of God is going must receive them all. O, what will it be to get to heaven, to leave this hellish nature of ours behind, to drink endless pleasures in from the presence of the Lamb who is in the midst of His people, leading them to living fountains of waters, so that they shall never thirst. They will never say, in Eternity, that their heart fails for God. Never say to Him, their God - "O, when wilt Thou come unto me?" Never miss His presence. Never miss fellowship with Him. I think the prospect that God sets before us in the Scripture, and sometimes sets before some of us in our souls, is such as to make the longing most ardent to reach there. O, to be free of sin. It will be a great thing for me to be free, for I am burdened, and hampered, and cramped, and hurt, and wounded, and weakened day by day by it; yet Christ is made precious.

This evening, if it please the Lord - who only is able for it - to help me to preach, I am to draw your attention to four necessary

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things, necessary for godliness here, for fitness for heaven.

Wisdom - we are fools. "Vain man would be wise though himself born like a wild ass's colt". All the wisdom of men is foolishness by the side of God's wisdom and gospel. Hence, you find, if you make the observation, that all the learning of this world standing alone, acting alone, operating alone, in the minds of those who have it, turns them from God. "The world by wisdom knew not God". Do not hanker after that alone. Get as much of it as you can, but do beg of God that He would not permit you to have that alone. Grace makes a fool wise. Watts says truly

He - that is God - calls the fool and makes
him know
The mysteries of His grace
To bring aspiring wisdom low
And all its pride abase (74)

What a mercy that we have wisdom in true religion. We are foolish people but if we are godly people the religion we have is not foolishness; it is wisdom. "Who of God", that is Jesus Christ. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus who of God" - not of man. "Which were born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God". "Who of God" in His eternal purpose, in His mercy, and kindness. "Who of God" did from eternity become the wisdom of His people. Wisdom, not first of all subjectively considered. Wisdom has a substantive nature, not an airy fancy, not a fine notion; no, but that which is in the chapter we read just now, substance. "I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgement, that I may cause them that love Me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures." Wisdom here is to be taken as that which comes from heaven to make God known to men; that that discovers God's nature, and purposes, love, and kindness, and salvation, and it is necessary. "Canst thou" - O worm; "Canst Thou" - O, poor creature of a day, whose foundation is in the dust, and whose horizon is scarcely, if one may speak in terms of measurement, scarcely an inch before and beyond thyself, and canst only know thyself; "Canst Thou by searching find out God? Canst Thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" It is not to be wondered at that men are ignorant of God since the fall put

out all our eyes, blinded our minds, darkened our understandings. Here is wisdom in that way spoken of by the Holy Ghost in the Hebrews - "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son; whom He hath appointed Heir of all things who is the brightness of His glory and the express image of His Person". What God is, what His purposes are, what He will do, and what He will be to His people, and in them; what they shall be to Him, how near, and why they are near, wisdom alone from heaven can discover to us, and this wisdom is Christ. "Who of God" - God eternally designating Him to do this great work, and office, to come from the bosom of the Father, to come from the Eternal Father, to be incarnate, to come from the Councils of Eternity, and the love of Eternity, and the goodness of Eternity, and the purposes of Eternity, that men should be one with God in Christ. I say, this wisdom alone can inform us of these things. Would you know God? You must know Him in, and by, His Son. Would you see things that are in God? You must see them in His Son, and by His Son, and no other way. Wisdom here then is not, in the first instance, that which makes us wise as to our own perception of things, but it is wisdom as it is in Jesus Christ. I came, He said, from My Father. I can do nothing of Myself. What He has told Me, I can speak. What I have seen Him do, I am come to do. My brethren, we shall never be wise, as to God, except this wisdom comes into our hearts. "Who of God" - in His purpose of love, in the mighty work of the Eternal Spirit forming that body which the Son was to take into union with His divine Person - "Who of God is made unto us wisdom". Do you love this wisdom? "I love them" says He "that love Me". Did you ever love Jesus Christ for a minute? Were your heart's desires ever fervent after Him? Did you ever feel that, great as He is, the little arms of your faith would fain open and embrace Him who allows Himself to be embraced? Yes, intends to be embraced by sinners. O, did you ever perceive a ray of heaven's light, a beam of divine mercy falling upon your eye, into your spirit? O, all came from this Person, Wisdom. "I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions." The love of God is discovered by Jesus Christ to poor men upon whom it was fixed in eternity. Salvation is discovered by Jesus Christ to whom His Father said - "Thou art My salvation unto the ends of the earth". May we - whatever else we seek - may we - whatever other thing we lack - have this in our heart's desire, and

in our experience, namely wisdom. When it is made so in us, there are certain effects following. When you receive instruction from Christ, there are certain effects following. You see, for instance, that there is a way from hell to heaven; that is not a little thing to see. Ah, you may see it in the words that are printed here - "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" - but that is not to see it really. Do not think it is the same thing as seeing it in the light God sheds in the heart of His children when He discovers Jesus Christ to them. It is to see, first of all, the hell of sin in your nature, then the hell of punishment due to that sin that is in your nature, then to fear God and know that Scripture - "According to Thy fear so is Thy wrath". To feel that that wrath is imminent, and to you, without a Surety, inevitable. Then, O then, to get a sight of Christ who says in His teaching, and in His blood, and in His mercy - "I am the Way". "I am the Way" from all those sins that trouble you, from that guilt that burdens you and is your death. "I am the Way" from that hell you see, that hell you feel. I am the Way from your death, your legal death, your death in trespasses and sins. I am the Way to pardon, and the Way to goodness, and the Way to peace, and the Way to reconciliation with God. "I am the Way". And it is this wisdom in a man's heart that makes the words of Solomon true - "The way of life is above to the wise that he may depart from hell beneath". Would you know Christ? O, be there sinners here who, in their hearts say, we want to know Him, fain would find Him, and feel Him, and know Him, and love Him, and be in Him, and united to God in Him. Well, there is this mercy - "Who" - that is the Person you desire to know and embrace - "Who of God is made unto us wisdom". You cannot know Jesus Christ naturally, as you can know a problem. Things are not as plain as that to nature. The wisdom of God is in a mystery. How the Eternal God could love sinners; how He could make sinners righteous; how He could make polluted persons pure; how He could punish sin in One who did not do it, in One who knew no sin; how He could remit all that, you can never know, except it be in, and by, Jesus Christ. The wisdom of God is in a mystery. Says Paul, in the second chapter of this Epistle - "We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory". This is the wisdom of God treasured up in Christ. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Him. How these things can be, that God - to sum the point up in a word - can be just and a Saviour; just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus

- this is a mystery, and yet it is known; Ah it is known. Thanks be to God that it is knowable, and it is known. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, for them that wait for Him". What then? O, says Paul, "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit". That is the point. The office of the Spirit is an office of revelation. The work of the Spirit is - after His blessed, and marvellous work in preparing the body which the Son of God assumed - in the hearts of sinners. He condescends to convince of sin; He condescends to reveal righteousness, to reveal the way of salvation. Wisdom - it will affect your heart. O, says Solomon, I have written words of wisdom to you that you may know the certainty of the words of truth, and when the wisdom of God enters into your heart, it is pleasant, and more than the honeycomb, sweeter than all things, more than all things that can be desired, because in the heart it speaks to a sinner. In the heart it speaks to a sinner; it tells him of the love of God; it opens the eternal counsels of God; it opens the love of God, that very thing about which the sinner is often exercised, of which he may be asking again, and again in secret on his knees, Lord tell so unworthy, so unlovely, so void, and empty a sinner, if it is so; tell me that Thou hast loved me. And divine wisdom comes from the very bosom of the Father and says to a sinner - "I have loved thee with an everlasting love". Christ came from His Father's bosom. "No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." Do you say, He has never done it for you, and in you? Well, if you have got a heart to ask Him, if you have an appetite for Him, if conviction of sin, and trouble make a place for Him in you, the day will come when He will really say to you - "Behold Me, behold Me" and let down into your thirsty, troubled heart, a sense of infinite love. I cannot tell you the sweetness of it, though I believe I have tasted it, but it is beyond all expression. It melts, it amazes, it humbles, it enlarges, it fills the soul with peace. Wisdom declares all this. "Who of God is made unto us wisdom". This will make Christ precious. It will teach you that, however desirable the knowledge of things here below may be to you in some particulars, this is the only necessary wisdom. All else can be dispensed with without great inconvenience. This cannot be lacked without an eternal inconvenience. I hope the Lord will forgive the shortness and the poverty of this word about wisdom. It

is beyond me. I look at it; I trust I have received and seen the beauty of this wisdom, namely Jesus Christ, but O, its unction, its instruction, its wonder, its certainty, its glory, can never be set out well enough by me.

Secondly He is made righteousness. Yes, the Son of God is made righteousness, "that we", says Paul in the next Epistle, (5 v 21) , "might be made the righteousness of God in Him". In Adam, we had a created righteousness; we soon lost it, sold it, sold it for forbidden fruit, and became acquainted with evil, whereas by nature we only knew righteousness. God made man upright but, says Solomon, we sought out many inventions instead of being content with God's creation. To make Adam's natural happiness complete, God provided him with an helpmeet, but their righteous union (a shadow of the holy bond between Christ and the church) was wholly marred by sin. Eve, the mother of all living, was first in the transgression, and Adam sinfully complied with her. Their sin put an end to all creature righteousness. It is all gone, and we are just estranged from the womb, speaking lies; alienated from the life of God through ignorance that is in us. This is the word that the Scripture uses respecting our righteousnesses. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." How many of us believe that? I suppose there is not a person in the chapel who would contradict it, but that is not the same thing as believing it. How many of us believe it? O, how many of us have been sickened with those filthy rags, have felt our very souls sick and ready to die at the sight of those filthy rags? The best of man is vanity, the best of him. "Every man at his best state is altogether vanity". God says in another place - "Less than nothing and lighter than vanity". And now, because hell shall not swallow up all these lost, unrighteous creatures; because God will have some men to walk with Him in peace, that is in righteousness; because He has mansions in heaven that must be peopled, He brings to light another righteousness, Jesus Christ, whose Name is, as Jeremiah tells us - "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS". This righteousness is a legal righteousness, that is to say, it is conformable exactly in every particular to the requirements of God's holy law, and yet it is without the law. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. This righteousness was revealed through and brought in by Christ. What door was it by which Christ brought in

this righteousness? The door of the cross, the door of His sufferings, so immense that angels ministered to Him in His weakness. That is the way He brought this righteousness in. Not a divine word, such as was uttered in the creation - "Let there be" - but a divine work under the law calling for the whole of the perfection and perfect works of the Man Christ Jesus. Calling for the sufferings that He had to endure. Men and devils against Him, yet He sinned not by resenting. When He was threatened He reviled not again. When He suffered He submitted Himself. But O, this was that that brought His grief; His Father smote Him, the law cursed Him, heaven's smile was denied Him for a time, and His cry was - "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" This was the way by which the dear Redeemer brought this righteousness in for the unworthiest, most ragged, most disgraced prodigal that ever walked this earth and defiled it. O sinner, this is righteousness, and God made Him this. The Apostle in the second Epistle to this church at Corinth says - "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." And because He was made sin He must suffer. And because sin could not be done away by an arbitrary word and act of omnipotence, Christ must atone for it. And because no atonement can be made without a sacrifice, and there was no sacrifice that the whole world could produce; no beasts, or all of them; no forest, nor all forests; no rivers of oil; none of those things could produce that that would satisfy justice; therefore this broken-hearted Man, this great High Priest of our profession, offered Himself without spot to God, and thereby put away sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness. Hence it is written - "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth". Says one, I cannot reach it, I cannot reach it. What says the Spirit by Paul to the Romans? O He says that the word is not, Who shall ascend to heaven to bring it down? - that is Christ - and who shall descend into the deep to bring it up - that is Christ - but this is it - The word is nigh thee, and in thy heart, that if thou shalt believe with thine heart in the Lord Jesus, and with thy mouth make confession unto salvation, there is salvation there. This is how Christ is made righteousness in the heart of His people. Ah, that is the resting place, that is the way men know this righteousness. It covers them, it absolves them from their guilt, it brings them from under the law into the bond of the Covenant. It translates them from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of

God's dear Son. It takes their rags away, it clothes them with a beautiful robe. It brings them into the court of God, into the banqueting house. O, it delivers them from death, as Solomon says - "Righteousness delivereth from death". God makes Christ righteousness. You will be delivered from the law honourably, legally acquitted, and yet the free, and sovereign grace of God will shine in your deliverance by your having given to you by imputation, and impartation, this robe; this beautiful, blessed, divine robe; seamless, not touched by man, woven by God at infinite pain, and with infinite skill. You will be justified and delivered from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses. And it comes right in, not something without. Not a picture to be admired, not a doctrine to be talked about only, but a truth which becomes life in the soul, peace in the conscience, power in the heart; power to believe, power to live, power to cleave, power to follow, and more than that - if more can be - all is involved in it. But another word - more than that - namely a right, a right to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God. Yes, and how is that right known here? By the witness of the Spirit. And how do people exercise it? By their approaches to God; by their humble petition preferred to the Majesty of heaven. And how do they know that they have a right? By the smile of that God to whom they seek, and to whom they have this access. By their obtaining a good report; by their obtaining the word of promise. They obtained promises, they stopped the mouths of lions, they quenched the violence of fire, they escaped the edge of the sword. Sickness is turned into strength, for the weak shall say I am strong. And they waxed valiant in fight. None of this experience apart from that righteousness. I do not say, you will get no access to God till you are justified sensibly; No, I would not say it. I believe many humble approaches to God are made by His poor people who feel nothing but their filthy rags. Many strong cries go out of their hearts to Him for mercy before they feel the melting mercy enter. Many, many fervent petitions they send up to heaven, and they are accepted in Christ before there is a sense of acceptance of their persons. But when, after those cries, and petitions, they receive into their hearts this righteousness, that is to say, Jesus Christ, then follow the things I have named. "Who of God is made unto us righteousness."

And thirdly - sanctification. Sanctification may terrify some of you because mostly you are seeing what just now you were singing

That we're unholy needs no proof;
We sorely feel the fall; (181)

and you dare not proceed. You are just poor sinners, perishing as you fear sometimes in your sins, with no indubitable evidence, to yourselves, of possessing divine life. O, it is a sad case, yet a happy case. Why do you feel so grieved at being sinners? Why do you wish with your whole hearts that you could leave off sinning? Why do you wish you could live near the Lord, delight in Him, and keep His holy word, and walk in paths of truth, and peace, and uprightness among men, before Him? What is it that occasions these breathings, that sends them up to heaven? What is it that makes you grieve at being so unlike Him whom you fain would know and love? Is it not the possession of that holy life which the Eternal Spirit breathes into each person that is born again? And the day will come when your mourning souls will enter into Paul's word where, having spoken of those who are wicked, he says - "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are justified, but ye are sanctified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." No room for pride here. "Such were some of you". When you can point out the wicked man, the idolator, and the thief, and the swearer, and the infidel, then, through grace, you come unto yourself and say, and such was I; yea, and more than that, such am I in my nature, and yet through grace, I am washed, I am justified, I am sanctified, in the Name of the Lord Jesus. Crucifixion of sin is by the cross of Christ. The mortification of sin is by the Spirit of Christ. The first makes the second real, makes it an experience. The first was when Christ said - "It is finished"; when He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. That being done for His people, the second is done in them. They mortify, that is kill, the deeds of the body through the Spirit, and so they live. Sanctification is a doctrine divine. Sanctification is by the death of Christ. "That He might sanctify His people with His Own blood He suffered without the gate". Yes, here is our sanctification. Not some imagined holiness rising in a moment and dying as quickly. Not some imagined goodness because you feel as if

you have overcome this sin or that lust. No, not that, but sanctification that shall never be more, never be less; always the same wondrous, glorious thing belonging to the church, but their experience of it rises and falls. Today what pantings you feel after God, what desires to live according to His Word. What longings to be saved from committing sin, to be kept from your own evil temper, to be kept from those heart wanderings, and heart lusts which at other times distract you. Today sanctification is beautiful to you and you want it. Tomorrow, O what a change. You may say, am I the same person? Am I the man who, a few short hours since, panted after God, and now my nature is rising, and working, and prevailing, and I pant after myself, and after the world? Christ comes again and again by His good Spirit, and sanctification is in their very souls. It is in their life, that is in their eternal life, is a holy life, and they find the cross to have a great, and marvellous effect upon them when Christ comes again and again; that they can unite with the Apostle Paul in their measure in the Galatians, and say - "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." That, and that alone brought the Apostle Paul the victory of which he speaks in the Romans - "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" cries out the wretched man. O, says he, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I, myself" - I, Paul - "serve the law of God" - I have received the law from Zion, I do serve God with my whole mind; you understand it in a measure - "but with the flesh the law of sin" The law of sin - An external law his mere zeal resisted - then an inbred law, an inbred law of which Owen speaks - "An inbred law has an authority that an external law can scarcely lay claim to". I myself, notwithstanding this law of sin, with my mind, my heart, my soul, my understanding, my affections; with my mind I serve Christ. Sanctification, it is not a natural, vamped up kind of feeling. It comes in sometimes like a stream of new life, a stream of sweet mercy. It comes sometimes by a view given by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus. They behold His face, and the hymnwriter speaks the truth when he says:

And while by faith they see His face
Their souls grow holy too (16)

You could not see Christ's face and not be holy in your affections. You could not see His sufferings and not hate the sin that brought those sufferings to His heart. "Who of God is made unto us sanctification" - holiness; separation from self. Here is that Scripture - Except you take up your cross, deny yourself, and follow Christ you cannot be His disciple. What is the cross that you have to take up? It is the cross of Christ whereby self is crucified. It is not to be confined, my dear friends, to some dispensation of God's providence, though that may come in indeed, but it is not to be confined to it. But that cross by which Christ put away sin, on which He offered Himself without spot to God, that will produce holiness in your affections as you perceive it, and feel it in your own soul. Who is made unto us sanctification. This will affect all relationships in life. This will affect us in daily duties. Yes, it will make us best neighbours, make us the best husbands, the best wives, the most obedient children, the most conscientious servants, the most tender, and just masters. It is sure to come out when it is within.

And fourthly, redemption. This redemption is relative. There is captivity preceding redemption. There are two awful captivities that the church, in common with all fallen men, have some knowledge of, and the church particularly comes to experience them. Captivity to sin, the law which is in my members, hindering me from the good I would; driving, hurrying, urging me to the evil I would not, I am a captive. A solemn experience this. Captivity to the law. Yes, the law holds every man till Christ comes and delivers him. No man can absolve himself from his union to the law, from his obligations under the law till Christ comes and delivers His people from these two captivities, and He does that by becoming their redemption. He redeemed them on the cross. He then led captivity captive. He realised in Himself, to His infinite grief, and pain, and shame, the sin that we had done, and the law we had broken. But he that led into captivity was led captive. He that slew with the sword was slain with the sword. This is the word of God, and here is the patience of the saints. And then He received gifts for men "that the Lord God might dwell among them". This redemption brings the sweet liberty that every child of God pants to experience. It is a redemption from the law; redemption from the law which is expressed by Christ when He says in His Own word to the Father - "Thy law is within My heart". There it

is; "the love of the Father is in Him" (1 John 2 v 15) Love is the fulfilling of the law, and that perfect love was ever in Christ's heart - it characterised His humbled state here: "I do always those things that please Him". But He was to bear the curse of the law as only Divine love could. Greater love hath no man than this that a man laid down his life for his friends. The Man Christ Jesus was obedient unto death. He suffered its curse, and so magnified the law and made it honourable. This was typified by the Ark and the tables of testimony put therein. And then the mercy of it is that that Ark, that contained the tables of testimony, with all their requirements, and claims on man, and all the awful sanction in the event of sin; that Ark was covered with the Mercy Seat and there were two cherubims there; and there, said God, I will meet with you, I will commune with you. That in the anti-type is Jesus Christ. That means no condemning word of the law will ever be heard in the church by Jesus Christ, and that is redemption. If the law is satisfied for you, you are redeemed. But then this is not known until Christ is made this to us. This is not known to you, to me, until the Holy Ghost brings Jesus Christ, and when He does we are redeemed. The conscience is redeemed when the blood of sprinkling is on it, because a load of dead works is purged from it. The affections are redeemed from all their idolatries and evils when this redeeming work of Christ comes, for the love of God comes with it. The will is redeemed from its captivity and is free, and really that comes to pass - "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure". Thus is the Psalm realised by a woeful, pained sinner. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power". And the understanding is delivered and redeemed by this blessed Redeemer by its being cleansed from its blindness, and darkness, and ignorance, and many errors. "I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord." O, what a redemption this is; what a redemption this is. My brethren, as Christ comes in this redemption you will be favoured to realise - "Who of God" - Jesus Christ, the Father's Eternal Son, the Father's servant in the Covenant, the Father's redemption; the Father's salvation to the very ends of the earth - is made to His children, and in their hearts, the wisdom of God's counsels of mercy, and love revealed by Him. Righteousness, full justification comes by Him. Sanctification, holiness, comes by Him. Redemption, freedom;

freedom to enter into God's presence, freedom to call the Lord your own. Freedom from sin's thralldom, and pollution from time to time, all by Jesus Christ. Therefore, says the Apostle - "But he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." This is what the Lord says - "That according as it is written, but he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." Says the Psalmist, and have not some of us said it with him - "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord". Did he not sing - "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy Name." Why did he do it? O, because he said - "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness, and tender mercies." This is the blessed way of glorying; glorying in Christ crucified. The cross that unites us to God, the cross that declares us saved, the cross that breaks the heart, that purifies the mind, and cleanses the conscience; the cross that enchains the affections of the soul, that cross is the glory of all who have it revealed in their hearts. Each one can say, as this cross comes to him - "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Let him glory in the Lord." Yes - "Let Israel say His mercy endureth for ever. Let the house of Levi say that His mercy endureth for ever. Let them that fear the Lord say His mercy endureth for ever." Let them whom He hath redeemed from the ends of the earth, the north, the south, the east, and the west, let them say His mercy endureth for ever. O, will He accept my poor thanks? says a sinner. Ah He does accept them in the atoning work of Christ. Prayers and praises, as going from us are poor things, imperfect, but there is a golden censer and there is incense in it, and prayers mingled therewith, and these ascend acceptably to God. God has said - "Let him that glorieth glory in this that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise righteousness, and lovingkindness, and mercy in the earth, for in these things do I delight saith the Lord." O my brethren, the wilderness fetches sighs. Manna rained from heaven brings forth gratitude. Thirst makes us weary; the smitten Rock sends living waters to refresh. Therefore let all who are so blessed in the wilderness give thanks unto Him who has blessed them. And do I hear some say, we feel as if our hearts unite with the things you have said, but we are so far from them? We are afraid we

are not interested in them, afraid they will never be ours. Well now, what course do you take? What do you do in, and with, your affairs? What is the way you go? Hart, speaking of his own case, and troubles, says

In this distress, the course I take
Is still to call and pray (773)

Is that your course? Is that the way you go? Suppose some of you now feel, we are going home without the blessing; well, what will you do when you get there? Will you be going into your rooms? Will you be falling down before the Lord and saying, Lord, we believe we have heard what is true, but we have not got any of it; wilt Thou give it to us? Thou canst. The Scripture spoken to says, Christ is made of Thee wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Wilt Thou give them to me? Well now, if that be the course you take, there is a word in the Scriptures that will embrace you, though you may not believe me when I say it. This is the word - "They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me." May the Lord help us to wait.

AMEN.