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Sermon Preached at Galeed Chapel, Brighton
by Mr J.K. Popham on Sunday Evening
5th October 1930

Text 1 Corinthians 2 verses 9 & 10

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

Did you ever consider that solemn scripture? "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema Maranatha." (1 Corinthians 16 verse 22). What a fearful thing it is, not to love Jesus Christ, on the other hand, what an unspeakable blessing it is, to have in your heart, even a spark of love to the Person of Jesus Christ. It is born of its own love, "We love Him, because He first loved us." (1 John 4 verse 19). Every one, although he may not realise it, who has a love to Christ, is loved by Christ, and is bought with the blood of Christ, and will one day enter into the presence of Christ, to go no more out.

The world does not know Him, it did not know Him when He was here, and it does not now. All kinds of notions about Him are entertained, speculations, denials, false ideas, and dreadful conceptions of Him prevail, the reason of this is, because they do not know Him. The Apostle says of his own day, that if the men of that day had known Jesus Christ, they would not have crucified Him. Away with Him, was the language not only of enmity, but of ignorance, "For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (1 Corinthians 2 verse 8).

If you knew Him, those of you who do not, you would not say, O let Him go away, you would say, from your hearts "O when wilt thou come unto me?" (Psalm 101 verse 2). And shall I ever have union with Thee, shall I ever come to be with Thee? Ignorance of Christ is a dreadful thing, and when that willful ignorance is terribly confirmed by judicial blindness then there is no hope. May the Lord not say, of any of us, "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." (Isaiah 6 verse 10). It is a judgement that comes on men, religious people in a particular way, come under that judicial sentence, a fearful thing. The Jews were emphatically religious, but they were emphatically against Christ, the God of all grace, and so they were blinded. He hath blinded their eyes.

O sinner, did you ever consider it? That there is such a just and awful action of God on some men's minds, as is thus expressed, "shut their eyes; lest they should see with their eyes" and harden their hearts lest they should convert. The God who spoke such words is a just God, it seems hard to some of you, does it not. It may seem very terrible, when you say, I would like to be right, and yet God hardens some people's hearts, If you want to be right, you will be made right. Never was there a desire for God raised in the heart by His Spirit, which He despised and there never will be. If a confused, distracted, perplexed person, should be here, who may be saying, O it is a strange religion. I do not understand anything about it, but I wish, O I wish I might be made right. I would say to such a person, if you can go aside, turn aside, bend the knee in prayer, and ask the Lord to save you. And this I can say, He is so good, so tender, so compassionate, that He will not turn a deaf ear to such a cry.

Pray, if thou canst or canst not speak;
But pray with faith in Jesus' name. Gadsby's 882 verse 3)

Beg of God to bless you, to teach you, and to take the stony heart away. To take away all the strange feelings and judgements that you form of Him, and give you His good Spirit to teach you. And remember, the dreadful crucifixion of Jesus took place because, they did not know Him. And may you pray, Lord teach me the true knowledge of Thyself.

This God has laid up in store for His people, endless blessings, rich suitable blessings, their eyes have not seen them, and they may never as yet have heard of them, but they are laid up, and not to be wasted, so to speak, but to be given out, communicated. "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." What a blessing it is that there is a God in heaven to give blessings to sinners. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself," (Ephesians 1 verses 3-5).

Now what a mercy for a sinner to have faith, to ask for these blessings. If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed to go to God with, all your weakness, and all your fears, and ask Him for these blessings, you will find what Christ said to be true. "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?" (Luke 11 verse 13).

"Eye hath not seen," why not? Because God is infinitely above men and all that men can do, or all that they can think. What are the things God has laid up? These are eternal life, eternal redemption, everlasting righteousness, spiritual purity and holiness, and therefore happiness. They are all stored up in Christ, spiritual blessings were given to Him from Eternity. Paul wrote to Timothy, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Timothy 1 verse). Peter writes that "Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world," (1 Peter 1 verse 19 & 20, ordained, given.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man," to conceive them or imagine them. When a sinner feels himself to be a sinner, he cannot think it possible that God can have any love for him. It seems to him grievous to imagine it, lest he should be deceived, that God could have kind thoughts and intentions of mercies towards him. All that he feels is condemnation, just condemnation because he has hated the light, neither has the heart received these things, conceived them or imagined them. If any one were to say to such a person, under strong conviction of sin, now God has set these things that you need, in Christ Jesus for you. He would not believe him, they are so high, and though necessary, they are so good, that they seem to be beyond all the imaginations of such a man. I may be speaking to some, perhaps to some of you young people, who feel your sins, and it may appear to you, to be an impossible thing, that God could have a thought of love and mercy to you.

Well, when I was a young man, I had all that, but I never heard the gospel, but if I had heard it, and anyone had said, now these blessings are yours. I could not have believed them. Death is on the soul, guilt is on the conscience, blindness is on the mind, and the justice of God shuts the sinner up. Oh He is a just God, and I could not expect Him to bless me, yet God has put these things in Christ to give them to sinners. Oh if we sometimes could remember that,

Sinners are high in His esteem,
And sinners highly value Him. (Gadsby's 89 verse 5)

Jesus said "I came not to call the righteous, (that is in their own judgement,) but sinners to repentance." (Mark 2 verse 17). He is now in heaven, for "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."(Acts 5 verse 31).

And this means that you cannot repent of yourself, and that He does not expect repentance from you, that it is not a penny worth to buy grace. You must come as much for repentance, as for pardon, to be delivered from all your sins, and from the hardness of your heart. Eternal life is a blessing, a gospel blessing, forgiveness is a gospel blessing, "I will love them freely." (Hosea 14 verse 4). He does love freely, justification is a blessing, the gift of God and the act of God, on an unjust person. A solemn divine declaration in the conscience, through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, declaring a sinner who is condemned by God's law, and condemned by his own enlightened conscience that he, though deserving hell, is justified freely "from all things, from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13 verse 39).

Exalted "to give repentance," to put repentance into an impenitent sinner. Is it not wonderful, exalted to give it, to work it, to make it known, make it felt, so that a man says, "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." (Psalm 32 verse 5).

Union with the Lord Jesus, an eternal union, is a blessing bestowed, one with Jesus, "I in them." (John 17 verse 23). Oh what a blessing, how is He in His people by life? "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life." (John 10 verse 27 & 28). By His presence, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love," (Ephesians 3 verse 17), may grow up unto Him in all things.

Likeness to Christ also, a blessing stored up in Him. What is likeness to Christ? Holiness. we know not what we shall be. Oh poor mourning sinners, who look at their deformity, their sins, and say, nothing can be more ugly, nothing more deformed than myself, and yet the image of Christ is a designed blessing, a given blessing, and that says this, that a sinner cannot make himself like Christ. Do you believe it? No sinner can make himself like Christ. How does He become like Him? Created in righteousness and true holiness, "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." (Colossians 3 verse 10).

True happiness is a blessing in Christ, happiness has contentment in it, it has peace in it, it has lowliness in it. The man is not stretching after the world when God is with him, he is content if God should bestow a smile upon him.

Toplady sings,

Happiness, thou lovely name,
Where's thy seat, O tell me, where ?
Learning, pleasure, wealth, and fame,
All cry out, "it is not hear,"

And where is it?

Object of my first desire,
Jesus, crucified for me;
All to happiness aspire,
Only to be found in Thee. (Gadsby's 988 verses 1 & 3).

And no eye of man sees these things, heaven is in Christ, stored up, given to Him, so that when He was about to leave His people, He said, "I will see you again." (John 16 verse 22). and "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14 verse 3). And that is the blessed destiny of the church, to be where the Lord is and to be everlastingly contented, and satisfied. "For the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of waters: (and they shall not thirst any more) and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (Revelation 7 verse 17). No heat shall strike them, no hunger shall consume them, and God hath prepared them, distinctly, lovingly, wisely, and powerfully prepared them. Given them all in the covenant of grace to His beloved Son, them that love Him. Why sometimes a saint, if he had thousands of gold and silver, would part with them for a sense of that love.

Are there no signs that can be given of love to Christ, to God in Him? I believe there are, one is faith, of which I spoke this morning. Faith that persuades the mind, a persuasion that says there is a God, and that God is a God of love. A persuasion that Jesus Christ has all the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwelling in Him. "For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Colossians 2 verse 9). And there is grace in Him, forgiveness in Him, mercy in Him, salvation in Him, and what is the effect? The effect is this, that the believer goes to the throne of grace, and asks for those things which he believes exist. He believes they exist and he goes to God for them, and sometimes he can say, with all the saints of the Most High. None but Jesus, none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good. And that is a lifelong feeling with the saints, a feeling that grows in their hearts, as they grow in a sense of their sinfulness. So this feeling again and again strengthens them by the Holy Ghost. That Christ can do whatever they need, and supply all their wants.

There is real hunger in true love, if you have an object of love, naturally you can never be content without that object. You can never be happy without it, the permanent lack of that object will be a kind of death to you. And if you fear God, you will have that hunger, it is there sometimes in the night and it is there when you awake, Oh what longings you will feel for the Lord Jesus to come. And when you are in trouble about your soul, Oh what longings you feel for the Lord Jesus to take up your case, and when you feel more deeply the corruptions of your nature, what longings you feel that He would come and subdue your iniquities. When you feel your ignorance, what desires you have to be taught of Him, that He would fulfil in you the covenant promise,

They shall all be taught, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children."(Isaiah 54 verse 13). And there is another thing in this love, there is jealousy. There is no love without jealousy, and God's love is a jealous love. "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury."(Zechariah 8 verse 2). And how will love for Christ show that jealousy? If His honour is touched, if His name is blasphemed, if His truth is trampled under foot, it will move your soul at times. Who is so dear to you as Himself? therefore of whom are you so jealous, of whose honour are you so jealous, and what does He say concerning people who love Him? He says this, among many other things, "I love them that love Me; and those that seek Me early shall find Me."(Proverbs 8 verse 17).

Oh may the Lord help us to love Him more, but these things are not to be seen by man, whatever eye he may have, of intellect or speculation, or any other thing, he will never see Christ therewith. How then are these things to be known? They are in heaven, how then are they to be known? Well Paul says, "But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."(1 Corinthians 2 verse 10. This opens up an immense subject, the personality of the Spirit who is God, A Person in the Godhead. One with the Father and the Son, and His searching all things, the deep things of God, sets before us His covenant office. As God, He cannot search into God, He knows God, for God only knows God and knows all of God. God knows all the things of God, the purposes of God, the goodness of God. But the searching, points to the work or office of the Holy Ghost, in the covenant of grace. When Jesus was born, the Spirit was given to Him without measure. He was with Christ through all His afflictions, and that same Holy Spirit, comes into the hearts of the people of God, and brings from God the things He has looked into, and brought from God.

And Christ speaks of this when promising the Spirit, He says, "He shall glorify Me: "for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you,"(John 16 verse 14), this is in the covenant. He receives of the Person of Christ, and of the love of Christ, the death of Christ, and the grace of Christ, and the power of Christ, all things that the Spirit has searched into and reveals to them. Revelation is the opening of, or making known the things of God, especially of Christ, God in Christ. To reveal is to open up and make known something that has hitherto been hidden from your view. And this is what every saint has some acquaintance with, sooner or later. This is real revelation, a vision given of the Person of Christ, and of the death of Christ. What that death was, and what that death effected, and what that death means to the Church of the living God. The Holy Ghost open up spiritual views of the living God, He is acquainted fully with the whole aspect of this truth, which here He is said to search. He is a part of the Trinity and knows everything concerning the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit.

Among other things, this word says, that you can only know them as the Spirit reveals them. It is not a matter of acquisition but the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ is only known by revelation. We are dependant, we are receivers if we are Christians, and receive only that which God gives. Now this is very humbling and mortifying to pride. The Pharisees said to Christ, "are we blind also?"(John 9 verse 40). As much as to say, do not we know? One may say, can I not take the roll of the law, and read it? Of course he could, but that did not mean that he would understand it. You can take the Bible and read it, God grant that you do this, and become acquainted with it, but do not think that this will mean that you understand it. You must have a teacher, well, you may say we have a teacher in the minister we hear. That is good as far as it goes, and if God should use him to instruct you, that will prove to be God's revelation. But the infallible teacher, the teacher whose unction brings the truth as a living word into your soul, even if only a glimpse or flash as it were, will make such an impression on your soul, that will never be erased. Forget it you may sometimes, but erased it cannot be, because it is revealed. Oh then says the sinner, when something is shown to him, I owe this to the Lord. Every little bit of spiritual knowledge that a sinner has, he owes to God, because he received it from God. "And they shall nor teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." (Hebrews 8 verse 11). O concerned sinner, go on asking the Lord to reveal these things unto you. It is His province, it is His business, it is His work to reveal the things of God. "God has revealed them unto us".

These Corinthians, what were they? idolaters, licentious people, but what were they made? They were made Christians, and who made them Christian? It was God. What did they know? They knew the Lord Jesus Christ, and they knew Him by the teaching of His Good Spirit. And so that is how we must be made Christians, if we are Christians, and that is how we must know God, if we ever do know Him. It is a very encouraging religion as I see it, and try to preach it. It says to a sinner, there is nothing in you that can be a bar, nothing in you that can hinder God's mercy, nothing in you that can hinder the blessing of the gospel, nothing in you that can keep you out of heaven. Because, Christ makes sinners fit for heaven, He makes them righteous and makes them whole. He makes them godly and causes them to walk in the truth, He answers their prayers, visits them with His love, He shows them Himself, so there is nothing in the creature that can properly be a discouragement, for Christ is above all.

May this be useful to us, remember that the world in the Apostle's day knew not Christ, and especially the religious world, and it is exactly the same today. The profane world know nothing about Him, the religious world is full of Him and yet He is not with them. "For had they known it, (Him) they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory." (1 Corinthians 2 verse 8). And if today men knew Him, they would not say the things of Him which they do. They would not deny His divinity, they would not deny His precious vicarious death, they would not deny his justifying righteousness, nor deny the Holy Spirits work. But there is a people known to God, a people taught of God, to whom the Holy Spirit reveals the things of God. He brings them with light, life and unction, so that each one can say, and does say for himself in some measure, I know. And each one desires to say, before he leaves this world, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." (2 Timothy 1 verse 12).

O there may perhaps be some here who are feeling, would that we could say as much as that, God can give it to you. "How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke 11 verse 13). May the Lord give faith to ask Him. Do not despair poor sinner concerned about your soul, do not despair because you feel so distant from Him, look to Him. He says, "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." (Isaiah 54 verse 13).

Amen