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Sermon Preached at Galeed Chapel Brighton by Mr J.K. Popham on  
Sunday evening 25th May 1935

Text 1 John 5 verse 6.

*This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ: not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.*

This morning we saw Christ sent, given, not spared, given by His Father, sent by His Father, not withheld, not spared from justice and punishment by His Father. A wonderful sight if it be given to us, that God's glory, should be God's servant, that His only begotten Son, should be His best, highest servant, to do the will of God in redeeming His people. He was given by the love of God. "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." (John 3 verse 16). Here in this text we have the same Person, The Son of God, coming. This is He that came to show us, it may be, that Christ has equal authority with His Father. He came, not forced, but voluntarily, of His own free sovereign will, and love. He came into this world, the Apostle Paul says of Him - "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." (2 Corinthians 8 verse 9). He left His throne, He came into the lower parts of the earth. "Now that He that ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?" (Ephesians 4 verse 9). This is the Son of God coming to be incarnate, made of a woman, made under the law. He came to manifest His love. The Apostle speaking of his own experience says, "Who loved me." (Galations 2 verse 20). That is the wonder that every child of God feels, when the love of God is manifested to him.

He loved me, and that brought Him down. That caused Him to answer to this word "This is He that came". He came to do a work, the work which my Father gave Me to do, I do. That work was to redeem from death and hell, the men His Father gave Him. "The men which thou gavest Me," (John 17 verse 6). He said, to them I have given Thy word. If we have the word of Christ, that is an evidence that God gave us to His Son. O what a mercy to have been given by God to Jesus Christ to be redeemed by Him. And the thing He came for will be accomplished. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." (Isaiah 42 verse 4). The works His Father gave Him to do He will accomplish. He said to His Father

"I have finished the work, which Thou gavest me to do," (John 17 verse 4). It was to make an end of sin. Think of it - Sin born in Eden. That blessed God, sin growing in every individual person of the human race, growing in you, and me, and The Son of God Incarnate came to destroy it, to make an end of it. To bring in everlasting righteousness. This is He, of whom it was written, a blessed type. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." (John 3 verse 14). Rear it high as Hart says:

Reared it high, that all might view it;  
Bid the bitten look up to it;  
Life attended every look. (876 verse 3 Gadsby's)

This is He of whom the Father said "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; Hear ye Him." (Matthew 17 verse 5). God will have men honour His Son, even as they honour Himself. If we never honour Christ by faith, it is an evidence, grievous indeed that we do not know Him. For all who know Him, see and know Him to be the very Son of God, and they honour Him. This is He who was lifted up from the earth "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me." (John 12 verse 32). O the attraction of Christ is so great, that whenever the eye of faith sees Him, of necessity, sweet necessity, faith runs to Him. "If I be lifted up from the earth" "signifying what death He should die." (John 12 verse 33). And He is lifted up in the Bible. Yes dear friends, this book lifts up Jesus Christ. In the third chapter of Genesis He is lifted up. The seed of the woman is lifted up, and from that verse to the end of Revelation the whole scripture bears witness to Him that He is the Son of God. That He is the man of God's right hand, and He is to be seen, so that all who see Him, shall look on Him as one pierced by them, and mourned for as an only son. This is He who came from heaven, to return to heaven, so He said "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." (John 16 verse 28). When He had done His work, when He was raised from the dead. Then after forty days He returned to His Father. And there He is, sitting at the right hand of God, "From henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool." (Hebrews 10 verse 13). God grant that we may not be His enemies. O dreadful if you are to be an enemy of Christ, because, when that great day comes He will put His feet upon you. Next we have the manner of His coming, that is to say, His death. The manner of His death. "This is He that came by water and blood." "You remember that John in his gospel relates this. The scripture had foretold that "not a bone of Him should be broken." (Psalm 34 verse 20). And when the legs of the thieves, crucified with Him were broken, they went to Christ, they

found He was dead already. The reason for breaking the legs of the thieves was that the passover day was at hand, and they could not allow these men, hanged on the cross to remain there, so they accelerated the deaths of these two men, by breaking their legs. When they came to Christ to accelerate His death, they found that He was dead already. He died a voluntary death, he fulfilled that scripture. It was literally fulfilled in Him. Not a bone of Him shall be broken, so they needed not to break His legs, but a Roman soldier, the motive God knows, pierced His side. As if he should say, I will make sure that he is dead, he pierced His side, and John said "and forthwith came there out blood and water."

This is true, it was intended to be a symbol of that wondrous work of grace in the church, in every individual member of it. Namely sanctification and justification. Thus are the two doctrines involved in the flowing from the wounded side of Christ water and blood. And these two doctrines I will draw your attention to briefly as enabled. First of all there is the water to be noticed. This answers to the promise made by God, by the prophet Ezekiel. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you." (Ezekiel 36 verse 25). That is what in the gospel is called "the washing of regeneration." (Titus 3 verse 5). Of that Christ speaks in the gospel of John, when washing the disciples feet He came to Peter, and impetuous Peter, forward Peter, said to Christ, "Thou shalt never wash my feet", and Christ said to him "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me". That was more than Peter could stand, so he said "Lord not my feet only, but also my hands and my head" and now Christ spoke to him thus. "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet." (John 13 verses 6 -10). He that is washed in the washing of regeneration, on whom the clean water has been sprinkled needs no more washing of that kind. Regeneration is done. One wondrous act of God. The clear work of the Holy Spirit in begetting the sinner again unto God.

Washing his feet means cleansing him from his daily defilement. This is the water, clean regeneration. The Apostle by inspiration, said to Titus - But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done". How then ? "but according to His mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration." (Titus 3 verses 4,5). That is the beginning of vital religion. That is the beginning of strife, conflict and trouble. That is the beginning of the fear of God in a sinner. That is the turning of a sinner away from the world, with his face Godward. That is the beginning of faith in the soul. Let us pause here, for a minute, and ask ourselves an honest question. Have we reason to believe that washing of regeneration, sprinkling of clean water upon us has taken place ? If it has there came a

change, which though we may not be able to say, when it came, or by what means it was accomplished, it is an act of God that will bear fruit to eternal blessedness. O the mercy of being born again, the mercy of having a religion that was not born with our birth, but was granted to us by the Holy Ghost. That divine Spirit has His work in the church, and that work is to beget anew all the people of God by that sprinkling, washing you in the sprinkling. There is an allusion to when it is made, in the New Testament, to the sprinkling of almost all things under the law. (Hebrews 9 verses 21,22). The altar was sprinkled with blood, and when a leper was to be cleansed, then blood was shed, and clean water with hyssop was sprinkled on the man. (Leviticus 14 verse 7). Everything or nearly everything, Moses says was sprinkled. Passover blood was sprinkled on the door posts and lintels of the doors, of the Israelites in Egypt. This blessed sprinkling is a wonderful mercy. He is a favoured man, who has this water sprinkled on him. That is the first thing in the text.

The second is the blood, and the Holy Ghost by Paul tells us that we are "justified by His blood," (Romans 5 verse 9), which means every sin is removed from the sinner by the blood of Christ. So that he is a just person in the sight of God. Justification takes place in two places, first in the court of God, there infinite satisfaction was rendered to God, the law was content. Justice was satisfied, holiness was pleased, so that there will never be, really a bar between God, and a justified person. Whatever there may be in experience, and there is very much, between God and that person, there is no bar, no quarrel, no contention, no accusation, nothing blameworthy. O the wonder of the blood of Christ, the wonders that it accomplishes in the soul, when every sin, and every spot, and every wrinkle is removed by the blood.

Now it comes to experience, for if there is no experience of doctrine, there is no religion. No vital union with Christ. Come then to experience, and first is there guilt. is guilt felt, is it a burden ? How many of you really, as in the sight of God, have felt, or may be feeling now the burden of guilt, a wicked thought, unbelief, any evil in your heart done by you ? If you really are tender in the fear of God, it will bring guilt, and you will feel it, and that will be as a bar between you and God. A very solemn experience, a very painful experience, no form of religion, no naked knowledge of doctrine can assuage, the grief a sinner feels, when he has guilt on his conscience. I speak to some, who know what I say. You have felt it. have you not. Now what could relieve ? what did relieve you ? You come to this, the blood of Jesus Christ cleansed you. And you felt solemnly and sweetly, that God's smile was on you, instead of His frown.

And that you had access to God, such as you never had before, though often you prayed and wept and mourned and fasted and got near Him, yet never before had you this experience. That is what is called experimental justification.

Blessed faith that God gives, lays hold of this doctrine and brings it in, it is a new life, sweet life in the soul. This is He that came by water, to cleanse you by blood, to justify you, so that now, the case with you is, this, without blame. without blemish, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. That is the condition, the state of a sinner who is cleansed and justified by the blood of Christ. And then in the next place, the Apostle says "It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." In the account John gives, he says He that bears witness of this knows He is speaking the truth. Here the Holy Ghost is said to be a witness to that which has gone before. Now there are two places in which the witness of the Spirit is found. First in the Holy Scripture. This book, this book inspired by the Holy Ghost bears infallible witness to the death of Jesus. He died a real death. It was a true, a visible blessed truth, that from the pierced side of the Saviour, water and blood flowed. And the witness of the Spirit, in the scripture is to that. It is no lie, no fancy, no figment of the brain, but a physical truth. Bearing an eternal significance, a blessed symbol. The Spirit itself beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. Every word He utters, every line of the scriptures written by His amanuenses is true. No other book in the world is infallible. This one alone stands infallible, God that cannot lie, has borne witness to this truth, that Jesus Christ died on the cross. That a Roman soldier pierced His sacred side and from that, water and blood flowed. The Spirit bears witness.

When you read of the death of Jesus, you read a truth, you may not see any beauty in it. You may only see shame and ignominy, because there was shame among men, in the death of Christ. Ignominy attended that death, curse attended it, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Galatians 3 verse 13). But though you may see no beauty in it, nor in Him, it is true. And I entreat dear hearers, as readers of your Bibles, hold this fast, that The Spirit of God has borne witness in these sacred pages, to the truth, the reality, of the death of Jesus Christ, that from His side flowed water and blood. But then to you, who never may see any beauty in that, this form of sound words has no saving effect in you. It does not bring you near to God. It does not humble you, it does not melt you into contrition. It does not raise you up, into happiness divine. You read it, you may believe it, you may doubt it, but you have no benefit by it, no saving health comes to you by it.

The second place, in which this witness of the Spirit is in the heart of a saint's conscience, the understanding of a sinner receives this witness, as the Apostle says it should, at the close of this chapter. "And we know that the Son of God is come". The Apostle Paul, writing to the Galatians says "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you?". They saw Him by faith, they had the witness of the Spirit in their consciences, and the Apostle exhorts them to "Stand fast therefore in that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." (Galatians 5 verse 1). Now my friends let us come to our cases. Did we ever see this precious Christ? Ever hear the witness of the Spirit, concerning Him in our hearts? There are two ways in which the Spirit's witness is known by the people of God. The first is this, when a convinced, distressed, burdened sinner gets a sight, distant it may be, very distant, but a true sight of the atonement, of the worth, the value, the blessedness of the death of Christ. O says, his poor sinking, troubled heart, there is room, there is ground for hope, and the sight stirs him up greatly. He feels he cannot rest, until he knows that precious blood, and that pure water were shed for him. Some of you know well what I mean, you can never perhaps forget, the first ray, or moment, when you saw by faith, the precious blood of Christ.

When you see how black and foul though, you were, in your feelings, you could be made clean, and just by the water and blood of Christ. That is a great blessing. That fixes the heart, that brings something of the psalmist's experience into the soul. "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed." (Psalm 57 verse 7). Fixed there, and if you ever speak of it, you say, I found my soul fixed there. My ear was bored to the door post there. My heart was fixed on Christ there, and there and then, I felt love I must, in fear, unless I was forgiven. Die I could not comfortably unless forgiven, and my eye was fixed on that only remedy, the Lord Jesus and His precious death, Now that is of great value to any of you who have it, I would say, hold it as fast as you can. Pray about it, go to God about it, ask Him to bless you, do not give up, do not give up praying about it. Do not cease asking the Lord to apply to you that precious atonement, that you had a sight of, that raised you to a hope. Tis a great blessing. Now the second way is when you get it, when it comes, and when you know what Peter speaks of "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers. But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Peter 1 verses 18,19). My dear brethren, who have known this, you know then, what this word is "It is the Spirit that beareth

witness, because the Spirit is truth" - "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater". If your friends say, O we can see grace in you. If they say we are certain, you are in the right path. If they say, you will be sure to get it one day, you may say, you do not know me. You may say secretly, I am afraid they are deceived in me, you may even begin to think, what have I said to them, to make them think well of me. I went through that as a young man myself. I know well what it is, but when you get that witness of God in your conscience, when you feel that there is no sin left on the conscience from that moment. Then it is, that the witness is in you, and you can say "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine."(Song of Solomon 6 verse 3). Now perhaps some of you are saying, we wish we could get that. Go to God, He can give it you. You say we are too ignorant, you are not. You say we are too black, you are not. You say we are too filthy, you are not.

Come needy, come guilty, come loathsome and bare,  
You cant come too filthy; Come just as you are.  
(155 verse 7 Gadsby's)

Now that is the gospel. "This is He that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." May the Lord bring this blessed gospel into our hearts.

Amen.