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Sermon Preached at Galeed Chapel Brighton by Mr J.K. Popham on  
Sunday evening, 27th March 1921

*Text: 1 Peter. 1 verse 21*

*Who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and  
gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God*

The Person of Christ is set before us in this verse, the Person of Christ under two or three particular considerations, first as the one by whom the Lord's people believe in God. Of this we took notice this morning. He is the perfect representative of God, He is the brightness of His Father's glory, and the express image of His person. And to one who asked to have the Father shown to him, and his fellow disciples, Christ said "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father;" also. John 14 verse 9. Whatever is communicable is in Christ, for the purpose of its being communicated, the love of God, the compassion, the goodness, and the vision of God, Christ has, and has it to give away, to give, that is to say, to His people. And all the rays of God's glory, that created eyes are to see in bliss, shall be seen in Christ. And all the judgement of God, upon the wicked, shall be pronounced by Christ, for He is that Man, by whom God will judge the world.

See then if you have faith in God through the Mediator, the only Mediator, the way, the truth and the life. You may have a very good faith in God as the Creator. You may have a very good faith in a God of Providence, but as I remarked this morning. The faith of God as a Creator is beautiful, and the worship that Adam rendered to God, as his Creator, and the Creator of all that he had about him, was beautiful and proper, because he Adam was an innocent man. Though we may have a similar faith, faith in the Creator seeing His invisible things clearly, understanding them by the things that are made, even His eternal power and God-head, it is short, because we are sinners. And there must be more than natural religion, beautiful as it is. O that England were filled with it, O that you young people, if you have not grace, may have such a religion as that. That will keep you from the terrible infidelity of the land, and gather your heart, as a natural heart to God. But do listen to me, while I say to you affectionately, and honestly, if you never have a better faith, seeing you are sinners, you wont reach heaven.

But this faith in God by Jesus Christ, is a different thing. It is called the faith of God's operation. It is called into being, not by beholding the wonders of creation, not by admiring the arrangement of providence, but by the immediate work of the Holy Ghost, in the heart.

And God is bearable in His justice, in His goodness, in His love, as He is seen in those perfections, in His beloved Son Incarnate. No man could live in the presence of unveiled deity. He must be veiled, and thanks be to God that He has veiled Himself to bearableness, to mildness, to attraction, in the person of the Lord Jesus.

We have Christ in the next place, in the text under consideration, of dying. He was raised from the dead, but He died, He died a voluntary death. He poured out His soul unto death. He was numbered with the transgressors. He yielded up the Ghost, He dismissed His Spirit, when He had done His work. "Which Thou gavest me to do" John 17 verse 4. It was a great work, a work of redemption, a work of ransoming prisoners, paying the debts of debtors, doing the duties of people, who were full of dereliction of duties. It was a life lived for others, and a death endured for others, a vicarious, efficacious death, that says, in the life of all for whom it was endured, a great consideration this, Christ was a conqueror in dying. Christ as God, "purchased (the church) with His own blood." Acts 20 verse 28. On the cross God was conquering the Devil, destroying death, and him that had the power of death. And all this great work was done, to effectively terminate guilt in the consciences of all His people.

The work was not for Himself, and the finishing of it was not the end, with Himself. His going to glory after His suffering, was not for Himself alone. He was not to be there alone. God saw Adam in Eden alone, and said "It is not good that man should be alone;" Genesis 2 verse 18. It was not good in God's sight, that there should be only one man in heaven, the Man Christ Jesus. He must have a wife, He must purchase her, yea, the cost should be His own life. He must justify her. The righteousness should be soon given to her, the clean white linen, which as in the book of Revelation, we are told "is the righteousness of saints." Revelation 19 verse 8. He must fit her, He must make her holy with His own holiness, He must bring her up with His own gladness, ("With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought" Psalm 45 verse 15) He must fill her out of His own fullness, and to do all this, He must needs die. It was a death that love dictated, a death that justice demanded, a death that His Father commanded, to die a death that should bear fruit, as when the corn of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it bears much fruit. Keep the corn in your sample bag, and it will be alone. Put it into the ground, it will then bear fruit, an hundred fold. Jesus Christ died, is His death our life ? Has the Spirit brought eternal life for us ? Do we know God, I want to ask you, if you love Him, - that is too common, it is deceiving, it may be imagined,. I ask if you know Him, for if you do, I know you love Him.

You could not know God, and not love Him, as He is seen here. "Who by Him do believe in God." You who know that He was freely ordained, before the foundation of the world, "but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by Him do believe in God." 1 Peter 1 verses 20 & 21. Faith is as Luther says "is a knowledge", and as Hart says

Faith is by knowledge fed, (Gadsby's 235 verse 3.)

Knowledge of what earthly things know, of whom God, God in Christ, as Paul says in the 2 Corinthians 5 verse 19 "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself," what a mercy that this knowledge of God asks for no intellectual power. It comes into an empty soul, it illuminates a darkened understanding, the intellect may beat it out, into expression of what is put in, by the Holy Ghost, that is all its use. Men receive passively what God gives them, then they actually express it. This does not comport with our pride, but it is strictly according to scripture. If ever we know God, we shall know Him by revelation. The knowledge of God is not a matter of acquisition, but impartation, and when that knowledge is imparted it is fruitful, it begets worship and reverence. faith, hope, love, and adoration.

Where your reason cannot go, faith sets boldly forth, and looks into the things of God. The death of Christ is fruitful in all this, if you know Christ crucified, you know who God is, and what God is in some measure, and you love Him. You cleave to Him and worship Him, and hope in Him, and follow Him. And you are brought, sooner or later, to that judgement of the Apostle, where he says "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." 2 Corinthians 5 verses 14 & 15. Is Christ's death your life? Is He your hope? Is He the door of access to the Father for you? Do you get near the Father in Him?

Here is liberty, here is liberty for a sinner, here is the way Christ gets the glory of sinners, the glory of beggars, the glory of people on the dung hill, who are to sit with Him as Princes, even the Princes of His people. Here is the way the light of God comes into the understanding, illuminating it. Here is the way sinners are reconciled unto God, they receive by Jesus Christ, the atonement, they receive mercy, mercy day by day. Some communication, some touch, or a preserving of grace, in an hour of trouble, they receive by the death of Christ. And then in the next place, Christ is in the text, under the consideration of His resurrection from the dead.

"Who by Him do believe in God that raised Him from the dead". A great doctrine this, the key-stone to the arch of the building of Godliness, of Christianity, the resurrection of Christ was the testation both of His Sonship and of the satisfaction that, He the Redeemer had rendered to God. His resurrection declared or manifested, did not make, but manifested Him to be the Son of God, and it declared the Father's infinite satisfaction with Him in His great work. And declared that all that the Father had demanded, had been rendered, the obedience and the payment, and the death had been rendered. Christ was buried, it may be mentioned, we ought to mention it, because the Spirit of God does in that beautiful summary of doctrine, that you have in the 15th Chapter of the first book of Corinthians. verses 3 & 4. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures:" and if you keep this in memory, says Paul in verse 2 "By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you".

Raised Him from the dead, according to the Father's word to Him, that His soul should not be left in hell, neither should He see corruption. (Psalm 16 verse 10). Christ was laid in a new grave. There had been no dead body there, and He left no corruption, He saw none, He left none. He left a long perfume for His saints, a long perfume for you, who die, in Him raised from the dead. He died unto sin a poor broken hearted Man, He had lived, labouring and sweating blood and dying for His people. Sin broke His guiltless heart, the sin was imputed to Him, and He died, but now that Holy Person, inherently holy, not only holy in His life and in His death. He inherently saw no corruption. How could He ? Corruption can only come where sin is. We die because we are sinners. Such and such a disease may take our life away, but sin is behind, and at the root of it. Although we die of necessity, Christ died voluntarily. He had no sin, and therefore if He had not voluntarily died for His children, He could not have died. But He did die a voluntary death, a vicarious death, and He rose again just as He had been pure, in the grave, as when He came forth from the grave. He was pure and the testimony to this in the scripture is sufficient. He showed Himself alive to His disciples, and many others, by "many infallible proofs." Acts 1 verse 3. And blessed be God, these proofs are given us in the scriptures.

And then again in the next place, God "gave Him glory". He had given Him stripes, He had laid stripes on Him, He had wounded Him, as with the wound of an enemy (Jeremiah 30 verse 14). He had withdrawn the light of His countenance from His beloved Son.

And inflicted thereby upon His Son the greatest sorrow that could be felt by Him, the most dolorous cry that came from the heart of Jesus Christ was that which was bourn of His Father's desertion of Him. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ?" Psalm 22 verse 1. And now after all this , His Father gave Him glory. What is this glory ? The glory of justification in the Spirit, justification in the Spirit manifested, that is to say having done fully, absolutely, the work His Father gave Him to do, and the glory of that conquest, thus obtained on the cross, was now fully given to Him.

Death could not hold Him, nor was the world to hold Him, after so many days He was to ascend into heaven, and to take His place on His father's throne, "exalted.... to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5 verse 31. And the glory of universal rule and sovereignty in the world over men, over providential things and over devils. He sits a mighty conqueror. So poor sinner, do you feel afraid with this, do you feel pleased, that the ever blessed Lord Jesus Christ is in heaven, seated on His throne ? That there He went leading "captivity captive: and receiving "gifts for men" Psalm 68 verse 18. That He had the Holy Spirit to dispense, that He has providence to manage, that He rules Kings, that princes and Kings reign by Him, that all things are just as He will have them. That the confessions of men, and the honours of the world are under His control, and that your matters, however small, yet great to you, because they are yours, that these are under His control also. That poverty comes, and riches come, and afflictions come not forth from the dust, but from the hand of Him, in whose hand there is a cup full of mixture.

Do you feel pleased with it ? O what a Christ we have. Our Christ is God, our Christ is God over all, a lamb as it had been slain, was able to approach the ancient of days, the infinite God and take that book of mysteries out of the hand of His Father, and break the seals and open the book, and look in it. (Revelation chapter 5) Oh whose eyes but Christ's could look in that book. Whose hand but Christ's could undertake the work of governing the world. Who but Christ is worthy of the adoration of Angels. Who but Christ is now worthy to send them forth and make them ministering spirits to His children. (Hebrew 1 verse 14.)

God gave Him glory, and does He keep this glory, and does He keep this glory to Himself, no. He gives, as it may seem good to Him, He gives to His children, that is to say, what He is in His authority, He reigns over them in it. What He has in His fulness, He has for them, to impart to them, and they get near Him. He gets glory of them, in their approaches to Him. They bring Him their hearts, He takes them and rules over them.

They bring Him their cares, He sanctifies them, their wants and He supplies them, their weakness, and He puts strength into them. They bring their death, and their bondage, and their uncleanness, their sins, they bring all these to Him. And He forgives them, and cleanses them, and they bring their temptations, and He rules and rebukes the Devil, so that he flees from them. They bring their darkness, and He nourishes them. O they bring themselves.

Now it is by this man, that we who have true faith, "believe in God". "Who by Him do believe in God". Let us look a little as helped at this great thing, what we believe, when we believe in God. I will speak just a few things, which, if I may say to express myself are practical. That is, comes within the reach of the faith of poor sinners, and are suitable to them. They believe, first of all, as I did mention this morning, in the love of God. God the Father, expressed His love to His people, in the gift to them of His only begotten Son. A greater gift than this He cannot bestow, He has not a greater He can give. Nothing greater than this, for Christ is as Himself, Christ is God, and God gave His only begotten Son, His eternal Son that His people might live through Him. And love comes to sinners, it comes into their hearts, and it is to terminate there. It dwelleth there, there it works, it melts a stone, it warms icy hearts. It gathers wanderers, it brings beggars to the footstool of mercy.

Love does wonders, O love divine, might we not say it

O love divine, how sweet though art !  
When shall I find my willing heart  
All taken up by Thee ? (Gadsby's 249 verse 1) .

Love manages things. If justice managed things for us, O it were ruin, but love manages them, tis life, you will get good out of your cross poor sinner, as love is sent to you. You will carry your burden to your own profit, as love is with you. You will walk in the midst of perplexity, with wisdom, as love is with you. Love will carry you, love will comfort you, sustain you, help you, bring you honourably through, give you wings to fly at God's word, give you a heart to submit to God's dealings. Love will give you zeal in seeking God, humility in waiting for God, the sacrifice of praise to bring you to God. The love of God is an amazing love. He who has felt a little of it, has felt a little of heaven. And you cannot believe God and never love Him, for as I said, faith is a knowledge, if it is fed by knowledge, then you know God as believers, and if you know Him, you love Him. O the beauty of God in Christ, how great is His beauty, the beauty of free love, love that was not deterred from fixing on a sinner, love that would take hold of a sinner.

Love that came to a sinner loathsome and dead. O the beauty of love that arrests a sinner, that says to a sinner live. The beauty of love that bears with us, that does not leave us. The beauty of love that comes again and again, and delivers all who are its objects.

In the covenant of grace God has promised to be the God of His people, and they believe in Him as their God. One word of Christ's sent to His disciples after His resurrection, you remember, was given - Say to My disciples "I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God." John 20 verse 17. God was the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, as our Lord Jesus Christ, He is that, and so that relationship is extended to His brethren. "I ascend unto My God and your God". In the covenant the Lord God speaks to His Son Jesus Christ, "And as for Me, this is My covenant.., saith the Lord; My Spirit that is upon Thee, and My words which I have put in Thy mouth, shall not depart out of Thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of Thy seeds seed, saith the Lord,henceforth and for ever." Isaiah 59 verse 21. And if you have the Spirit of the Son in your heart, one day you will say "Aba Father" My God, My God.

The other word that Christ sent to His disciples, was that I have just named "That I ascend unto My Father, and your Father;" And if you believe in God, in Jesus Christ, you will believe sooner or later, to your great comfort, that the Father of Jesus Christ is your Father. And pray after the manner that Christ directed, in the scriptures. "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name." Matthew 6 verse 9. You will pray like that, one may say I dare not, but you wont be able to avoid it, to refrain from saying it, when the Spirit of adoption is crying in your heart, when the holy, humbling, sweet, sweetest of all sweet sensations fills your breast. When the blessed overcoming feeling in your heart is, I have a Father in heaven, then you will say "My Father, My Father". And what does a father do for his children ? Everything that his heart can dictate, and is this true of God ? O yes, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him". Psalm 103 verse 13. Pities all their griefs, sends quick relief to them. Helps them, comforts them, and will never forsake them. Mercifully our backslidings, which are many alas, cannot change alter or destroy this relationship. The prodigal had that name given to him for his riotous living and base conduct, but the end of it was, as the beginning "This my son was dead" Luke 15 verse 24. You will smart for your sins. O Christian, O child of God, the rod will make your back smart. The stocks will hold your silly wandering feet, but the relationship will be brought to light again, again, and again. "My son". "This my son".

You will be educated by your Father, He will send you to school, He will be determined with you. You may think to leave the school, you may play truant, you may think you will not, you cannot submit to this lesson, you will not learn them, it is too hard, too difficult, too mortifying, but God will be determined with you, He will keep you at it. You must learn sin, its bitterness, grace and its sweetness and its inhibitions, grace and all its movements in your soul, this you must learn. "Little by little, precept upon precept; line upon line," (Isaiah 28 verse 10). you must learn. "Whom shall He teach (doctrine) knowledge ? and whom shall He make to understand (wisdom) doctrine ?" Isaiah 28 verse 9. God's own children, "who by Him do believe in God", the promiser of Christ to help Him, and he did help Him in his necessity. The Lord Jesus prayed and God helped Him, "For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded:" , "He is near that justifieth Me." Isaiah 50 verse 7 & 8. He sent strong cries and tears "out of the low dungeon" (Lamentations 3 verse 55). of His sorrow. He cried unto His Father "with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared" Hebrews 5 verse 7. And you and myself, as we are children of the living God must cry, and we shall have need, need of God, need of the Father's compassion, and of His mercy, and of His fulness, and of His faithfulness, and of His power. And these strong cries given by the Spirit, to him, will be heard, and relief will be sent.

O but I am a backslider, yes said the Lord "Is Ephraim My dear son? is he a pleasant child ? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 31 verse 20. And so it is today, but I am dark and in the wilderness, says the Lord "I will allure her and bring her into the wilderness," (what for ? why to supply her, Why to) "give her vineyards from thence" (Hosea 2 verses 14 & 15.) and there to make her sing. "Who by Him" , by Jesus the man of sorrows while sojourning here. Jesus the Almighty God. Here though little known to be God, there acclaimed by angels and worshiped, and all the spirits of just men made perfect surrounding Him, and adoring Him. Almighty God, Jesus. He was a man of sorrows. He went into the wilderness, and there He got a victory, and there you will do the same. You will go into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil. Learn your own wicked heart, in some of its ways, bad ways. Learn the power of Satan over you, and learn that you could not resist him successfully. Then you will find the help of God, you will find the help of God "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord will pity you" in the wilderness. And send help from the sanctuary, and strengthen you.

And lastly and briefly the end of all this, "that your faith and hope might be in God." 1 Peter 1 verse 21. God is the ultimate end of the faith and hope of the Lord's people. They receive the end of their faith, which is the salvation of their souls. There is something more to look for than a deliverance, here out of this trouble, and out of that. Something more to expect than the consolations of God here, though they are neither small nor few, something more to look for than the incoming of the Spirit, and the promises, and the getting near the Lord, and the comfort of the gospel. Something more to look for. These are very great, but there is something beyond them, the enjoyment of God.

This is faith's great and grand object, the ultimate end, the enjoyment of God. Where? In heaven. When the kingdom is completed, when there are no more sinners to gather in, and the great day of assize shall have arrived, and the Judge shall be seated on His throne. And assembled worlds shall be there, on the right hand sheep, and on the left hand goats. When the hope you felt at times, to depend on Him, and expect at times the fulfilment in the soul, of the promise. When that faith shall be honoured, and die, and put death, in an honoured and blessed vision, that shall expire, in a sweet realisation. Then there will be an enjoyment of God. But this is more than eye hath seen. It can only be feebly and faintly traced, what it will be John says "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." 1 John 3 verse 2.

Therefore as people of God, lift up your heads. The day may be long, and the trials many, and the burdens heavy, and the sorrow great, and the grace appear gone. Sin that bitter, that filthy thing will fain darken your sky, and blacken your soul, and depress you. But the day is to come, when you will say farewell time, and better still farewell sin. Welcome heaven, and better than all, welcome the Lord Jesus. And He will say, welcome sinner, welcome child, welcome home.

May the Lord bring us to that place. Amen.