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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel, Brighton
on Sunday morning 26 February 1928

1 PETER 5 v 10/11

"But the God of all grace, who hath called us
unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that
ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish,
strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion for
ever and ever. Amen."

This gracious word follows the text of last Wednesday evening in the 8 and 9 verses "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world", and some of us fail; we are not often sober, not always vigilant, do not resist the devil, rather give place to him, though we are told in the epistle to the Ephesians to give no place to him. We listen to his suggestions, follow many of them, sometimes not suspecting them to be his suggestions. We fail; failing, we become weak, confused, distant, guilty, and if the thing ended there, what would become of us? What would you do, what should I do, if it just stopped there? And if the trend of the Scripture was just in that direction, and stopped there, failing people must despair. But a gracious God has said, in the text of this morning, and throughout holy Scripture, that the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin; that all imperfections are done away in Him; that the Father accepts poor sinners in the Beloved; sees in them nothing blameworthy; speaks to them and tells them that they are all fair and that there is no spot in them; that, having begun a good work in them, He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. And, as if the Spirit should say to Peter, now some of these strangers scattered about, tried in many ways, are not always watchful; some of them have their hearts surfeited and drunken with care, care of this life, and do not leave it just there, naked. Be watchful, be sober, resist the devil; tell them this, that the God of all grace whom they serve - though they serve Him imperfectly - that the God of all grace who began a good

work in them, will see to it that it shall be accomplished in the day of Christ; that the God of all grace will be with them, will not leave them orphans, but will comfort them, will come to them in His Spirit, dwell in them in His Spirit, and help them by His Spirit, even to the end. Thus, viewed generally, the text appears to be full of graciously intended consolation and may that intended consolation be accomplished in every needy, troubled, weak, sinking heart here. The trend of the Scripture is in this direction. "Say unto the feeble, be strong". "Let the feeble say, I am strong". The feeble shall be as David and the house of David shall be as God. (Zechariah 12 v 8) Speak comfortably to Jerusalem, cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished. Tell them that, though they are weak in themselves, their Head and their Saviour shall not fail nor be discouraged till He have sent judgment unto victory in the earth; that a bruised reed He will not break nor quench the smoking flax; that He carries the lambs in His bosom; that He is unspeakably tender, always watchful, never intermits His care, His kindness, never fails of His purpose. When, at any particular time, this beautiful trend of the Scripture is seen, though there may not be any special application of any particular word, it has a consoling, a strengthening effect on the heart. It says, Fear not, God will come to you. Fear not, He will come with vengeance against your enemies and punish Leviathan, the dragon that is in the sea, with His great, sore and strong sword. Therefore, fear not; heaven is yours. You may be distant from it in your feelings; you have much in you that will militate against your confidence and beget doubt and fear; still, fear not. It is very wonderful when the faith of God's elect, and His operation in the heart, is strengthened to lay hold of the gospel in its entirety, the gospel as a whole; the beginning in God and the ending in God, as we have it in the epistle to the Romans. "Whom He did foreknow He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son

Moreover whom He did predestinate them He also called, and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified" Now then, may faith in our hearts see this: "What shall we then say to these things?" What shall we say to these things? "If God be for us, who can be against us?" What shall we say to our sins? What shall we say to guilty conscience? What shall we say to faltering minds, wavering, double-minded? What shall we say to the daily failures, the falls, the sad slips? What shall we say to the

darkness we bring on our own souls and the deadness that we often feel? What shall we say? Well, we have to say this, sure the plague of leprosy is in us; we must say it; the plague of leprosy is in us. And what will you say when trouble comes to your body, disease, or something? Then you will have to say, the leprosy is in the house. What then? No hope of any betterment; no hope. And shall we then despair? If the gospel were not what it is we should despair. But the gospel says this: "Having loved His Own which were in the world He loves them unto the end", and saves them in spite of their sins; saves them from a tempting devil; forgives them all their transgressions; blots them out and overcomes their native hypocrisy and blesses them with a spirit in which He finds no guile. Now may the Lord help us to follow this in our thoughts and meditation. We are very apt to take up parts and bits of things and not look at the whole. The whole is beautiful and as the gospel in itself is a whole - and not to be put into parts, though it has branches in itself, as it were - as revealed, so the work of grace. If you look at parts of it, just little bits; look at the feeling of a day; look at the momentary movement of faith; at what you may even call the spasmodic influence of some truth upon your minds; you are apt to say, surely such inconsistencies cannot dwell in a Christian. But take the whole, take for instance this part of the whole, the trend of the spirit; take that. Now here is a poor man in business; sometimes his heart says, O if I were but right with God; O, if the Lord Jesus were known in my heart. He goes to his business and a quantity of things arise to which he must pay proper attention and there is a diversion. His thoughts get diverted, his mind is deflected, so to speak. For the time he becomes eccentric, loses his centre. Now shall he judge just by this little experience, of what he is before God? One says, can a Christian, shall a Christian judge by what he feels within? It is not a good rule of judgment. This is the good rule of judgment. "Having begun a good work in you" - a good work which Satan resists, which indwelling sin opposes at every step - He who has begun that good work will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. And take that in Isaiah, which I mentioned just now. The Lord there says, "He shall not fail". My Servant shall not fail, "neither shall He be discouraged", by what He sees in the people He is saving. "Neither shall He be discouraged; He shall send forth judgment unto victory". And there is this word also: "And they overcame him by the blood of

the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony" (Revelations 12 v 11)
They overcame their discouragements; they overcame their
weaknesses; they rose up in faith, faith that stands in the power of
God; they rose up and overcame and sing again and again

Begone unbelief, My Saviour is near
And for my relief will surely appear

What a favour it is to have real faith. Here then we have a gracious
word, and what I have said, if it may be regarded as an introduction,
take it so.

Now look at this Word. But whatever you may feel or fear "The
God of all grace who has called you unto His eternal glory by Christ
Jesus, after ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish,
strengthen, settle you." An all covering word, as I judge. "The God
of all grace". This is God the Father, the Father of mercies and the
God of all comfort and consolation.

This God is the God we adore
Our faithful, unchangeable Friend,
Whose love is as great as His power
And knows neither measure nor end

Anchor here - The God of grace, in the grace of free, eternal
election. This prevents any person interested in that grace from
killing himself, from that self-destruction which is in the nature of
sin. The whole world is destroying itself; its sin and the devil are
murderers of immortal souls, and we should be with them but for this -
The God of all grace made choice, as we hope and believe, of our
precious souls, and also our poor bodies, in eternity, in His dearly
beloved Son. May the Holy Ghost open the first chapter to the
Ephesians to us. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly
places in Christ..... Having predestinated us unto
the adoption of children by Christ Jesus unto Himself." And like that
chapter, is the first chapter in this epistle: "Elect, according to
the foreknowledge of God the Father". Do not pass by this; God help
us to hold it; grant that it may hold us in our consciences, judgment,

and affections. Now this grace is manifested in the gift of the eternal Son of God to be the Saviour of the Church, which is His body. This is grace; this is grace from God the Father; the grace of God; the God of all grace. All the favour that lost sinners, elected, should need, all the favour they should ever pray to have, all the goodness they could ever receive, and more than they could receive, this God of all grace gave to His Son before the world began. You will never boast, if you are gracious, in yourselves, but come to say with the Psalmist: "My soul shall make her boast in the Lord". This grace, given to Christ, He manifested. He manifested it in that infinite condescension which He made when He left the bosom of His Father, always remaining there, but left the bosom of His Father, to become incarnate. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him". And in the Psalms, the Saviour says: "I will preach righteousness in the great congregation; I have declared Thy Name unto My brethren". This was the grace of God in the Lord Jesus, and this grace the apostle speaks of when he says to the Corinthians: "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"; made rich. And again, to the Corinthians, he says: "God made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him". O, my friends, it is this grace that we shall have to celebrate through eternity. He manifested His grace and the grace given to Him by the Father when He went to the cross and there put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Then it was that God rent the veil of the temple from the top to the bottom, to give a sight of the glory of God and the Ark of the Covenant and the Mercy Seat. Now if you are partakers of grace, it flows from this fountain. Every partaker of grace partakes of the grace that the God of all grace gave to His Son, as Paul speaks 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". That is the grace you are partakers of. What a wonder.

Now grace is very beautifully relative. It relates to a person who does not deserve it. It relates to a person who has sin in him, who loves sin, who commits sin with great pleasure as long as he is

unregenerate, and has sin in him as long as he lives and finds the love of sin, by very painful occasions, working in him. Grace is beautifully relative. It is not an abstract idea; it is a beautiful thing and there are myriads of concrete evidences of it in heaven, and many, many on earth, and some in Galeed now, and very wonderful it is. "When thou wast in thy blood I passed by thee". Now let us look at this. "Who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus". "Hath called us". And this is no less than the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, of which operation some are the happy subjects without knowing it for a time. They are not aware of what has happened to them; what these feelings are; what the change is; why they think about God; why they are concerned about their souls; how it is that eternity is more to them often than time; that their souls are more to them than their bodies; that their standing before God is more important to them than their standing among and before men. They do not know what has happened to them. Some of you may be there, do not know what has happened. There has a change come, a great change. When it came, you could not say. How it came you are unable to determine. But it is a change; there it is; something in your mind that you cannot get rid of, a feeling of sin that burdens you, a feeling about God that terrifies you; judgment, maybe, looming in the distance and you not ready to stand before the judgment seat. Now we have in the Scripture certain clear, indubitable evidences of this calling. You take the world which lieth in wickedness and a poor man of God who does not know that he is a man of God; who, if he had a world and parting with it would assure him of that, he would gladly part with it. He is now separated and therefore separate. He is separated from the world. To be sure, he is in business, he must attend to it, he must be fervent in spirit, and yet also diligent in business, but there is this in his heart, he cannot go with the world as he used to do. It is different to him from what it used to be. He sees it in the light he used not to see it. He sees it condemned and he is condemned also and yet he is different from the world. He is separate from it, being separated by grace. Now that is one thing you will see. "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world". Just take that, examine yourselves by it, those of you who may be uncertain as to your state, your present standing before God. Are you in the world? Yes, physically. Are you in the world? No, in my mind I am not. Its maxims grieve me; what it is doing

pains me; I cannot go with it; I am not of it. "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world".

Now take another thing that is indubitable, cannot be disputed as to the Scripture though you may dispute it about yourself. It is this, "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit". Now put yourself by the side of that. Take the world and your own fallen nature as being the flesh, and the Holy Spirit and His blessed work as being in that passage: "They that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit" Now how do you stand? What is your element? What things do you most care about? The world? Some gain? Some ambition, lawful perhaps in itself, and yet to you, again and again, a plague? Or the things of the Spirit, which are eternity, salvation, sin, ruin, rags, filth, guilt. Salvation, Jesus Christ the Son of God, His precious death putting away sin and the spirit of faith and of prayer, of life, of hope. Are these the things you mind? Perhaps you are like a pair of scales. One day there is such a burden put in one scale, of the world, that you seem to be worldly, and if you are judged by that, well what a poor, worldly thing you feel. Another day spiritual things have such a weight, such a power, such an attraction, such a beauty in your eyes and in your feelings, that you say, vain world begone, I do not want you. Things of time about which I must be conversant, O do not occupy my whole heart and mind. And you kneel before the Lord in your heart while perhaps you are engaged in business and cry out, O save my soul. Yea, you can say, I hunger and thirst after righteousness; I want God, I want Christ. I want to be righteous; I cannot be in myself, nor by what I can do, but I want to be righteous in Him whose Name is "The Lord our Righteousness". Take these two things; now how do you stand? I expect that some of you may be tempted even to question the matter, but I would say to you, now beg of God to keep you from lying against your right. Take a third point in this matter which is very important and beautiful. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life". Not, in the first instance, not he that believeth that the Son died for him, but, he that believeth on the Son of God, that He is the Son of God, the Son of God incarnate, that He fulfilled the law, magnified it, and made it honourable, that He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; that He died and rose again from the dead, and is "ascended on high, having

led captivity captive and received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also that the Lord God might dwell among them". Now I believe you could not put yourself among unbelievers. You may fear, sometimes, you have no faith, but could you really dare, as in God's sight, to put yourself among unbelievers? If you got into a company of unbelievers who denied the incarnation of the Son of God, who denied the efficacy of His atonement, would you go with them? No. Well now, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life", and more, John in his epistle says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself", and you never go forth in one act of faith to this Person of Jesus Christ without having in your soul some witness in your heart. You feel, perhaps, now a glow of love to Him; then, another moment perhaps, a sweet hope He loved you and therefore came into the world. Then again a living cry - O, put me among the children; bless me with grace; comfort me with Thy mercy; purge me with Thy blood; clothe me in Thy righteousness. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself". Sweet has that witness been in my heart. You could not rightly, properly, righteously put yourself among unbelievers. If the Lord would have nothing to do with you, what would you do? Go to the world? No. If He tried you as He tried the Syrophenecian woman, what would you say? Just what she said: "Truth Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the master's table". "Lord help me". Now I will give you one more sign; you have it in the Psalms. Said the Psalmist: "My soul followeth hard after Thee". Are not there moments when you can say that the great desire of your heart, the ambition of your soul, is God? O, that He were mine. O, that I knew Him. O, that He would bless me and give me union with Himself and a sense of acceptance in Himself. Now, my friends, troubled as you may be, if you have got these things, if you cannot deny having them, look at this text: "Who hath called you". "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling". And one thing stands with you, and I hope will, that you are not satisfied and that you never will be satisfied, until you get the precious atonement on your consciences by the Holy Ghost. You may hold fast to certain Scriptures, the Scriptures I have brought before you, and if you can it will be for a comfort, but the thing that will well settle your hearts is that one thing, the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son cleansing you from all sin. Wait on Him; wait on Him. The day is coming, blessed day, when you will say: "I am my Beloved's and

my Beloved is mine". There is an open door - O, the Lord give us to see it - an open door, and He who is that door says, "Come to Me, come to Me; I will give you rest".

Now this calling of God is an effectual one. "Hath called us unto His eternal glory". Not only in eternity known, but known in measure in this life. Now the Scriptures inform us about this. Very beautifully, very graciously did the Lord Jesus, in His prayer as recorded in the 17 chapter of the gospel according to John, say this: "And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them". The Apostle Peter says to suffering saints: Rejoice, be not ashamed, for the Spirit of God and of glory resteth upon you. The glory of grace, this is given; the glory of righteousness, this is given; the glory of a purified conscience, this is given; the glory of the Word of God is given. The words Thou gavest Me I have given them and they have known surely and believed that Thou didst send Me. A sinner, with this glory in his heart; a sinner, with this glory around him, and upon him. "Unto His eternal glory". Eternal in its purpose and eternal in its duration and in its fulness, when time is no more. But in time, in a measure. Perhaps small often, scarcely perceived; still there, in this life. And whenever you have been very near the Lord, whenever He has shined into your heart, whenever He has spoken a single word of love, of life, of truth and of peace to you, then, then you had a measure of this eternal glory. And if this be true - I believe it to be - some of us have had this glory. Blessed be God, we have had this glory and we have said to Him: "Lord, I do not want a creature". He has been sufficient. Sufficient for time, sufficient for eternity. Is not it wonderful that the God of all grace should call a sinner to this glory, to experience a little of it? How the conscience feels it, being purified. How the heart feels it, being contrite and happy. And O, how the spirit feels it in its attraction, looking forward to that which is to come, and which shall only be measured by the capacity of the creature in eternity. Not measured as to its duration, but just the measure of the creature's capacity; the only measure of this glory. And, called to it; did not want it, did not want it; did not care for God at all, but He would have us. Rutherford said: "I did not want Him, I did not love Him, but He would love me." This is the wonder that every child of God more or less feels in his heart. He would love me, would have me. Ruined in the

fall, yet loved me notwithstanding all. Stumbling brethren, wandering, yet loved and called again and again to the throne of God's heavenly grace. My friends, this glory is a sanctifying glory, a humbling glory, a melting glory, a strengthening glory, wherever it is. It is wonderful; it is felt to be so. It is enjoyed at times. He hath called us unto His eternal glory. He glorified Jesus Christ while He was here below. "I have glorified Thee on the earth" said Christ to His Father; now glorify Me, and His Father: I have both glorified Thee and will glorify Thee. Now if you are brought near to this glorified Saviour, you must be partaker of His glory. And just to finish this morning with this, the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians says: "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image, from glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Now the glory in that chapter is the excelling and abiding glory of the gospel over the vanishing glory of the law; the abiding glory of the gospel. It is called the glorious gospel of the blessed God, the gospel of Christ, and this glory abides in Christ and comes into the hearts of the saints and it is to abide there for ever and ever. O, called people, how high is the privilege God has bestowed upon you. How great, infinitely, is the mercy that God has given to you, to be called His sons. "And 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" May the Lord help us to believe, and keep us from setting up our sins and ugliness and all the terribleness of guilt against this excelling and abiding glory.

AMEN.