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GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTIST

Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel Brighton
on Sunday evening 5 January 1930

1 TIMOTHY 2 v 5 and 6

"For there is one God, and one mediator between
God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who
gave himself a ransom for all, to be
testified in due time"

Three parties are in the text. First, Almighty God, Jehovah, our
Creator, our Lawgiver, our inexorable, most holy, pure, glorious
God. Just and right is He.

The second party is man created by God in purity, uprightness,
and so without sin, innocent and made capable of continuing so. He
was instructed as to what the law was by the symbol of it in the
garden, namely the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And man,
thus made, and thus placed with all the beneficence of God's kindness
in his creation, and in his ability, and in the law, this man
disobeyed. And that word, that word that God uttered, saying - "In
the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" began to be
fulfilled. "Dying thou shalt die". A double death, a death
immediately on the sin, the death of the soul, called "being dead in
trespasses and sins", and death of the body to take place when God
should decide. And this, dear friends, this is the case of everyone in
this congregation. By nature we are fallen, corrupt, guilty, dead as
to our souls and our standing before God, and to be dead as to our body
in the time God has fixed.

And these two parties, separated; separated, not as Creator and
creature - that relationship abides; not as Lawgiver and subjects -
that relationship abides; but separated from a holy God by our
polluted, filthy, guilty state. And dear friends, no man can
approach this holy God in his own name. This is our state. O, it is
good to feel it, though it is a terrible state, and if God, in His
wise, and pure justice had said there should be no third party to come

in between Himself and these sinners, these sinners must all have been punished. Think of it. I am stating truth. I am stating an elementary truth, and yet an everlasting truth, where no Mediator is. But infinite mercy, and wisdom, and power, and love provided a third party who should be able, and willing, to stand between the two named, and undertake for the wretches, the wicked people, given to Him to redeem, and to take their case up with all its sinfulness, and guilt, and debt, and death, and rags, and filth, and present them to God spotless, and without blame; unblameable in holiness. This is the third party, this is His work. O sinner, if you are interested in this wondrous Person you will need eternity to thank God for the Redeemer. This third party, who is He? The answer is - He is God's Eternal Son, the equal in nature with His Father. Never borrowed leave to be; never in that relationship began to be - the Eternal Son of God. But this would not answer, if alone, and so God His Father provided a body for Him. God His Father said to Him - Thou shalt be My Servant. Thou shalt raise up nations, and call sinners, and save sinners, and I have provided for thee a body like the bodies of the men Thou art to redeem and represent. And so the incarnation of the Son of God took place. Paul said - "We see Jesus". If we see Him where shall we see Him? We shall see Him in between God and our souls; that is the place we see Jesus, the Mediator.

Now these three parties have to be considered. God, the judge of all. There is owing to Him a price. Ransom, in the text, means an equivalent price. God's law must be honoured. O, dear people, God's law must be honoured, and there are two ways in which it is honoured. Listen - the first way is by the price paid as a ransom, and the second is, that God will honour the law in condemning all who die in sin. May the Lord open the eyes of any of you and all of you, if it please Him, who at the present moment know not God; know not self.

Let us look briefly, as enabled, at this mighty thing - a ransom, the Mediator. A Mediator is a middle-man. That is what the word means, a middle-man, a party between other parties. A party between parties who have a difference, a quarrel. O what a difference there is, what a quarrel there is, between God and men. Ours is unjust; His is just. Do you believe it? And this quarrel can never be made up, the differences can never be removed, by man, and God's quarrel with

man can never be answered by man, sinful man, and therefore the work of the Mediator is to bring together, on honourable grounds, on terms absolutely pure, sinful men, and a holy God. This is a great concern with some of us, 'Tis a great concern with me. Thanks be to God, we are not indifferent, many of us can say, as to whether this quarrel can end. Jesus ended it. Jesus ended it when He said - "It is finished". He paid the price. He was in between God and man, and there was a drawn sword, and God, seeing the Mediator, said to His sword, Awake against Him. "Awake, O sword, against My fellow, against My shepherd, against My equal, against My servant. And O, how solemnly, and awfully, was that sword made fat in the blood of Jesus. One Mediator paid the ransom, and so justice, anger, wrath, threatening, curse due to the men given to the Lord Jesus, fell on Him, and willingly, and lovingly, and with all the ability that He had, He said, as it were, let all fall on Me. And O, the love, and the goodness, and the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in thus being a Mediator and paying the price, being a ransom. A ransom is paid for captives. A ransom paid liberates the captives, sets them free. The terms of freedom are met by the ransom, and therefore justice says, These ransomed ones must go free. The chains, the law, the curse, the prison all, all must give way, or rather, must let go free the creatures they hold in bondage. Sinner, are you concerned about this? In this ransom there was a life. This is the point to notice; in this ransom there was a life. Said the law - An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, life for life. That is the law, and Jesus came and gave all that He had to give - Himself; gave Himself a ransom for all. And this becomes a matter of rich experience in God's time. It is not a dry doctrine floating in the brain of a man. Many men have it there, and it is to be feared it never goes deeper with them, but with regard to the ransomed it is not a matter of dry truth, uninteresting up to a point, but it is a matter that becomes a rich, heart-breaking experience, and this brings me to the word "To be testified in due time" To be testified means that there is to be a witness of this matter, a witness of this transaction, a witness that it is true, a witness that, the terms being met, the captives shall go free, and their freedom shall be a testimony to the reality, and the sufficiency, and the glory of the ransom that was paid for them. You follow this, and is not it wonderful, is not it grand - not my saying it, but the thing, is not it

grand - that there comes a day when a sinner dead in trespasses and sins, indifferent to his own everlasting interests, when that sinner is arrested by a hand he knows not, by a power he understands not. He is arrested. A new life is imparted, a new light shines on him, new feelings take possession of him. Convictions come to him; he does not know whence, he does not know what the thing means, but there it is; he is arrested. Love has arrested him, truth has arrested him, law has arrested him, and he is brought face to face with what he never thought about before. He is brought face to face with two great things. He is brought face to face with God's holy law, and then, through that law, face to face with God, and very solemn it is. Now his supposed liberty has gone, and he is a captive. Now his boasted goodness is rottenness, and he is a sinner. Now his wisdom has fled, and he is a fool in his own judgement. He is a captive. God holds him captive. The law holds him a captive. He is a lawful captive. He has no right to liberty as he realises, no right to anything but judgement, and death. This he believes. My brethren who have gone through this, you know I am speaking the truth when I say, that when judgement is laid to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, the sinner finds there is only one right, namely God. Himself is wrong, his nature is wrong, his life is wrong, his thoughts are wrong, his pleasures are sinful pleasures; his face is toward destruction. Was it not true? Yes. O, the light that discovers to a man his darkness, and his ignorance, is a penetrating light. O, the life that makes him feel he is dead, and under a cursing law is very solemn. But he is ransomed; there was a price paid for him. The vicarious death of the Lord Jesus was the price paid for him, and therefore he must go free. There must be a witness of the vicariousness, the sufficiency, of the death of the Lord Jesus, and there are several who shall see this witness, this testimony, and I will name them to you. God sees it. The Saviour sees it - "He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied". A groaning sinner, O, how welcome he is. What music there is in his groans as they ascend in the Spirit's power to the Lord Jesus, and, through Him, to the Father. Jesus bears witness, and this person's praying is a testimony that now this ransom is taking effect, taking effect upon him. That is a great thing, and a wonderful thing. But O, the questions the sinner asks. Can I be saved? Can God be just and save me? Can such a polluted sinner approach infinite purity? Can such a debtor ever be free of debt with

nothing to pay? Can such a heart as mine ever be straight with God? And these vital questions cannot remain unanswered - they are too important to the man, too vital - they cannot remain unanswered. But who can answer them? Not the sinner. O, we remember, a goodly number of us remember, when the questions were paramount. It was not with us - "What shall we eat, or what shall we drink" - but can we be saved? It was not - What position we shall occupy in the world - but can we be saved, can we escape a deserved hell? Can an angry God be appeased? Can His wrath be taken away? O, the questions, and God answered them. And if some of you have them now, living questions in your consciences, what I would say to you is this - Do as we did, as God helped us to do. Go with the burden, and with the guilt, and with the trouble, and with the death, and with the curse in your bones; go to the good God of all grace, and lay the case, the chains, the bondage, the sore, and the guilt, and the burden; lay them all before Him. O, He is a good God - I can tell you this, and I will tell you this - He is a good God.

In the world of endless ruin,
Let it never, Lord, be said,
"Here's a soul that perished suing
For the boasted Saviour's aid". (1068)

It never will be said there. There is one Scripture on your side O seeker - "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved". So another person in the matter shall be a witness to this ransom, the reality of it, the sufficiency of it, namely the sinner himself. Not that he bears witness of himself - I do not mean that; a man bearing witness of himself is wrong - but he will be a witness in his experience, a witness in his conscience, a witness in his liberty, a witness in his whole state, a witness in his happiness. He will be a witness - "Ye are My witnesses". Take it this way, these people are the witnesses in their very existence as a people, that God has made them a people. Now sinner, this is happiness because it is holiness, it is a sufficient ransom that gives you liberty. It is a divine life that makes you free from death. It is the divine blood that makes you free from death, and absolves you from guilt - the church of God was purchased with His Own blood. The church standing before the Lord is the witness to the sufficiency of the death of

Christ. Joshua stood before the Lord clothed with filthy garments, and Satan was there, a busy-body, Satan was there, an accuser, accusing night and day the people of God. But there was a greater than Satan there; there was the Redeemer there, and He turned to the accuser and said - "The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? As if the Lord should say, What have you to do with this case? What have you to say about this matter? He is Mine, I bought him with My blood. Now there are three things in every regenerate person who gets forgiveness, that become a testimony to the ransom, and first is the sprinkling of the blood of Christ on him. That is a wonderful thing, when a man's conscience is purified, "purged", as the word is "from dead works to serve the living God". You will never forget that when you have got it, when you have had it. You look back sometimes and say, O my conscience is again defiled, but there will be moments when you will remember when first it was purged. O sweet memory, to go back all the years some of us have lived since that happy day; to look back on the action of God upon our consciences, for the Holy Ghost is here; He brings the blood of Christ; He sprinkles it on the conscience. Now look at the correspondence between the altar and the sinner's conscience. The blood was on the altar, and, now it is on the conscience, what difference, what quarrel can there be between God and this person? He is free; he is free. That is one thing, one of the three things. The second is this, that his heart is made straight in its affections, and whole before, and with, God, and the sinner who, by nature, hates God, loves Him, cleaves to Him, and sees a beauty in the ignominious cross, and feels a power on his heart, the love of Christ, the death of Christ. O, he says, who but God could have done this? The load of sin, the filth of sin, the power of sin, the estranging influence of sin, all removed, and God and the sinner friends. There is a beautiful passage in the Scripture like this - "And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in His Name, saith the LORD." "Thou shalt call His Name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." So that is a second testimony, a sinner's standing, his conscience, and his heart, and his spirit. He is reconciled to God, and, being reconciled to God, he has the high privilege, and the sweet, melting mercy of walking with God. The man who has had a little of this has had a little of heaven; he has tasted that the Lord is gracious.

And the third witness is this, the witness of the Spirit, the infallible witness of the Spirit. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." That is not like a man presumptuously laying claim to relationship with God. O, no. It is God owning the sinner's condition owning the sinner's relationship, owning the oneness that is between the Saviour and the saved. This is the third thing in the testimony of the ransom of Christ to be testified in due time. Now some of you perhaps have been waiting for years, and often, often often have said, Shall I ever be forgiven? Sometimes you have got very near to the Lord in prayer, and hope has sprung up lively, and strong in you, and you have thought, O the day is coming when I shall be pardoned. Then you have got back again, got into the dumps again, and you have had fear, and bondage, hard bondage, but the day will come. You say, when will it be due time? They said before Christ came that they were looking for the Messiah, but O, will He ever come? They said, all things continue as they were from the beginning. Where is the promise of His coming? You may say, Lord when will it be due time? I do not know that I can tell you this. It is God's time and

All kind, and all wise,
His season is best

Wait on Him. Due time will come, beautiful time, well ordered, just the right moment, when God will be magnified, magnified greatly in your experience, and you will say, It was best I had to wait, to struggle, to pray. I ceased praying sometimes. I hoped, and then hope died away from my feelings, and I looked, and looked, and looked, and saw nothing, but now it is good; good for me to have been afflicted that I might learn God's time and God's love, and God's mercy. "He gave Himself a ransom". And there is this dear, glorious Mediator, and when you pray He is between a holy, just God and your soul. And when you offer prayer He takes it in, as it were, and puts the incense of His merit into it. When you lift up your hands in prayer, the prayer of faith, it is then to God as the evening sacrifice. "Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." (Psalm 141 v 2) One can never adequately express the greatness of God in ransoming sinners, and the goodness of God in drawing sinners to Himself, and

the love of God in accepting sinners, and the condescension of God in eating with sinners. "This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them"

Now I finish this service with this word. I have tried today - O, how I have failed, but I have tried - to preach a great God. I took up all the morning nearly endeavouring to set His great Being before you. I have to say this, you must have dealings with Him, either in mercy here, or hereafter when you will stand before Him for the first and last time, and between this great God and sinful men is the Mediator, the middle-man. He is a Man, he must be to be a Mediator for men. This Man Christ Jesus, look at Him. O, behold this Man, true Almighty God. Infinite in love, infinite in goodness, infinite in His determination to save people, infinite in every act as a substitute; therefore sufficient, eternally sufficient for this people. And the sinners - ~~you~~^{who are} convinced of sin, myself convinced of sin - and this great God says, Come to Me. The Mediator says, Come to Me. My terror shall not make you afraid, I came into the world to save sinners. I was tempted that I might succour you who are tempted. I suffered that you might be healed. I died that you might live. My stripes shall be your songs. Come to Me. May the Lord help us.

AMEL

Now what is the church to do in the second service? It is to come to this table, ordained provision is on it. Eat My flesh, drink My blood. This is the ordinance. I know I have not spoken to make you light and trifling. Now let us, as God helps us, come with all the solemnity that the cross is, in itself, calculated to impress our spirits with. Come dear friends, the Saviour says, This is My body broken for you, this is My blood. Take, eat and drink; all of you drink it, for this is the new testament in My blood which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins. O this table, this beautiful ordinance. Would it not be wonderful if, when at the table, we could personally, individually, sing

Long time I after idols ran,
But now my God's a martyred man

May it be so.