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 GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS
 Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
 at Galeed Chapel, Brighton
 on Sunday evening 9 June, 1929

1 Timothy 2 verses 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

A passage, whose weight can never be properly expressed; a remarkable Word respecting the divine Being, and our standing before Him through the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Never, sinner, never expect to stand well with God except you stand in and through the Mediator. You cannot dwell with infinite holiness without the Man Christ Jesus. You cannot bear the scrutiny of divine justice without the Man Christ Jesus. You cannot be fit for heaven, and heaven would be no heaven to you, without the Man Christ Jesus. I wish it would please the Lord the little time longer I have to speak, to more and more fill my feeble ministry with this mighty, this sweet, great, glorious theme. "There is one God." I believe in Him, and if we, as a little congregation, could unite as one and say, I believe in God almighty, maker of heaven and earth, we should be a remarkable congregation. If you come to sift the matter, look closely into it, carefully ask yourselves where and when you got a real sense of the Being of God, and of the infinite disparity between you and that God. Not a disparity of nature - for pure nature, angelic and human, could never be ashamed before the infinite God - but the disparity between sin in the sinner and infinite holiness in God. Such a feeling as that, if ever you had it, made a mark, left a mark.

Now I would take up, for a short time, the 6 verse: "Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time". Jesus Christ was capable of being made sin because He is a Man and made under the law. May that truth be deeply imprinted upon our hearts. Jesus Christ was capable of being made sin. He was willing to be made sin. He knew what it meant. He saw sin as God alone in the fulness of that word, can see it. He saw what it would mean to Him if He were made sin.

He saw the anguish, the pain, the shame, the withdrawal from Him, for a time, of the infinitely blessed smile of His Father, and yet, willingly, lovingly, He was made sin. He submitted to it, and God made Him to be sin. This was a divine act of the Father, a wondrous act of the Father. In infinite love to the election of grace, His Father made Him to be sin. If we had grace and wisdom to look at and weigh every word I think we should see an infinitude of meaning, of love, of grace, of justice, of wisdom, of power, in making the Lord Jesus to be sin and all this goes into the word "ransom". He gave Himself a ransom, the word used by the Holy Ghost in this text. Ransom means an equivalent price, an equivalent price paid to redeem captives and the law insists on this. Said God, by Moses, life for life, eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, foot for a foot, hand for a hand. wound for a wound. This is the law. Our life was forfeited; we have no right to life; we live on mercy, we live by sufferance; we have no right to our human life. "In the day that thou eatest thereof", that is of the forbidden fruit, "thou shall surely die". And the Lord Jesus saw this condition and undertook to give life for life, to pay, in that way, the ransom, the equivalent of what was demanded. And there is one consideration very worthy to be named, as I think, namely that our death, the demerit of our sin, would reach through eternity. Hell, for ever and ever, must be the punishment of all for whom no ransom is found. Ah and what can be the equivalent of that eternal punishment due to you, due to me, due to every spirit of just men made perfect now in heaven? It was the infinitely valuable, precious life of Him who is the Man Christ Jesus, spotless, innocent and pure; that human nature which, united with His divine Person, He offered in a perfect sacrifice on the cross. I believe a faith's view of this makes the infinite value of the death of Christ so precious to the sinner who sees it, that he cleaves to that sacrifice and pleads and believes that in that there can be given to him, even to him, the full forgiveness of sins, the perfect justification of His person.

Now I would desire, if enabled, to speak a little - it can be but little at the most - of what this meant to the Lord Jesus. The suffering, the pain, the anguish, the shame, the shame of death; what it meant. The Apostle desired, followed after, the knowledge of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. If, to a regenerate soul, sin

is bitter beyond expression, what must it have been to Him who did no sin, who had no guile; nothing but purity. What must it have been to His holy soul when sin was imputed to Him and the guilt of sin was laid on Him. The expressions used by the Lord in the Scripture to set this forth, you well know. "Now is My soul troubled". "And, being in an agony, He sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, falling down to the ground". And, seeing what was immediately before Him, He said, when prostrate on the ground: "If it be possible let this cup pass from Me. Nevertheless not as I will but as Thou wilt". Men afflicted Him, but the affliction with which it pleased the Father to afflict Him, that was the trouble, and a great word in Galatians is very expressive and deep, profound beyond our reach: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us". If a man were to curse you and you felt you deserved his anger it would be very serious to you, though you would know he could do you no harm perhaps. But the Man Christ Jesus was made a curse. The curse of God was poured into His soul like fire and He expresses the anguish, the grief of His soul in that dolorous cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Jesus Christ, the holy Son of God, to whom the seraphims - when with two of their wings they cover their faces and with two of them cover their feet and with other two fly obedience - these cry out "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts" And in the gospel of John, we find that the Lord who is thus praised and worshipped is Jesus Christ. Says John in his gospel, "These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory". And that holy One received the inconceivable, terrible curse of God's law into His soul, and all this is in this word "ransom". Gave Himself a ransom to buy sinners back, to redeem wicked people, to bring liberty to dreadfully wicked captives, and to bring distant people near and to make aliens children and bless them with adoption into God's family. He gave Himself a ransom; He gave Himself. He was willing, lovingly willing, infinitely willing, willing beyond all thought that we can ever entertain of His willingness, to be made this, made sin, and then to give Himself a ransom. And in this we see, we may see, three Persons, God giving us the sight. We may see God the Father in sending Him, making Him under the law. God the Father gathering up, if I may so express it, gathering up all the sins that the church would commit from Adam down to the last elect person who should live and be born again, all their sins, and in love, in justice, in wisdom, He laid all of them on that devoted Man, that Man

who said in the Psalms "I am devoted to Thy fear". Who said in the Scripture "The zeal of Thy house hath eaten Me up". Who said "Thy law is within My heart". Who gave His back to the smiters, His cheek to them that plucked off the hair, but more than that, gave His soul, gave His life, a ransom. This is the Person of the Father. We may see in the light of the Spirit the Person of the eternal Son saying to His Father "Lo I come to do Thy will O My God. Thy law is within My heart". This was the Lord Jesus, the Man Christ Jesus of the text laying bare His heart and expressing the whole of His heart thus to His Father. "I delight to do Thy will O My God". And He knew what that will was. He knew that that will took the shape and form of a commandment to lay down His life and though He knew it He shrank not from it but said "I delight to do Thy will O My God". We may, in the light of the Spirit, see the third Person in the Godhead, the Holy Ghost, qualifying the sacred human nature of the Lord Jesus for God was with Him. The Holy Ghost was in Him without measure and we may see this great God in Three Persons engaged thus; the second to give a ransom, the first to accept it, and the third to enable that Man, Christ Jesus, to make that sacrifice, to offer Himself. Never, never separate the Trinity in your minds from the work of salvation.

And now I leave these inadequate remarks and come to the next point. "To be testified in due time". An arminian would say, you have left an important word out. You have left the word "all" out. The word "all" here, as in many other places, must be understood to mean certain persons; all kinds and races of men, not universal, for universal redemption denies the equivalent of the price paid. If Christ died for all necessarily all must be saved: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me". All men, all of some men, of every race and nation and tongue and tribe and people, and connected with it intimately in the text is the last clause: "To be testified in due time". The season, that God has appointed, wherein He will make it manifest by the preaching of the Lord Jesus, manifest for whom the Man Christ Jesus gave Himself a ransom. Nobody wants Him naturally. There is nobody in this congregation that wants Christ naturally. We all wanted the world. I wanted it. I do not suppose there is a person in this congregation sitting to hear me that was at any moment more intensely worldly than I was. I did not want Him. But, inasmuch as Christ wants His people, He gives them His good Spirit by whose grace

they come to want Him. As He cannot do without them, He gives them His grace to be dissatisfied with everything short of Himself. They need, they desire Him; they seek Him, and there comes a time when a seeker really finds Him. There may be years elapse between regeneration and full assurance. The time must come when the redeemed shall say, each one for himself, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine". And this is the testimony. The preaching of the Lord Jesus is the means ordinarily used to gather the saints. "I will draw all men unto Me". And the means God has ordained, and uses ordinarily, as I said, is the preaching. The Word of God in Apostolic days multiplied; grew and multiplied. Not only in the addition of book after book, and epistle after epistle, until the canon of the Scripture was complete, but it grew and multiplied in the power of it in the hearts of sinners, convincing them, three thousand in one day by the preaching of Peter. And many more were constantly in those blessed days added to the church, such as should be saved. Now that brings me to a great question which I would press on your attention. This, namely, has God manifested to us that Christ gave Himself for us? The ransom that Christ gave, or paid, God received. It was sufficient, and it must come to those for whom it was given. It must find a resting place in the consciences of sinners. 'Tis a great thing to be convinced of sin. So long as I am able to speak to you I must constantly speak of this, conviction of sin. There is no fitness between a sinner and Christ if there be no conviction of sin. There is no fitness between a physician and a very healthy person. The sick need the physician, not the whole. The lost need the Saviour, not those who are saved in their own judgment. "I am come to save that which was lost." So look at this - God grant none of us may turn our face away from this great question - has it pleased God to show to us our sins, convince us of them? O yes, some of us can say, it has. I remember the beginning in this in my own case when I was sure and I said it, where that God is I shall never be. Conviction; why, it is one of God's kindnesses to us. Conviction of sin; it is one of God's best testimonies of His goodness. He rebukes whom He loves. Conviction; it will deepen, it will widen, it will grow in you as you are under the Spirit's grace and you will come to say, I did not know in the beginning that I was wicked as I now know I am. I did not know in early days that I had the corruptions which now I am conscious of. I did not realise how that my whole nature is constantly turning away

from God, in those early days as I now know. O, but see this; Ah and I would say it to you with all the pleasure that God may enable me to feel, this does fit a soul for this ransom. Yes, how welcome Christ is to sinners. How welcome His blood is to a guilty conscience. How welcome His Person is as a Representative and a Mediator to one who cannot stand before God because of his trespasses. "To be testified". Who testifies? The Spirit. What does He testify? That you are interested in this gift of God, this ransom paid. That you are interested in the covenant of which the blood of Christ is the seal. He is the Mediator of the covenant and by His death He redeemed the ^{(HEB. 1} transgressions that were under the first testament, the sins done _{9 v 15} under the law. The sinners under the law He redeemed by His precious blood, and the testimony is this, that God the Spirit brings this blessed gospel into the heart and conscience of sinners and tells them that they are redeemed not with silver and gold but with the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot. He tells them that. Yes, and some here, and some in many, many places in the world, know it, and others here want to know it. And I would say to you seekers, go on seeking. There is not a Scripture in this blessed Bible that is written for your discouragement but everything for your encouragement. "Seek and ye shall find". "Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord". O what a God He is, what a good God He is. What a sacred word it is "Come unto Me". He means it; He means it my friends. O believe Him, He means it, and when He promises rest He is able to give it. Ah He does not promise more than He is able to perform. That is quite easy to a man, but God can never promise more than He is able to perform. "He gave Himself a ransom for all" and when you know this, and when the Holy Spirit opens the sufferings of Jesus Christ, lets you a little feel what it cost Him to redeem you from death and hell and sin, then, more than at any other time, you will hate sin. Then, more than at any other time, you will repent of sin. May the Lord grant this testimony to us. The Scriptures testify of this ransom. The ministry that God has given to the church in all ages more or less distinctly has testified of this ransom, and the Spirit has constantly here and there been testifying of this blessed ransom. "Who gave Himself a ransom". Dear ransom, dear ransomed people, making one body for the glory of God, filling heaven with redeemed people, and filling the ears of God with all the praises and honours and majesty and glory and dominion and

riches for ever and ever. I do hope the Lord will keep this among us, put it into our hearts, and that, as a people, He may continue it with us. Paul laboured that the gospel might continue with the Galatians and I would labour and hope that you also will labour that the gospel may continue with you and that you will never lack a Pastor. I hope you wont. He knows how I entreat this for you that when my time is ended there will be one raised up for you, and brought to you, so that you will never lack a Pastor and that, having a ministry of truth, your souls may be greatly refreshed and delighted with this blessed gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

AMEN.