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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham at Galeed Chapel,
Brighton on Wednesday evening 5 February 1930

Text: Galatians 5 verse 25

"If we live in the Spirit let us also
walk in the Spirit"

A very important word, on the first part of which I have spoken three times. There is much that might be said in addition to the little I have said. The more I look into the scriptures with respect to the Holy Ghost, the more impressed I am with the wonderful glory of the third Person in the Trinity and with the abundant references, direct and otherwise made to Him, concerning Him. He does not speak of Himself. The Lord said - He shall not speak of Himself; that is to say, He does not stand alone in His work. He proceeds from the Father in His divine Person. He is one with the Father and the Son in the Godhead so in the plan of salvation He is not alone. He is with the Father; He is sent by the Father. He is with the Son; He is given to the Son and He comes from the Son to the Church. The Spirit wonderfully works all the works of God. In creation, He is there. In providence, He is there, anointing men, leading men, helping men. In grace He is present, the efficient worker in the Church of God. So the word "If ye live in the Spirit" has this tremendous significance that without Him, without His mighty work of grace, beginning with the new birth, there is no salvation; there can be no saving knowledge of God. We profess to be Trinitarians. Blessed be God if we really believe in the Trinity and if we believe in the Trinity by some manifestation to our souls of the Holy Ghost, of the Son and of the Father. The work of faith is a work of divine power and grace and it is according to the power which God wrought when He raised Christ from the dead. Be, therefore, my brethren very particular about this.

If we live in the Spirit. I entered into a few particulars both last Wednesday and last Lord's Day concerning this mighty thing - If we live by or live in the Holy Ghost. Faith, prayer, hope, love and every grace, all saving, comfortable knowledge,

all strength in the Lord we derive, if we have them, from the Spirit, and, says the Apostle in this chapter - if you live in the Spirit, you will not do the works of the flesh. If we live in the Spirit we must have conflict, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. Every living soul is like a battle-field; two armies, as it were, a company of two armies - the flesh insisting on indulgence, the flesh resisting every motion of the Spirit, every desire of the soul, and the Spirit resisting the flesh in all its lusting, striving, opposition, pride, vanity, and all wrong things and therefore, no man of God, no child of God, ought ever to expect an easy path to heaven. If there were no temporal difficulties, no afflictions, either in body or circumstances, yet, with grace in the soul, there must be tribulation. But I wont dwell longer on this part, because the second part is very important. It is vital as an evidence of the possession of the Spirit. It is good as an evidence of obedience if there is this walking in the Spirit. "Let us walk in the Spirit".

Now in the first place, let us look at this important thing, that the Spirit of God is called the Spirit of Truth and He is the One who leads into all truth. The Spirit of Truth means there, as I apprehend, that the truth of the Scriptures, the Scriptures themselves emanate from Him as the inspirer of holy men of old who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. This then means, if we walk in the Spirit, we shall walk in the truth. That, if one may use a word one does not commonly use, that is a proposition to be laid down, that if we really walk in the Spirit according to the Spirit's teaching, we do walk in the truth. Do you believe that? Is that part of your belief? Here is the gospel, and Jesus promised that the Holy Ghost should lead people into truth, and before I go further, I will here say that we should not expect to be led into all the truth at once, but by degrees the Holy Spirit opens, now this branch of the truth, then that branch of the gospel. Now the Lord Jesus in His Person, then Christ on the cross, then in the grave, then risen, then ascending into heaven, and interceding there. To-day, you may get a glimpse of one part, tomorrow a glimpse of another part, the flesh all the while hating each part, as opened. To walk in

the truth then is a great thing, but do not be discouraged. Particularly I would say this to any young seeker and believer, do not be discouraged if you only grow and learn very slowly. The thing is not to see how quickly you are moving, but if you are moving surely. We are being hurried by time to eternity. Are we taking any steps toward heaven? Bless God if you have ever had one glimpse of any truth of the gospel. The Apostle John had this great joy with respect to those to whom he was writing, that the truth remained in them and that they walked in it. I have no greater joy than that my children walk in the truth. By walking in the truth you have your back on the world; you have your back on error; you have your face toward God. Your steps are heavenward, if you are walking in the truth. Let me name one or two particulars here. Do we walk in the atonement? Christ said "Abide in Me" Christ died. Do we walk in Christ as dying, as having poured out His soul unto death? Is His death our life? Is His death our plea before God? Is it the ground of our hope? Is it, whenever we feel one bit of joy, the ground and cause and all of it? Do we walk in the atonement? If we do we obey Christ in that scripture in John's gospel - "Abide in Me". "As the branch cannot bear fruit except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in Me." To abide in the atonement is to believe in it, to cleave to it, to follow Christ in it, to long to feel its power, to be panting after that in our consciences, which alone can give us real peace, peace with God. Walk in the Spirit. Let us do this. It is an exhortation to stand fast. It is an exhortation to us to keep as close as we can to Christ and to resist the separating influences of sin, of the course of this life, of the deceitfulness of other things. It is not a legal obligation, failing in which would come a curse. It is a gospel word exhorting a living soul to attend to that which is his life. The life of the Spirit, that is the life which He gives, is not an influence occasionally moving. The life is eternal life, not influenced by any change. It is eternal life, but acting, living, moving faith, is, as it were, just an occasional thing, because it is not continuous. O if we only lived constantly by faith in the atonement, what different people we should be. I believe everyone believing in Christ would be in some particular regard very different people. If I

constantly walked in the Spirit, in the atonement, I should be, my preaching would be better. Everything would be different with me. Let us walk in that then, in the atonement.

Let us walk in the promise of God. The promise of God is everlasting life. The promise of God is strength, help in time of need. It is a promise of abiding, of not forsaking. It is a promise that God utters in the scripture and then occasionally speaks into the soul. You forget it do you not? "My people have forgotten their resting place, days without number". Is that your confession? I wish I had not to make it as my own, but I have. Promises? O how sweet they were when they were spoken. How beautiful in the eye of faith, how full in the apprehension of faith, and yet a cloud has come, and the promise seems to have gone or, by lapse of time and no special need, the promise has been forgotten. We have forgotten, as it were, God who gave it. This is a sad state to get into and we do need to be put in mind. I put you in remembrance says Peter, of things, though ye knew these things once. So we need to be put in remembrance. Walk in the promises. They were the Spirit's gift, they were animated with life when He spoke them. They were illuminated with His own light, when He sent them into our hearts. They were made to fit by His grace and power into the cases we had, into the troubles, into the necessities, into the weaknesses. They fit in because He made them fit in, He applied them. O, to think we should have forgotten them as we have! Let us walk in the Spirit. Let us attend to the word of God, let us put Him in remembrance as He says "Put Me in remembrance". Let us plead them, let us do as Jacob did - "Thou didst say I will be with thee" May the Lord help us.

Let us walk in the Spirit in respect of the truth, the truth of the gospel, that it might abide with us. In this we must expect conflict, for the error of our nature will always be cropping up. Unbelief saying - where is the promise. Things are different, things contradict it. Let us walk in the Spirit in respect of the truth of the promise, even when it is not immediately fulfilled. There are many exhortations of the gospel to persons, the people of God, and to churches, and these all

need to be attended to and if we walk in the Spirit, we shall, from time to time, be walking in one or other of the exhortations, according to our various positions and conditions. Now there is this - "Abstain from the appearance of evil" That is a great word. Remember, the Spirit spoke it. He inspired it, and it is spoken to the people of God. It answers to Christ's prayer - I pray not that Thou shouldest take them from the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil of the world. Do you ever feel that, attend to it - the appearance of evil. An appearance of something which, as seen by the world, as seen by your brethren, would be a stumbling, an offence, a pain, a grief, and which, if persisted in, would bring a bar, a distance between God and your souls. Walk in the Spirit. He has given you liberty - "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free". And when you have to do with the world, business with worldly people and in some way, it may be, related to them and connected necessarily for a time in a condition of things, then how close is that word - abstain from the very appearance of evil. In all our relations, our duties, our positions, in our families, and business matters connected with the world, says the word of God, the Holy Spirit says it - abstain, keep away from the appearance of what is wrong. Anything in itself wrong, keep away from it, and though you may say, I have no union with it, do not like it, still you may have some appearance of connection with it. Keep away from that; have no dealings that would lead you into an appearance of connivance, of union, of walking in an evil thing. Let us walk in the Spirit in this particular. Now the liberty of the gospel is very considerable, but it is never to be taken an advantage of. It is very considerable. We are not to say, nor act upon anything like this - we will have nothing to do with the world in any shape or form. Says Paul, if that is to be we must get out of the world, we cannot live in the world without having something to do with it. Says Paul again, when treating of things sacrificed to idols, if you be bidden to a feast and are disposed to go, there is no bar, but this is to be noticed - Do not do that which would stumble any weaker brother and the result is this. If meat offend my brother, I will eat no more meat, while the world stands. He would keep from the very appearance of things that would hurt a weaker conscience, a conscience weaker than his own.

Not forbidden to go here; and then, according to scripture, but if any child of God, knowing you went, would be offended by your going, then you are not to go. Conscience, not your own in these things, but conscience of a weaker brother. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputation." Do not dispute with him. If his conscience is tender in any point, regard him in that. Deal tenderly with him in that, and do not say my conscience is strong enough to do it and I will do it. That is a breach in the scripture. That is a breach which, if you persist in, may bring you to a distance from God.

The exhortation is this. "Lie not one to another". Who would think, one might say, who would think that a person fearing God would do that. Well, if it is what the church could not do, would the Spirit give an exhortation like that. If you look at the exhortation against certain sins, you will see your own liability to commit those sins. Underlying every exhortation, if I may so express it, is the liability of the person, the people to whom the exhortations are given, to do the things against which the exhortations are. If you follow this, God give you grace to walk in the Spirit, to walk after every word He speaks. Everything He says is of unspeakable importance. The Saviour said - "Let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay" Abstain then from saying anything that will not bear the light of God. "Lie not one to another". Walk in that dear friends, walk in that. Do not think I am accusing anybody. I am dealing with an exhortation against a sin to which human nature in every person is liable. Let me press it on you by repeating the word that there would not be an exhortation against lying written to the church if the church were not capable of that sin. Think upon it, dwell upon it, for grace to do that.

Well, may the Lord help us to walk after the Spirit in these things, these practical things which, because we may not be powerfully tempted to them, may be passed over by us as if they had no meaning to us in application. We need them. I feel that. I feel it much at times. How I need to attend to the scriptures in every part of them. There is no part of the word that we can afford to be indifferent to. God give us grace to do this.

Now another word about walking in the Spirit is this, meaning the things of the Spirit. The Apostle in the Romans deals in that eighth chapter with two seeds, two different sorts of people. The first he says, are the people of God. "There is therefore now, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" And what do they do? They mind the things of the Spirit. What are the things of the Spirit? They are the Bible, the whole Word of God. Attend to the whole scripture, and, as I said on Lord's Day, rather, I advised you to carefully read the scriptures more and more and read them with respect to the teaching of them, of the Holy Ghost. He is in them; He inspired them, and though He does not speak of Himself, there He is. And why need He speak of Himself, since His work in this particular praises Him, for He is the author of the whole Word of God. Attend to every doctrine, attend to the exhortation to hold fast the form of sound words. I am of the opinion that the day may come to some of you when you will find the form of sound words will become a test and if you have got it in your heart the exhortation is - hold it fast. And when you come to your own experience, then this will be it - hold fast that which thou already hast that no man take thy crown. What God has given to us is of unspeakable importance and worth. There is nothing He has put into your hearts or into my heart that is not of unspeakable worth. Any truth revealed, any promise spoken, any manifestation of Christ given, any application of His merit to us; all these things are of such importance that we can never adequately express that importance. Hold fast. Mind the things of the Spirit. Be careful of doctrine. I am ashamed when I think of what at one time was in my mind and what I gave utterance to more than once that we needed not doctrine, but experience. What I say now is the reverse. We need doctrine, we need to know it, we need to love it, we need to hold it, for true experience comes from it by the teaching and grace of the Holy Ghost. True experience will always be just square with doctrine. As the city revealed in Revelations was four-square, so the four-square gospel, if I may use that word much abused, the gospel in all parts of it will be the very ground and reason and form of true experience. No building is stronger than its foundation. No experience is

stronger than the doctrine of Christ, and if this is true, what need there is for us to take heed to the doctrine. " Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself, and them that hear thee", says Paul to Timothy. Take heed dear friends, to the gospel, take heed to every part of it, to every part of it, because therein as you continue, you will find life, and peace, and good and comfort. What is it to mind the things of the Spirit? It is to mind the very things He has revealed in this Book. It is to mind this - the leprosy of our nature. There is a striking word in Deuteronomy. Moses there says - Take heed to leprosy and what the priest commands. Why need we to take heed to sin? Why need we take particular heed to the leprosy of our nature? Because if we are left to forget it, then it wont be long before we shall forget the Saviour. You wont be running to Him if you do not feel you need Him. You wont be panting after His righteousness unless you are seeing and feeling the filth of your own rags. You wont be running to His arm if you have got some strength in your own. Take heed to your nature. Do not forget you are sinners. Indeed, if the Spirit is with you, working mightily, He wont let you forget. You will turn again and again to see abominations which perhaps you never suspected. You may have a godly walk, and I hope you will have, but you will be very troubled by ungodliness in your nature if you are enabled to walk rightly. Ah it is a constant trouble where there is a continual exercise kept up. Take heed to sin my friends. Take heed to it lest you fall into it. Take heed to its deceitfulness, as the Apostle exhorts. Take heed, he says, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. Be jealous in these things. That is one thing of the Spirit, He has revealed sin, He has shown what it is. He has declared what it deserves. He has said the wages of sin is death. He has said if a person lives in sin He is the servant of sin. "Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness." Take heed to the remedy. The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth from all sin. Walk in the Spirit about that. God help you. The remedy's before thee, O sinner, the remedy is the blood of

Christ. No sin can ever be forgotten but by and through that blood. No iniquity can ever be subdued but by the Saviour. O may we cleave to the atonement. It is our life, it is our reconciliation. It is the plea we must make before God. It is the ground on which we are to stand when we pray. It is the urging thing, it is the prevailing thing that a poor sinner is led to use before God when he says - for Christ's sake. Ah, there is no help but here, no comfort but here, no stream of mercy but what flows from the atonement of the Saviour. No consolation in Christ but that which proceeds from His atoning work. If there be any consolation in Christ, it is here. This is minding the things of the Spirit. If we had the scriptures more in our hands, it would be better, but if the Holy Spirit puts them, by a passage here and a passage there, into our hearts, then we have indeed a great gift. But unbelief and the devil will make us indifferent at times to the thing that alone can give us peace and strength. Let us walk in the Spirit.

I must just say one or two more words and then may the Lord open the scripture to you and give you to meditate upon it. Let us, in the next place, walk in the Spirit of love. Love is of God; love runs through the people of God. They are exhorted to it; they are to take heed to it, and it is not to be in word only. It has its root in the heart. Where the Spirit of love is, there love is felt. If you love God it is a great thing; a mighty conquest has been obtained in you by the Spirit of love subduing your enmity for the carnal mind is enmity against God. Perhaps some of you can do as I hope I can, you can remember when you hated God actively; you can remember when you first felt a sensation of love to Him. It is in my memory sometimes, the first sensation of love I felt to God, a mighty conquest. O think of it as to its origin. Love is of God. Think of it as to the efficient worker of it - the Holy Spirit. How He came, how He subdued you; how He took away the enmity; how He showed you the loveliness of the Lord Jesus and you believed in Him. You had that sweet sense; you almost said, yea you did perhaps say really - "Lord I love Thee". No-one can tell but the people who get such a sensation, the sweetness of it, the power of it. Now we need to be exhorted about this. John Baptist needed it.

Faith and love got very low in him when he was shut up in prison and he sent to the Lord asking if he had made a mistake in preaching Him. And when faith gets as low as that where is love, for faith and love always are in company. You cannot separate them. Go and tell him what you have seen and what you have heard and say "Blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in Me." Now where this love is it will run to the people of God. If you have a poor friend in need, a godly friend, you will walk in that word in this epistle - Do good to all men, especially to the household of faith. It will run there. Does any brother offend you? If you have love it will run to him. If you have a quarrel against any, forgive even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Love is this, and again it will move you to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Endeavour suggests difficulties. If there are no difficulties in the way of a thing then there is no endeavour needed. Endeavour, in spite of devils, in spite of appearances, in spite of actual hindrances, endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Let us walk in the Spirit. Does the exhortation at all appeal to you as being worthy of your consideration? It is not legal. The Spirit has put it into the gospel. If ye live in the Spirit ye wont fulfil the lusts of the flesh. So says the Word of God. Therefore dear brethren look at this exhortation. There are many other things in the scripture which you know as readers of the scripture for yourselves, exhortations, precepts, all pointing in one direction, that is pointing to God - Leave these things, leave those things, leave the carking, corroding cares of this life, and seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Strive to enter into the straight gate, and innumerable things which you can, as reading the scriptures, see for yourselves, given out as exhortations and as reasons for separation from the world. And then, as you see them, may the Holy Spirit help you to regard them as coming from God; to regard them as having a reference to yourselves; to regard them as being what you should very earnestly desire to obey Him in. Let us walk in the Spirit.

Now I say, perhaps my speaking so frequently from one word may have been tedious to some of you. I hope not. Now may the Lord take hold of our hearts, take hold of this word, put it into our hearts and make us attend to it.