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Sermon Preached at Galeed Chapel, Brighton
by Mr J.K.Popham on Wednesday Evening
1st October 1930

Text: Hebrews 8 verses 11 & 12

And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

These gracious words ensure a true experience to every redeemed sinner, ensuring the removal of that awful ignorance of God, which is the fruit of the fall. Gracious words indeed they are, and all who are interested in them, come under this word, "they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying know the Lord for all (without exception, all) shall know (Him) from the least to the greatest." This does not exclude a teaching ministry, it does not exclude the great truth that God uses the ministry. It does not abrogate God's promise to give pastors and teachers after His own heart, to feed the Church with knowledge and understanding.

The Apostle who writes this word, wrote another word to the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, " Feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20 verse 28). There is no contradiction in the Scripture, one word on the face of it, may seem to be against another, but when looked at in the light of Scriptures, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and in the light of God's dealings in grace and providence, they are seen to be most harmonious. But this promise, this covenant promise, "They shall not teach every man his neighbour," means this, that God will see to it, that His Good Spirit shall so instruct a sinner in respect of himself, that the sinner shall see, without any human means, perhaps without any teacher, and say, I know there is a God. The light, the energy and the gracious unction of the Holy Ghost, will bring this knowledge into the heart of every elected and redeemed sinner. And if it were asked, how is it that the nation, such as this, possessing the Holy Bible, which notwithstanding all the criticism and dishonour done to it in our day by the modernist, is still what booksellers say, is a best seller. How is it that such a nation as this does not know God? The answer is this, that they are not under the word, and if any among us are ignorant of God, it would be a mercy if this solemn, awful truth were impressed on them.

So, to make them say, will God teach us. We know this teaching removes the subject of it far from speculation about God, far from human theory about Jehovah. It brings him into what Paul, in this Epistle, a little further on says, "He that cometh to God must believe that He is," (Hebrews 11 verse 6). Which means this, that there comes a moment when a conviction, a light, and a demonstration of God, is given in the heart and conscience of a sinner, so that, according to the measure of light, and the conviction given, the sinner has to say, I believe in God, which is a great confession. How many of us this evening, could lay our hand on our heart, and with reverence say, I believe in God Jehovah? A person who is thus convinced, understands this. "They shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying know the Lord," he says, I know Him, not much, but I know Him. I believe He is eternal, I believe He is a Trinity, that He is almighty, infinite, that He is what men say, incapable of extension. All creatures are capable of extension, they can grow in knowledge, but God is incapable of extension. Do you believe this? And if we thus know God, we can enter into the spirit of Joshua, when he said to Israel, "Ye cannot serve the Lord: for He is an holy God." (Joshua 24 verse 19). The apprehension of the holiness of God kills flippancy, makes a sinner tremble, and makes him realise that to deal with God, to pray to God, to profess that He is, becomes a very solemn exercise. So this promise is full of encouragement, it says to the ignorant, it wont keep you out of heaven, it wont keep you out of the Bible, it wont keep you out of the gospel. It impresses on the heart the majesty of God, and that brings him to tremble at the word.

I was wishing yesterday particularly, that we might know the majesty of God, the loveliness of Christ, and the intimacy of the Holy Ghost. If we know God thus, we are in the way to heaven. "They shall all know Me," they shall all know Me without human teaching, without human demonstration, without human light. They shall have a light and a demonstration and teaching in the heart, that shall bring them to know, and not guess or speculate, but know. It may not be much, and may none of us pretend to know more than we really do. But a little true knowledge is eternal life. "And this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." (John 17 verse 3). And the intimacy of the Spirit of God which every saint has, an acquaintance with means, His indwelling, His teaching, His condescending mercy, His checks in the conscience, His motions in the heart, His forbidding and prompting, and it is a great mercy to have this demonstration, this intimacy.

My brethren, look for these three things in your soul's, and pray

that you may have them. A knowledge of the majesty of God, there is not much of it today apparently. No doubt God still has His seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal, (1 Kings 19 verse 18). But apparently there are not many comparatively who know God's majesty. That means men can trifle with His name, use it lightly, flippantly and constantly. Secondly the Loveliness of Christ, God in Him, and the blaze of glory at Calvary's cross, irradiating the lovely beams of grace and goodness, forgiveness, justification and acceptance. Oh the light of truth, the life of truth, the beauty of truth, the weight of truth, as irradiating, scattering by means of mercy from that wondrous centre. The centre of which Paul speaks, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," (Galations 6 verse 14).

"And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." (Isaiah 54 verse 13). And if each child of God here of any standing, would speak about himself, and herself in this particular thing, each would say, that they had something in secret from God, some touch of the Spirit, some life from the Spirit, some beams of light from the Spirit whereby they became acquainted with God. In some particular or some office of His character, in some of His wondrous doings, in some of His blessed promises that are yea and amen in Christ. A religion that has no privacy in it, that has no dealing with God in secret in it, is a poor religion which will not stand the shacking of temptation and of death when pressed.

"Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." (Matthew 6 verse 6). And that will make a man's face to shine, "and oil to make his face to shine." (Psalm 104 verse 15). This is where people deal with God, and God deals with them, this is where they get communications, Impressions, teachings, removing them from speculation about the Deity.

This is far from saying what God ought to be, or should be, or what He cannot do, all these heresies which belong to our nature are removed as to their dominion when we get something from God in secret. A secret religion dwelling in the secret place of the Most High. Hiding under the shadow of His wings, and getting beams of light and mercy from this blessed book, in the hand of the Spirit. So that they did not need a minister to say, do you know the Lord, for they do know Him, in the way that He teaches them His being.

I would like to be enabled to keep this truth before you, in these my last days - that you have to do with a great God. A glorious being is

Jehovah, who subsists in three Persons, some may say, O we know all about that, well I do not say that you do not, but it may not be an impertinent question to ask you, how do you know? It is not only a question of what you know but how you know it, Jesus said, "Take heed what you hear:"(Mark 4 verse 24). and also "Take heed therefore how ye hear:" (Luke 8 verse 18), and on another occasion, "Take heed therefore that the light that is in thee be not darkness." (Luke 11 verse 35)., and also "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness" (Matthew 6 verse 23). There is an instructor in the Church, Jesus Christ, who said, "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me". (John 6 verse 45). That is a great point, and tells us this, that coming to Christ is the fruit of divine teaching, the fruit of sweet attraction for the Father opens, as it were to the view of faith His Son, His beloved Son. And the completed work of the Son shows that what the Son is, and what the Son did exactly meets the case. It tells a sinner, here is a Saviour, it tells a ragged polluted creature, here is a robe of righteousness to cover you, and to a creature steeped in sin, here is blood to cleanse the blackest soul, and wash away each stain. So dear friends, this is a great point in saving religion. "They shall no more (it is secured to them in the covenant) say one to another know the Lord for all shall know Him." And that brings out, what the Lord said, "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." "Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ." (Matthew 23 verses 8 & 10). Christ is your teacher, and He will give you that knowledge, that shall cause you to say, I know the Lord. From the least of them to the greatest of them, the least may be an idiot and will not his lack of brain hinder him? No, an idiot is as capable of receiving a revelation of God, as is the man with the acutest intellect, because true religion has its seat in the soul, not in the brain. And that will be opened up to those who feel their ignorance a very great encouragement.

It says, God does not want your brain, he may use it afterwards, but with respect to knowing Himself He neither needs it nor will have it. Here is a sinner, and God says, I have loved him, I have redeemed him, he has no understanding naturally, a poor ignorant person, without any brain power, yet he is Mine and I will teach him to know Me, this is a great thing. Similarly John the Baptist when in his mother's womb, leaped for joy, when the mother of Jesus visited Elizabeth his mother. Blessed be God this is a teaching that does not depend on the brain, a life, an energy, a penetrating light that entering a sinner, says, there is a God.

And poor Yeddy, a boy in Scotland known as the village idiot, said, he had seen Yon Lovely Man, who had taught him? He had been taught

of God. Another case from Scotland, where a Minister visiting a house was about to take family worship, asked if everyone was present. He was told all except the kitchen maid, and he insisted that she be brought in. He found her ignorant that she even had a soul, so he asked her to pray to God using these words, Lord show me myself. After a time he again visited the house, and said to the girl, did you pray that prayer as I asked you? She told him of her sad experience in finding her sinfulness, her ruin and that she was lost. He told her, that he wished her to pray another prayer, Lord show me Thyself, which she did and the Lord answered that prayer also, when she rejoiced in God her Saviour. Years afterwards an elderly woman called at the Minister house, and gave him a present of something she had made for him, saying do you remember the kitchen maid? She told him that she was that same girl. It was God's teaching, and if we are the subjects of that same teaching, then we shall know the Lord. We shall know the Father, we shall know the Son, and we shall know the Holy Ghost. From the least to the greatest, including the whole Church of God, "All shall know Me".

The next verse tells what the Lord will do, and it seems as if this is a foundation for all the rest. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." No unforgiven sinner will be found in heaven, if that is true, then every exercised person will say, may I know that my sins are forgiven. In speaking of forgiveness, I would take notice of it in three particulars. First, is the origin of it, which is God's eternal purpose to have a people before him in love without spot or blame. Without the blame of original sin, without the blame of actual transgressions. They are to stand before Him, spotless without wrinkle, blemish or any such thing. And the Apostle writes this to the Ephesians, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." (Ephesians 1 verses 3-5).

He also speaks to the same effect in Romans, "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son," (Romans 8 verse 29). without sin or any blemish. This puts true religion on a very high plain, far above all human conceptions. "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him." (Isaiah 64 verse 4). May He raise our eyes to this, that there is eternal predestination to holiness, but this

cannot be without forgiveness, without the removal of sin. For sin must be removed, if a person who is a sinner is to be without sin. Men may say this is not possible, it is not among men. When a person has committed a wrong action against another, that action will always remain, although you may forgive the wrong, you cannot justify the guilty person. Sin remains, but shall God be judged by that fact.? Shall we judge the infinite God and say because we cannot justify, even though we may forgive, therefore He cannot justify? Because we cannot wash a black thing, and make it white, does that mean that God cannot do it? All things are possible with God, therefore the origin, the rise of all things is in God, the Eternal Trinity.

Brethren hold this fast, redemption was not a future with God, it did not rise after the fall, there can be no future with God, all His purposes must be eternal. The next word I would say, is this, regarding the promoter of forgiveness. Forgiveness is no arbitrary act of God, forgiveness must have justice in it as well as mercy. And this must be, and only could be done, by a substitute. A substitute appointed, a substitute accepted, and Jesus is that Substitute, He took the place of sinners,

He took the dying traitor's place,
And suffered in his stead;
For man (O miracle of grace!)
For man the Saviour bled. (Gadsby's 95 verse 3)

And thus Christ procured this great blessing, He obtained (as it is written) eternal redemption for His people. (Hebrews 9 verse 12). "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree," (1 Peter 2 verse 24), A divine statement that, a statement that will stand and shine through eternity. He Himself, a Substitute, the sinless Saviour made sin, which was imputed to Him. His Father made Him to be sin, He was born of a woman, that He might be capable of bearing sin, and sin was imputed to Him, and that was why He was crucified. The curse came to Him, (the curse of the law) that the blessing might fall on His Church. He was a Priest, and He officiated as a Priest on the cross. "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." (Hebrews 8 verse 3). This man had somewhat to offer even Himself. A Levitical priest had a Temple in which to offer, This man had a temple even His own body. When the Lord Jesus said "It is finished", salvation was procured, assured, made an absolute certainty.

And so when God forgives sin, justice and mercy, righteousness and peace, truth and equity all unite, and a sinner goes free. Freed from

his sins, his debts are paid, his pollution purged from him, and he stands accepted in the beloved.

Now my third remark is this, the forgiveness of sin, in the origin of it, in God, in the procurement of it in Christ, it becomes an experience, and this brings us off, if I may so say, brings us together, and brings us to one point, forgiveness.

Forgiveness! 'tis a joyful sound
To malefactors doomed to die (Gadsby's 755 verse 1)

What makes it a welcome sound? A sense of sin, and it may be, and wherever it is truly felt, it is good, it is wholesome, a sense of original sin, that we were condemned in the Adam fall. A sense of actual transgression, that we have gone "astray as soon as they (we) were born, speaking lies." (Psalm 58 verse 3). "That the thought of (men's hearts) his heart (are) was only evil and that continually." (Genesis 6 verse 5). Men under the convicting light of the Spirit realise this, and more or less distinctly, they feel that sin is in them, that it covers them, that they are drenched in it, and then it is that the forgiveness of sin becomes a wonderful mercy, and a sweet experience. Forgiveness is an act, it is an act of the person against whom it has been done, passed upon him, who has done it. And this forgiveness is God's act passed upon the conscience of a man who has sinned, and whose sins are more in number than the hairs of his head. After this every Spirit taught sinner pants, for this he prays, "For Thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." (Psalm 25 verse 11).

"God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18 verse 13). "Lord remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom." (Luke 23 verse 42). "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness," Hebrews 8 verse 12). "Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him." (Zechariah 3 verses 3 & 4). And the adversary was there, Satan was there to resist him. God took him in hand first, he rebuked him, and so to speak, put him out of court. What has Satan to do with it? He has got nothing to do with you. He may be about you, he may plague you, He may tell you that your sin is not forgivable, He may tell you that God can only glorify Himself by condemning you to eternal perdition. But it is no business of his, whether the Lord will forgive a sinner or not.

So the Lord put him out of court, and now He has got Joshua and taken away his filthy garments. Not to leave him naked and exposed to justice, but to fit him with a change of raiment, thus God is merciful to

his unrighteousness. Clothing him with a new robe, as broad as God's law, in all its commandments, spotless as God's light, and so Joshua had this mercy, and sinners that is what you will have. If you are mourning your filthy rags, you have this to receive. A change of raiment, a robe of infinite worth, a true and proper justification brought to your soul, spoken on your conscience. "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more". How does this come, how does this become an experience? According to this truth, this scripture, it must be so. Forgiveness is not always in the heart of God, and never communicated, it could do no good if it lodged always there, but it is communicated, and in the chapter which I read, we are told how it is done. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:" (Hebrews 9 verse 13). You will remember how this was done, there is an unclean person brought to the priest, and there is a method, a means, provided whereby this unclean person shall come again into the Sanctuary. Running water, ashes of the heifer sprinkled on, takes away his uncleanness, So says Paul, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot o God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9 verse 14)

Peter says, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, (1 Peter 1 verses 18 & 19). He is speaking there of an experience, "Ye know," you are purged, forgiven, that all your sins against God and your own soul, God has forgiven, and He has done it by the blood of Christ, and you know it. O what a day, that is to a sinner, when the Lord tells him, He has forgiven all his sins. It is many years ago since He told me that, and I have added transgressions without number, but there is that blessed forgiveness for sins past, sins present, and sins to come to the very end, all put away. And the boldness of this is intimated to us thus "will I remember no more". Not only forgiven but put away, so as never to be present to him again. As when a thing has slipped out of your memory, it does not exist to you for the time. So God will never have in His view again, those sins which He purged from a sinner, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. There is such an experience as this, and some of us know it, but there is such an experience as wounding and defiling your conscience from time to time by fresh sins.

And that is a painful experience, but the Lord renews it. Peter got a sweet renewal of it when the forgiveness as it were, was conveyed to him by that look of Christ, and he went out and wept bitterly. And John

writing in his first Epistle said, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1 verse 9). It is very wonderful to be enabled to get these reckonings and cleansings and renewals of forgiveness in the soul, and to believe that the Lord will never rake up the old score, but as He says, He will "cast all my (our) sins behind Thy (His) back." (isaiah 38 verse 17). casting them into the depths of the sea. And He will remember them no more.

Dear friends this is in the covenant, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel." "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people." "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jeremiah 31 verses 31, 33 & 34) This covenant remains, "In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old, Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." Hebrews 8 verse 13). It may be decaying in some of you, but not vanished as yet from your mind, as being over you to curse you. It may be vanishing, decaying, and every touch of God's mercy will cause this old covenant to decay a little more. Every view of Christ will also weaken it in your conscience. All the glimpses you get of the glory of Christ in redeeming sinners, dying for them, rising for them, ascending into heaven for them. All visible views will weaken the law in the conscience, and cause it to decay little by little. It is good, when suddenly and fully it is done as in some cases, but in many cases it gradually decays, weakens, and hope strengthens, hope in Christ. Hope looks forward to full deliverance. May it be so for those of us who have a living religion, and real hope in the mercy of God.

Now may the Lord guide our hearts into this truth, bring it to us in the power of the Spirit, and enable us to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name." (Psalm 103 verse 1).

Amen