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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel, Brighton
on Sunday evening 3 August 1930

John 16 verses 13 and 14

"Howbeit when He the Spirit of truth
is come, He will guide you into all truth,
for He shall not speak of Himself, but
whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak
and He shall show you things to come. He shall
glorify Me, for He shall receive of
Mine and shall show it unto you"

The gospel is the manifestation, the revelation of the love of God. It is the gospel for sinners, for all who despair of helping themselves, who feel their rags, their unrighteousnesses, their pollution; who may be feeling from time to time their utter inability to reach the things which they read and which they desire. To such the gospel says there is the good Spirit of Christ to reveal Him, to bring His things into the soul. It is the gospel of love infinite, of divine compassion, of eternal righteousness. And perhaps this latter character of the gospel is less before us than it is good for us that it should be. God is not less righteous in the gospel than He is in the law. The law vindicates Him; so does the gospel. The law says He will be content with nothing but perfection. The gospel reveals that He is content with righteousness. The law says perfection must be brought; the gospel brings it. Justification is a doctrine most sweet, but have we often realised the ground and reason of justification; that it is absolutely a righteous justification; that it is not a mere remission of punishment, but it is the removal of sin; that as sin burdens the sinner with guilt and guilt entails death, the gospel reveals that that guilt, the death, the guilty death, is altogether taken away, so that the sinner forgiven and led into this by the Spirit will again and again look, if I may speak so, look the Almighty in the face and believe that his salvation is just and look for God's love to the end. What is the ground of the justification of a sinner? Why

is God able, and why does He not only remit punishment, but justify the person entirely from that which deserves punishment? It is because God made His Son to be sin that all for whom He was made sin might be made the righteousness of God in Him. O dear fellow sinners, what a gospel has God revealed in Holy Scripture; a gospel of grace; a gospel that fills the sinner with graces, that begets repentance, love, contrition, humility, peace, strength, and comfort, and promises eternal felicity. I apprehend that this gospel is in the text; that there is no sin save that against the Holy Ghost, that cannot, that shall not, be forgiven to every repenting sinner; and the repentance that pleases God is a fruit of the Spirit. This promise of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of truth, is a wide promise; as wide as the woe and the ignorance and the fears of poor sinners to whom it is made over. Let us look then as enabled a little this evening at this great promise, that the Spirit of truth, of whom one spoke a little this morning, shall bear witness. He is to do this great thing, namely, to glorify Christ. That is to say, He is to give the knowledge of Christ. To give the knowledge of Christ means that the Spirit is to teach sinners, to guide them. "The meek will He guide in judgment; the meek will He teach His way". The glorifying of Christ means the uplifting, setting up, setting forth, and opening and displaying what Christ is in His Person, in His work, in His love, in His death, in His burial, in His resurrection, in His ascension into heaven. It takes in the whole of Christ as He is to be known here, as He will be known through eternity. You will see at once that the subject is so great that one cannot expect to do more than, as enabled, just touch it, just whisper about it so to speak. And God the Spirit is the One who is not only able to glorify Him but who is promised to glorify Him and, I may add, who loves to glorify Him. There are some of us who could not live if we had not a hope in the Person of Jesus Christ. He is the subject of all subjects. He said of Himself - "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me" which says that He is to be an attraction. There is to be in Him, and known to be in Him, an attraction. It I may use the word, a pulling of sinners. They have much to oppose them, to hinder them, to keep them away.

Unbelief, sin in their members, the temptations of the devil, carnal reasons and reasonings all stand in the way and say, as it were, you will never reach Him. But Christ's promise ensures, reaches him - "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto Me". What is meant by "all men" you have opened in other Scriptures. In the Revelation they sing "Unto Him who loved us and redeemed us out of all nations, kindreds, tongues, tribes and peoples". Now this glorifying of Christ. He is full, full of all that is needed, and the glorifying of Him is the opening out and speaking of and bringing near to, yea within the souls of sinners whose cry is - "Jesus reveal Thyself to Me"

First, what do we need as fallen creatures? We need what we have not, a righteousness that God will accept. A righteousness that God will accept must needs be perfect, no flaw in it. Righteousness is judged by a law, a law given and obeyed. The person who obeys it is, in respect of it, righteous. God's law is a righteous law and the duty of man is to obey that law. And the man who obeys it gets, shall I put it so, gets his wages; he is accepted. You know the terms of the law - Love God with all your heart and all your mind and all your soul and all your strength, and your neighbour as yourself. That is an inflexible law, an eternal law, never to be abrogated, never to be altered, never to be in the least degree mitigated. To meet the case of the person who has made a breach in it, we need a righteousness that God will accept and this is called the righteousness of faith, the righteousness which is of God by faith. Paul had this in his mind, this was his pursuit; this was what he aimed at. "That I may win Christ and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law" - therefore defective - "but the righteousness which is of God by faith, the righteousness of Christ". And this is that righteousness that Paul speaks of in the chapter which I read (Romans 3 v 21) which is manifested without the law, that is, without the deeds of the law done by any person save Jesus Christ. In the Psalms He said, by the Psalmist - "Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will O My God, yea, Thy law is within My heart". And the commandment of His Father was this, to obey.

And, inasmuch as sin was in the matter, His obedience had to reach death. "He was obedient unto death even the death of the cross". And by dying the guilty death of His people He brought in everlasting righteousness. This is what we need.

Righteousness to full perfection
Must be brought,
Lacking nought
Fearless of rejection

And faith in this righteousness, standing in the power of God, will take this righteousness of the Lord Jesus and present it to His Father in boldness and enable a sinner to say

Bold shall I stand in that great day
For who ought to my charge shall lay

The Spirit is to glorify Christ then in this great, this fundamental particular - The righteousness that is of God by faith. Faith is that instrument or hand that God gives to a sinner to receive, or to lay hold of, this righteousness. Christ is this, and faith lays hold on Him. Faith lays hold of God's strength; Christ is God's strength. Faith brings this righteousness for acceptance and the sinner is "accepted in the Beloved". Faith mentions this righteousness alone and the sinner gets a smile from God through and in and by this righteousness. A sinner would fain be near to God and he is near because he is righteous. He would fain serve God and he serves God in righteousness, even the righteousness of His dear Son. He would stand before God's great white throne and fear no rejection, no condemnation, no banishment, and he so stands in this righteousness. Has the Spirit glorified Christ to us in this respect? Have we seen Jesus Christ to be "the Lord our righteousness"? Have we magnified the Lord in this particular saying "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength"; righteousness for justification; strength to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh; strength to resist sin in my members. Paul walked after the Spirit as in the conflict which

he tells us about in the 7 Romans. Then in the 8 chapter he says in the first verse "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit". They are not righteous because they walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, but they so walk because they are righteous in the Lord Jesus. Righteousness therefore begets, as it is known from the Spirit, a proper, godly walk of faith. "We walk by faith not by sight" This sinner, you must have; you must have it sinner or be condemned in your own guilt and poverty. There is no middle way; justification or condemnation; acceptance or rejection; heaven or hell. If there is anything in the Word of God, in the whole world, that can be said to be encouraging respecting eternity, it is this full gospel, this righteous gospel. If there is anything that will beget repentance, out of which will be borne love, it is this blessed gospel. If there is anything that will make us delight ourselves in the Lord, it is this gospel of righteousness, perfect righteousness. When the Holy Spirit reveals it, He then fulfils this promise - "He shall glorify Me". He shall set Me up before the believing eye of a sorrowing sinner, that I am his righteousness. "I, if I be lifted up" He is lifted up in this way. Scripture lifts Him up; the Spirit lifts Him up; faith admires Him as lifted up and embraces Him, closes in with Him. "Close in with Christ" O poor, distraught, self-despairing, weak believer.

Close in with Christ by saving faith
And God's your friend for ever

I may add here that when this exaltation of the Lord Jesus by the Holy Ghost takes place in a sinner, no matter how afflicted, burdened, perplexed and distressed that sinner may be, he is happy. He may yet have his troubles; God may not, for a time, even before death, deliver that person out of their perplexity and their troubles, yet that person is happy. Happy in his state; happy in his feeling; happy under trouble; happy in the prospect that this righteousness sets before him, this righteousness makes his own. So faith walks, so faith obeys, so

faith works love, so faith brings obedience. Christ our righteousness.

If I dwell on this, to some of you perhaps it may seem tedious, but the importance of it is such that one cannot well exaggerate it. But it needs heavenly wisdom and skill to speak well about this righteousness, this covering, this removal of filthy rags, this clothing of a sinner with a robe that is beautiful and makes him pleasing to God; that enables him to bring an offering in righteousness and with which God is well pleased. O sinner if you are righteous in Christ, all is well. It ensures perseverance; it ensures a smile occasionally; it ensures the comfort of love and the fellowship of the Spirit. A righteous person is a person well-pleasing to God.

He glorifies Christ in the next place by showing Him to be the life and the strength of a sinner. Christ said a word which, taken alone, may seem very discouraging, may seem to set true religion at a great discount in the mind of a man. I mean that word - "In the world ye shall have tribulation". That is God's ordained way; escape it no child of God can. It means trouble; it means the mortification of the flesh; it means that the thing we would indulge has to be crucified. The taking up of the cross, the denial of self, the following of Christ. It means being squeezed through the eye of a needle, not easy. There are some afflictions that have a peculiar, painful effect, at any rate in the beginning of them; an effect that perplexes; namely, they bring to light the worst parts of our nature. An affliction may come and the very start of it makes you rebel. This thing you do not want, you will not have; in this path you will not walk; to this you cannot, you will not submit. So says flesh. Now God is determined with His disciples; He is determined with them. An unwise parent may allow the child's refusal to attend school and learn, but God is wise, and a determined teacher. And so, when He sends tribulation to be a teacher, the sinner has to submit to it. While he rebels, he finds rebellion must add to the trouble, for it brings him into a dry place. It makes him like a garden without water. All graces

languish - faith droops; hope gets all but dead; love waxes cold. What is it that enables the person who has rebelled, refused and stubbornly stuck to himself, to submit and say "The will of the Lord be done?" No lightening of the cross, no easing of the yoke, no padding of it. No! everything remaining the same in the trouble. The change is in the mind, in the will, in the understanding and it is brought about, a light shining on the road that leads to the Lamb. The light shining on the road is a light that manifests the kindness and the love of God and the wisdom of God. O His wisdom in ordering trouble. The light that shines on a word perhaps like this- "I will correct thee, but in measure. The word "measure" is a heavenly word, a lovely word, an acceptable word; "in measure". Some troubles have no measure; they end in eternal misery. Sanctified trouble in the church of God, in a particular person, a believer, has a measure. There is a measure to all the trouble that you have O people of God. Christ's strength begins to be felt, then the sinner accepts the punishment, the tribulation, the difficulty, the pain, the mortification. And he says - Here am I Lord; do with me as seemeth Thee good; only be my God, and Saviour; only bless me, be with me. Be with me to the end; be with me in temptation's fire, and cause me to know that beautiful Scripture, all-embracing Scripture - "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." This lifts up Christ as the strength of God. He is the strength of faith, the strength of hope, the strength of love, the strength of repentance, the strength of submission to the will of God, the strength of faith enabling a sinner to accept what God sends. Much of the kingdom of grace lies here, the kingdom under the control of the King, God's King whom He has set up on His holy hill. A sinner may little apprehend how much is done for him and in him when grace is given to him to submit himself unreservedly to the will of God. One feeling may accompany this submission even; a sinner may come to this point, to say, "Lord I gladly submit; I do not want a creature; I have all I need in Thyself." This glorifies Christ; it puts out all rivals, false gods; self, with all the idolatry of self. Everything put down, and the experience at this time answers to that Scripture - "Having every thought

brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." A glorious kingdom this, standing in the power of God, grinding to powder, and scattering with the wind as chaff is blown. This blessed kingdom stands alone in the power of the Lord Jesus.

He glorifies Christ in the eyes of all believers as their King. They often pray - "Reign o'er us as King". A King has His Kingdom's interests at heart. Jesus, the King for Zion, set up by God, has the interests of His subjects at heart. He looks after them. Not only does He attend to their interests, but He watches their enemies. Their chief enemy the devil, and men and heresies, and all kinds of opposition to Himself and to them, Christ has in view and He takes all injuries done to His people as done to Himself. "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" We have a King; our King says "I will be thy King". And faith says - "Lord, reign over us as King". And the Spirit brings His Kingly power before faith, and exercises it in the soul for its protection. And then, one may say, faith looks on this as an unspeakable honour, to be on the side of the King of kings; to be a subject of the King of kings; to be able to put all your interests and cares under His protection; to have audience of Him occasionally; to have some manifestation of a rule here as to this conduct, and the guidance there as to that which must be done or left untouched. The work of our king is very great, very wonderful. And the Spirit of God lifts Him up - King of kings. Speaking in the Proverbs the Lord Jesus says - "By Me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By Me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth", which says He is the King of them all; over all of them. And the Spirit lifts Him up. This King gives His ordinances, rules; He is Master in His own house, King over His own subjects. And that means they are not to devise their own ways; not to devise their own ways but to walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. O what an exaltation of Christ have some of us seen at times and that has made faith so strong as to say to Him - "My times are in Thy hand", my difficulties are under Thy control; my enemies are under Thy management; my sins, Thou art able to subdue. A soul prospers here. There is true prosperity in submission

to the King; there is real blessing in submitting to the King, in coming to His footstool, in having the golden sceptre held out to you and your faith has power to touch it. There is great prosperity of soul here. Here it is that a spirit is spiritually minded which is life and peace. The Spirit's work is to do this, to glorify this Lord Jesus; absent yet present in heaven; yet in the heart always loving and occasionally showing love; always taking care of a sinner and occasionally letting that sinner know that He cares for him; noticing loyalty, resenting disloyalty. This disloyalty means the rod, the reproof, the correction and all this is made acceptable to faith when the Spirit of God lifts up our King before the eye of faith. Thus then it is that the false gods and kings all fall down before Him. Here love has her scope; yes, love has her scope here and love sings with good Berridge

The God of spirits only can
Fill up the vast desires of man

O it swells the soul, so to speak, with fervent desires to receive full satisfaction from Him who alone has satisfying love, satisfying righteousness, satisfying mercy, satisfying compassion, satisfying intercession, and satisfying rule. Whatever belongs to Him, as revealed, pleases faith. The Spirit's work is a beautiful work, an amazingly beautiful work. He glorifies Christ.

AMEN