

Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham
at Galeed Chapel, Brighton
on Sunday evening 26 June 1921

PSALM 40 v 16

"Let all those that seek Thee rejoice and be glad
in Thee; let such as love Thy salvation
say continually, The LORD be magnified"

The great end of Christ's coming is His glory, and the glory of His Father, and the glory of the Holy Ghost in the effectual redemption and ultimate glorification of all His people. He will be sought unto, He will be found, of all who seek Him. He makes Himself glorious in their eyes. They see Him by faith, feel Him in their hearts betimes. They perceive the sufficiency of Christ, and desire to realise it in their own hearts. Christ is glorious in Himself, but He will be glorified in His children, in all them that believe, and it becomes a matter of concern with each one who is born again to know for himself that he has an interest in that person in whom the Father is well pleased.

In speaking to you this morning on this text I drew your attention to its context, that is to say, to the entire Psalm. A Psalm - this emphatically is a Psalm - of Jesus Christ. No mere man will ever answer to the whole of this Psalm. No experience that a sinner may have, however deep, however clear; no obedience that may ever be wrought in him, however sincere, and universal, will ever bring him to the height of this Psalm. This Psalm is as high as God's throne. The obedience spoken of in it is the obedience of the God-Man. The love of it, is the love of the Trinity. The grace of it, is the grace that saves wherever it comes. O, it is a great Psalm. The Mediator speaks in it. In it He confesses to all the sin He had imputed to Him. In it He declares His willingness to do the will of His Father, which will was in His heart. O sinner, if you are sick of yourself, if you are taught by the Spirit the evil of sin, if you are weary of looking at the abominations of your own heart, if you are tired of struggling, and sick, and ashamed of the failures which attend all your struggles, may you be turned to look at Him who is in

this Psalm, and who intercedes for such as you in the text. "Let all those that seek Thee rejoice and be glad in Thee". The death of Christ is the way to the Father. The intercession of Christ is that that prevails for every one who comes to God by Christ. When people rightly seek, they seek for a foundation. On this I made a few remarks this morning.

Now I would proceed, by the help of God, to speak for a short time on several other important, and beautiful, and attractive points in our most holy faith. And, first of all, does it not appear to every convinced sinner a marvel of God's love, of God's greatness, that He should, that He could, and that He did, in eternity embrace pieces of sinful clay, persons utterly corrupted, condemned by the law, under which they are; full of sin, the sin of rebellion, the sin of all corruption. O, it is great in the eyes of God's people that God could and did love such persons as they find themselves to be, and when they see this free love, what do they do? They seek it. No tongue can tell what beauty self-condemned, and self-abhorred sinners see in that wondrous Scripture - "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love". A love that embraced people who, in their nature, are corrupted, and hypocrites, and everything that is evil. Yet this God, great and eternal God, loved such, and their desire is, their seeking is, their fervent petition is, that He would tell them that He loves them. You perceive that in yourselves - those of you who answer to the description I have just ventured to give of human nature - there is no ground of assurance of this; that there is no reason in yourselves to believe this; that your convictions of sin make you think it impossible that this can be; that your sense of evil, your sense of being law breakers, of always doing, and wishing to do, things which are contrary to God is against this. There is One, and only One, who can assure a guilty, self-condemned person, that God loves him, and that is God Himself. He must appear in His graciousness, and say in His power - "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love". And He will so impress His love upon His dealings with a person loved, as that He will say - "Therefore, with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Love is impressed on God's dealings with His loved people. His providence is love, though it come in a very ugly form sometimes. His rebukes are in love, though they cut deep. His frowns are love, although they seem to repel, and

put away a sinner. His absence is love. He makes the soul long for Him by His absence. Rutherford well puts it; he says - The Lord's wise love feeds His people with hunger and makes them fat with desertion; and people come to know that sooner or later. It is a great thing to be seeking the God of love who could not be put off by anything in the object of His love; who could not be turned away from loving him. The church is loved, not because she is the greatest in number, or any other thing in the world. 'Tis with her as with the Jews, the Lord loved them because He would love them, and each one to whom this love comes says in his own heart sooner or later - "On such love my soul still ponder".

Now there are three ways for me to mention to you in which this matchless, eternal, endless love of God is manifested, and first is in the gift of His Son, His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. No other manifestation of it will ever reach to the height of this. This stands alone; all other manifestations of it are the effect of this. This is first, this is last, this is everything, all God's heart. His ineffable love, His infinite pity, His wondrous compassion, His divine power, His longsuffering, all, all are made known, and shine in this one matchless gift, standing alone in its greatness, in its freeness, in its sufficiency, in its wide embrace of the whole church of the living God, the gift of Jesus Christ. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift". And that gift does exhibit God. Neither here, nor hereafter, will any creature look on God apart from, and without the intervention of, the Lord Jesus. He stands in the midst of the throne. And particularly He manifests this love by His death. "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends." "Ye are My friends" says Christ. Christ died for His children when they were without strength, that is, when they were guilty. God commends His love towards His people in that while they were without strength, Christ died for them. In this was love, the love of God manifested, because that He sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him, and live through Him because He is the propitiation for our sins. O, would you see the love of God in all its glorious blaze, in all its ineffable beauty, in its tenderness, in its far reaching effects, then you will have to go, under the leading of the Eternal Spirit, to the cross. There it is, there the Redeemer said - "It is finished", that is, the work His

Father gave Him to do. There He grappled with all enemies that He, and His church alike, had, and overcame them. There He destroyed him that had the power of death. There He swallowed up hell, the hell of His people. There He took away their guilt, their death. There He made a full and absolute atonement, so that all of them for whom that atonement was made shall come to the enjoyment of it. There was a great company at the cross. I mean not men. The Roman soldier was there, the mocking Jew was there, the Pharisee was there, the tempted disciple standing afar off was there, but there was another company. Yes, there was justice infinite, there was righteousness everlasting, there was mercy with all her tenderness, her bowels, there was peace with all her serenity, at the cross. And there they were to harmonize, and righteousness to gladly justify the mercy manifested to a hell-deserving sinner. At the cross mercy rejoiced against judgement as justice was satisfied by the death of Christ. All should harmonize there, where otherwise those wondrous attributes must remain incompatible. But they are not incompatible in the Person of Christ, in salvation and divine glory. They come together here. Righteousness and peace kiss each other here. Mercy and truth meet in everlasting amity here. O here is the truth of God, the righteousness of God, the love of God, the pity of God, and the glory of God. Yes, but says a sinner, that is true. What I want to know is whether I am a partaker of that glory? And what course do you take then? What is the manner of your heart's life? Well, one says, the manner of my heart's life is this, I call on God. I call on His great Name. If that is so, let me tell you what the Holy Ghost has said about you. It is as if He had put your name in the Epistle to the Romans, in this Scripture - "Whosoever shall call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved". He shall seek - he does seek in calling - he shall find in manifestation. "They that seek shall find". What is this but seeking the kingdom of God. And what is it when you seek the love of God, but seeking His kingdom to be in your heart? "The kingdom of God is within you". And no more wonderful setting up of the kingdom can there be than in the manifestation of the love of God in the Person and death of Christ. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation". It is not in meat, it is not in drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and to good men. (Romans 14 v 17/18). They that seek shall find this, find this

precious love. Love has been the convoy of every child of God from his birth. Watched over him in his wild days, his unregenerate life. Looked after him when he had no thought of God, when he sported with death, when he thought he did right, and good to walk after the course of this world, and obey the prince of the power of the air. Love sent the arrow of conviction. Love brought him low, gave him a wound that no creature could heal, no human remedy could cure. Love brought him to his knees, love poured prayer into his heart, love gave him boldness in pleading with God. Love gave him knowledge to mention the Name and the righteousness of Christ. Love is in it all. All is in love. The religion of Jesus Christ is emphatically a religion of love. Love comes from heaven and carries to heaven. It came from heaven in Christ's Person. It will carry you to heaven through the Person and the death of Christ. Love is beautiful. It is not weak, it is not weakness. Love is strong, stronger than death. Love is precious. Gold and silver cannot purchase it.

The love of Christ is rich and free
Fixed on His Own eternally

Let all those that seek the God of love be glad and rejoice. A seeker seeks to know, and be fixed upon, the death of Christ. Christ's death is the life of His people. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly". Yes, when you rightly live, you live on the death of Christ. As you live before God, you live by the death of Christ. When your conscience is purified, it is purified by the death of Christ. When you are happy, you are happy in the death of Christ. When accepted of God, you are accepted by the death of Christ. Death in Him, the death He died, is the life that you live, that is to say, you live because He died. He put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and where that is there can be no death. Now an experience of this sets the soul free. You read in the Romans: Reckon yourselves dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ. (Romans 6 v 11). Yes, sinner, and when you find the Lord you will make that reckoning. Look into your heart and you cannot make that reckoning. See the seething lusts there, and as you feel them; look at the horrible things that live in you, and which the tempter tries to make you live in, because they are so lively and so strong. When you look at your failures, your aversion to prayer, your lack of love,

of faith, of knowledge of Christ; how can you reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin? Why, the child of God feels that his heart is the habitation of every unclean bird and thing. And how then can he reckon himself to be dead to sin? It seems a contradiction for him to mention it, and a mockery to him to have it mentioned to him as belonging to him. O, but the death of Christ will explain it in his conscience. It will show him that that precious death on the cross not only bought his soul, and his very body too, but that it procured for him, and will become in him, a victory over these abominations. He will tread on living enemies when Christ gives the victory to him. Yes, you will put the foot of faith sometimes on the neck of living lusts, living practical atheism, and the many things that distress and distract you, and you will say - "Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ". And this will make you glad. A sinner convinced of his filthy rags seeks a robe divine, a robe wrought out by the God-Man, a robe so exact, so perfect, so pure, as that the eye of God and the scrutiny of the law can find no flaw in it. The people of God do not want a salvation at the expense of God's honour. They could not do with a righteousness of that sort. But there is revealed to them, revealed in the Scriptures and then brought to the view of their faith, that perfect robe that honours the law, that pleases the Father, and justifies the person of a sinner. They seek this.

They seek also that they may have communications of grace and power made to their souls by the Eternal Spirit. There is a religion that is destitute of this; it is called the form of godliness but which is a denial of the power thereof. From this, as from the professors of it, the children of God are to turn. There is a religion that stands in the power of God and that consists in the life of Christ, the teaching of the Spirit, that grows in the soul by the communications of the Spirit. He it is who takes of Christ's things, and shows them to the saints. How often we who, as we believe, fear God, find ourselves looking at the things which are seen; at our trials, our mortifications, and the many things which are contrary to God in us. We look at them. And further, how often we are guilty of going against Christ's Word - "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness". Seek not those things which perish. "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto

everlasting life." But when the grace of God flourishes, when the truth of God is in a sinner's soul, then it is different. Then divine things shine, they are uppermost, they are the best. O, yes, a sinner seeks them then, and then he wants to be near his God, to have fellowship with his Friend, and Brother, Jesus Christ. Then he would swim in the river which no man can pass. Then he would be daily partaking of the fruit of that tree that bears fresh fruit continually every month, as it is written, and have applied to him the leaves of that tree, which are for the healing of the nations. He would be near God. O, but I am so far off, one says. The Lord can bring you near. But I am afraid I am a hypocrite. Well, the Lord will never tell you you are altogether upright in your nature, never. If you expect comfort in your own soul on the ground of perfect sincerity, you will die a disappointed person. Who is perfectly sincere? Where is the sinner that could lift his face up to God and say that altogether, in his heart, and desires, and motives, he is absolutely sincere? You wont find him. But the comfort will be this, when God does bring comfort, that though you are base, that though, in common with all men you have hypocrisy in your nature, the Lord Jesus stands for you, represents you, gives you His life, His holiness, His righteousness, His grace, His mercy, His power. He pleads for you, He looks after you, and will take care of you to the end. This will be the rejoicing, that you will not stand on the ground of any goodness in yourself, but alone on what Christ is and has done, and has promised to do, and will do, for all His dear children.

They seek the Lord for grace to hold on, grace to persevere, and this is not little. It is not very much to walk in a straight, well paved way, with no crowds to jostle, and no difficulties to test you at all; just to walk on quietly. That is not much. But he who is going to heaven is walking uphill, he is walking away from the world; he meets difficulties many, and great. Many from himself, many from his surroundings, many, and how shall he hold on? How weak he feels at times, how ready to give up. Everything in him conspires to hinder and destroy him. How shall he hold on? Why, says the Lord- "Sin shall not have dominion over you". No, He says, though you have tribulation in this world ye shall have peace in Me. And further He says - "I have overcome the world". What is that to me, says a struggling saint? What is that to you? Why, this, that His victory must become yours,

be translated, as it were, into your soul's experience. Some things will not translate; this will. This is translated. "Christ who conquered for us once, shall in us conquer too."

They seek heaven. They follow their father Abraham who sought a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Less will not suffice them. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ we are of all men most miserable". I shall not get through, says one. It depends on God, not on you. It depends on the covenant, on the promise, on the Holy Spirit; depends on God, and faith will bring you to follow Hart's advice

Depend on Him, thou canst not fail
Make all thy wants and wishes known
Fear not, His merits must prevail
Ask what thou wilt, it shall be done

Now a few words on rejoicing and being glad. "Let all those that seek Thee rejoice and be glad in Thee". First they rejoice in Christ's Person and work. They rejoice that Christ made an end of sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Has not this sometimes been your joy? Some of you must say it has. O, to see redemption accomplished by Christ, the whole work done by Him, leaving a sinner nothing to do. This is a great thing. Faith is led to see the whole of redemption as in the death of Christ, and by it accomplished. And therefore, when thus blessed, the sinner is thankful. He rejoices, rejoices in the putting away of sin by Christ's sacrifice of Himself. Rejoices in the fulfilling of the law, in the exhausting of the curse due to the church. Rejoices in that there is now a new and living way - open for even as he finds himself to be - unto God the Father. So says the Apostle Paul to the Hebrews - "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh, and having an High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Is there any joy more pure, more sweet, and more strong than this that is founded on the perfect redemption effected by Jesus Christ when He said - "It is finished" and dismissed His spirit. There

is a joy sometimes felt at a view of the Covenant of Grace, ordered in all things and sure, wherein the salvation of a soul, and the steps of providence, are all fixed. Wherein every supply that can be needed and desired is to be found. Wherein the Trinity is, wherein the oath and promise of God are, and shine, and wherein there is absolute safety, and purity, and peace, and glory. A sight of the Covenant is a great sight to see; how it was sealed and ratified, even by the blood of Jesus, for He did seal the Covenant with His Own blood. It is called the blood of the everlasting Covenant. It is a great joy when God opens up some everlasting promise. All the promises of God in Christ are yea and amen to the glory of God by us. The Apostle, by the Holy Ghost, will have no yea and nay gospel presented to poor, troubled sinners, but a yea yea. "I have loved". "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee". "I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness". "I will guide thee with Mine eye". Promises absolute. Promises for their fulfilment depending on Him who made them. Promises which, though doubted, shall prove to be effectual and true in every particular. Promises which never can be exhausted by those to whom they are made, and by whom they are experienced. They rejoice sometimes in perceiving that this great God in three Persons is their God. "This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our Guide even unto death". They rejoice sometimes in perceiving that this God works for them in providence, sends tribulation for their good, lays it on them as a rod to bring them to Himself. They see that their wants make room for His supplies; their weakness is a place for His power; their blindness makes room for His wisdom. Yea, what they are, poor empty nothings in themselves, they find to be the means that God has designed and desired that He may dwell with them. All things work for good; losses, crosses, staffs or rods. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." Sometimes they rejoice in a good prospect; it is before them. What is there here for us? Probably some of us, if not all of us, even the oldest, will see sore troubles in this land, sorer far than the present ones. What then? O, says the Lord "Come My people" - I will protect you - "enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment". Hide yourself, that is, come to Me, confide in Me, look to My merit, depend on My power, lean on My arm, trust My promise, follow My guidance, and you shall be safe. O what a

wonderful thing it is to believe in this great, this loving, this Covenant God.

And lastly on this point, they rejoice and are glad in the sweet and solemn persuasion that the Lord is theirs, that they are His. What know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Holy Ghost dwelleth in you which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are His. (Mixture of 1 Corinthians 3 v 16 and 1 Corinthians 6 v 19/20). If ever you have felt the persuading power of the Holy Ghost in your heart then you have had this joy, this rejoicing, and gladness, and have gone forth in the dances of them that make merry. Then you have united with the Psalmist and said - "Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy Name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies". (Psalm 103). Sweet is this employment. Then faith rises to God in eternity. Jesus is seen in the midst of the throne of God. The seven Spirits of God are there, the Ancient of Days is there. There is the Trinity, there is the mighty multitude around this blessed One, and you may have seen yourself there by faith, and even sung

Yes, I to the end shall endure
As sure as the earnest is given
More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven

The Holy Spirit is the earnest, and God has given Him in the heart, and He seals the saint unto the day of redemption. This is the blessedness of God's people. "Let all those that seek Thee be glad and rejoice in Thee; let such as love Thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified."

"Love Thy salvation" - what is this? It is none other, it is nothing less than, the Lord Jesus to whom the Father speaks in the spirit of prophecy by Isaiah - "Thou art My salvation unto the ends of the earth". Do you love Him? Have you said sometimes

Jesus, I love Thy charming Name
Tis music to my ears

Have you loved the very sound of His Name? "Let such as love Thy salvation" - and who would add to it anything of their own, not a thread, not a thought, not a deed, not a word - "Let such as love Thy salvation" - free, and great, and wondrous, and glorious - "say continually" - throughout their days - "The LORD be magnified". "The LORD be magnified" in the riches of His grace, in the matchless love of His heart, in the infinite wisdom manifested in salvation, in the Covenant which is ordered in all things and sure, in the coming, in the life, and in the death of Jesus Christ, in the gift of the Spirit, in the fulfilling of the Scriptures. "Let the LORD be magnified" He never can be more than He is in Himself, but He can be made great in the praises of sinners and this is what is intended. Lift Him on high, speak well of Him, and honour Him in a godly, consistent walk, in a conversation that shall be in heaven. May the Lord cause us to seek Him and grant that we may find Him and then rejoice and be glad in Him.

AMEN.