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GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS  
Sermon preached by Mr. J. K. Popham,  
at Galced Chapel, Brighton.  
Sunday evening 30/10/32.  
Text: Psalm 62. v 5.

34  
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P.L.C.

"My soul wait thou only upon God for my expectation is from Him."

The man of God, in this Psalm writes of his good God; of his defence, of his enemies. He declares that his whole attention is given to God; that he waits upon Him; declares that God is his Rock; He is his strength, his foundation; but that there are enemies who imagine mischief against him, who consult to cast him down from his excellency. This excellency is his Rock, his foundation, his standing with God for Eternity; and in these states, he charges, solemnly, his soul to wait on God; not to be diverted; not to turn away from that blessed Rock, that only safety which he had experience of. It was no small thing to him, to be a man of God; to be a christian. I should think there is not a christian living to-day who has as much grace as David had. He had probably clearer views of Christ, than some of us have, more intimacy with God in Christ than we have, sweeter communion, clearer, sweeter, more powerful intimations of God's mind and will than we have, and realising what his enemies aimed at, even his destruction, he charges his soul to wait only on God. King though he was, having at his command resources, defences, yet to none of them would he look; on none of them would he depend; but solemnly looks to his soul and says, "Soul, thou hast weakness, and thou wilt have great weakness, if thou lookest to anyone, to any defence, if thou leanest on any arm, other than God and His arm; thou wilt have destruction; therefore wait thou only upon God." It is no little matter whether we are right or wrong, whether our eyes are on God, or on self and on the world. It is no trifling thing, to be looking to the creature, to be running to this resource, to be leaning on that support, and neglecting the only support, and the only resource that can avail a sinner, even God. This, if we have faith, will lead us to some searching of heart. We may say individually, Soul, where is thy trust? On what art thou depending? Whither dost thou flee in times of trouble? Where, in whom is thy hope?" Do not turn away from it friends. Look narrowly into it. Ask thyself sinner, what it is to be a christian, what

it is to be depending on God or to be depending on self or something else; whose arm you would lean on, whose wisdom you would follow. My soul, my immortal part, destined to live either with God or with devils and lost men, my soul, exposed every moment to the searching eye of God: my soul where art thou? We are careful of our bodies, and rightly so; are we as careful of our souls? We would not knowingly neglect anything that conduces to bodily health; are we careless about what conduces to spiritual health? Clearly, the man of God was not, while penning these words. He knew dangers. He had had many deliverances; he had had much guidance; but now here he perceived that enemies were plotting, seeking his destruction; so, seeing that he could do nothing effectually to maintain his case and preserve himself from the destruction that was in the world, he turns to his God and charges, solemnly charges, his soul with this: "Wait thou only upon God." His enemies had an only, they only consult to cast him down from his excellency; they delight in lies. They will tell lies to compass their end. They even bless with their mouth to compass their end; but while they are speaking these smooth words, murder is in their heart, they curse inwardly. He does not say, - Now I will put against all this that you are aiming at, that you are doing, my kingly power, my authority, my armies. No! He turns from everything and says, "Now, wait on God." Wait on Him who says, "Trust in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

Let us look a little, as enabled, at what this means: "Wait thou only upon God." Waiting is an act, an action of the mind. It is different from hurrying, different from a hasty spirit. A hasty spirit is generally blind, and runs into danger and death. A quiet waiting is a waiting, a looking to, a depending on, a committing of the case to God, turning from all things else and saying, Now I have no hope of deliverance, of safety, of endurance to the end, but God; therefore, I bring before Him my whole case. When we bring our cases before God in this waiting spirit, we bring many things. First we bring our weakness. You will never seek protection from God, without implying at least, if you do not say the words, that you are weak, unable to stand. You follow this, I am sure you who fear God "How weak is thine heart, says God to Israel.

How weak we are. Well might the Lord Jesus say, "Pray thus: "Lead us not into temptation." We do not know, till temptation comes, what weakness is in us and what liability there is in us to fall by temptation. Probably Judas Iscariot, when called to be a disciple, would have said to any suggestion that he would one day betray his Master, "Am I a dog that I should do this thing? But being a thief and having the bag given to him and loving money, the opportunity came and he fell. The temptation was too much for him. Were you ever afraid of a temptation, something coming that is suitable to your disposition, that fits in well with some inclination; a temptation that is like a bait to an appetite? "Lead us not into temptation." Weakness is revealed to a sinner by temptation, if he does not fall by it, and he has to go to his God and say, "Lord, I am not able to resist this. I have no strength to stand against this. That is one thing that will always be confessed, owned and really, fully owned, weakness. It is ours. How weak we are friends. We fall asleep rather than fight, we are so weak.

Another thing in this waiting on God, is taking to Him what we conceive to be the strength of our enemies. They are strong. Our forefathers knew the strength of enemies. They had strength to stand and venture, yea, and to go into the martyrs fires; but they knew the strength of their enemies. Those noble confessors on Dura's fiery plain saw clearly enough, the strength of idolatry, in the whole nation bowing down to the image which Nebuchadnezzar had there set up. They knew that their enemies were strong, and what did they do? They sought God. They depended on their God. He is able to deliver us. We are weak, He is strong. In the strength that He gave to them, they were enabled to resist the temptation. They were not careful to answer Nebuchadnezzar in that matter. You will never, if you are rightly led, under-rate the strength of an enemy. It is a great weakness to do it, great ignorance to do it; and if you do it, you will be sure to fall in some way. If you say, well, he is not over strong, and I will fight him in battle, in this you will fall. But if you can go to God by faith and say, as it were, Lord, there is a kingdom at the command of the enemy and I am alone, a feeble sinner, Thou art almighty, undertake for me, fight my battles. In such a spirit you will overcome.

My soul, wait thou only upon God for a defence. The defence is this- the Rock of ages. The church is built on that Rock, and Christ said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it," that is, against the church. Well, it is a great thing to be found here, and fearing lest you should fall; to be waiting on God, that is, beseeching Him to hold you up, "Hold Thou me up and I shall be safe." There is life in God; death in us. There is light in Him; darkness is ours. Therefore, we have to wait on Him in the cases that come to us. Wait on His goodness, wait on His power, wait on His promise, wait on His faithfulness. My soul, wait thou only, exclusively, let no other trust intrude. Let no other arm beguile you when it is offered for your support. Let no other wisdom guide you, when it proposes this or that path for you, but wait only, exclusively, entirely, on God. And the Psalmist gives a reason. You will always have a reason for right things. You will always have a reason in your heart and in your understanding, and in your affections, when you are right with God. His reason was this - "My expectation is from Him." This expectation was looking for victory. Is that your case? You look into it. Looking for victory. There is much to be overcome. Victory is given to weak souls. "Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. This is to be always, when people are right, their song. Victory over many things, first, over indwelling sin, our greatest, our deadliest enemy, indwelling sin. The law in our members - a weak heart, a gadding spirit, a worldly mind, an inattentive mind, inattentive to the things which make for our peace, "I see," says the Apostle Paul, speaking of the law of sin, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin." It pained him, wounded him, weakened him, threatened his life. Therefore, he went to God - "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this death, the body of this death;" and he got something. You will always get something from God when you go by faith to Him; you will always get something just suited to the case you take to Him. Perhaps not immediately in your experience, but really you will never fail. Faith never fails to get the attention of God and to obtain some answers. So Paul found it. "I thank God." What a wonderful word for a man who was just conquered. A man who

was in trouble about sin. A man who was indwelt by sin, who found that he was led into captivity by sin, that he was unable to do what good he would, that he could not resist the evil he was tempted to, and driven into . Now says he, -"I thank God who giveth the victory." Yes, God gives the victory. A crucified Saviour, a risen and exalted Saviour, gives the victory. "I thank God." Do you seek this? "My soul wait thou only upon God." You say, "I try to resist it." Well, leave off trying to resist it in your own strength. You say, "I feel as though I must pray more." Leave off the must pray more, and ask the Lord to give you more prayer. You say, "I try to believe more, and cleave more." Leave off the trying, and entreat the Lord to grant the grace to do it, to work it in you. "Thou Lord wilt ordain peace for us, for Thou hast wrought all our works in us," all works of goodness, good feelings, good frames, peace of God, power to resist evil, power to pray, to pour out your heart before Him. All goodness comes from Him. Wait on God for manifestations of mercy; for communications of goodness. Wait on God for manifestations of mercy: these are the appearing of Jesus Christ in the light of His Spirit, the glorifying of Christ by the Holy Spirit. God does give these in different measures, He does give these. The Spirit has not forgotten His mission. He will not neglect to fulfil His mission. The promise concerning Him is that He shall glorify Christ and take of His things and shew them to his people. Whenever the Holy Spirit accomplishes that promise in any measure in a sinner, it is giving some new, fresh, clearer, deeper sights and apprehensions of the Lord Jesus Christ, suitable, willing, able, full, full of goodness, grace and truth. and only the people who receive these mercies can understand what it is to have communications from God. He does communicate to His people even though, in this evil day the communications are very few comparatively, and small. I often think of better days than these, according to the history of the church. O, there were better days than these, when there was a ministry of authority and there were signs following. I have wished sometimes I had lived in the days of Huntingdon, or going further back, that I had lived in the days of the Puritans, when the ministry was so powerful. I judge that you could hardly listen to Owen to-day, or Goodwin, or any of the blessed puritan ministers.

They were too weighty for us, too deep and too clear, too discriminating, but notwithstanding, we may not be enquiring wisely, why the days that are past are better than these. But it is certainly a wise thing and a good thing to be led to wait on God for manifestations of the Lord Jesus; that we may clearly see His Person; that we may be receiving out of His fulness, and grace for grace; that we may know Him and the power of His resurrection, that by such communications we may be made spiritually minded.

Wait on God for power to wait on Him. I mean that the gadding, wild, wandering spirit that troubles us, some of us, so much, may be subdued. Ah, you may be on your knees and digging your garden. You may be on your knees with your heart in your ledger. You may be on your knees with your mind at the end of the earth, doing business, following pleasure, anticipating good that may never come. Wait on God for power to kill that gadding spirit. O, I wish it were killed in me. I wish it were killed in all of you who suffer from it. "My soul wait thou only upon God." Do not resolve that you will be different. You will be sure to fail if you do. Do not resolve to give your whole mind to it, because your heart will be better and stronger than you in this. Do not resolve not to follow that vanity or the other, because you will be certain to be overcome. But if, in your weakness and in this vain and sinful wandering, you can go to God and entreat Him to take hold of you, take hold of your heart and your thoughts and your attention and give you stronger faith to believe in and cleave to Christ crucified; you will find strength. Remember that the spider taketh hold with her hands and is in kings' palaces. Go poor spider-like creature, and take hold by faith of the goodness of God and you will find that strength will come. "By thy weakness, thou shalt prove, that Christ is strong". Wait for this. Wait to have given to you strength, the strength of faith to put on the whole armour of God.

No one can look at the state of things in the church of God and in the nation and in the nations of the world and not have some fear of what God may very quickly be doing. He may be early gathering together the nations to pour on them the fierceness of His anger. And what will the church do? How will she stand? What will the professing church do when modernism will come more and more to the front; or so to speak, like a

flood, flow into the church; when ungodly men and wolves shall more enter into the church of God than to-day? What shall we do? O, says the militant protestant- I shall stand, I shall defend the truth. Yes, and if that be your defence, you will be the first to go. The man who says, "I will never give up protestantism is the man who is likely to say very, very early in temptation, "I am on the other side". My dear friends, I must utter a word of warning. We are in perilous times; that I am persuaded of. What the Lord God is intending to do with us I do not know, but I believe heavy judgements are to fall upon us; and you younger people will know it. I may live to see it; sometimes I hope not. That is a solemn scripture to me and may it be so to you, it is in itself solemn: "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life." Well perhaps you, if you think about it, if it comes into your mind as the living word of God, may say, what I say almost every day of my life: "Lord make me faithful. Keep me faithful. Let me not deny Thee." You say, "I will never deny Him." Peter said so. Peter protested his loyalty: "I am ready to go to prison with Thee, yea, to die with Thee." You may say so. Ah, but when Jesus was accused and standing alone and shamed, then Peter suddenly found himself saying he knew not the man. O what a solemn thing! He was quickly restored, but he never forgot it. And you may, in a moment of temptation, say you never knew Him. O, may the Lord keep us when temptation comes, when trouble comes.

One enemy to the church of God, and a danger in the world, is modernism. There is nothing sacred in this book to the modernist, nay, not the divinity of Christ, not His sacred humanity. The modernist says, - O, but He was born as other men are born; nothing peculiar in His death, except that He was a great example of courage and purity; no efficacy in His blood. Modernism, what an enemy it is: I hate it. Modernism tells us what God should be, what He ought not to do. Go to God if you feel a fear of this. I used, when young, to feel differently, though I do not think I should have said I was perfectly safe from departing from the truth. I thought I knew the truth; but to-day, it suits me well to pray the Lord to teach me the truth and to cause the truth to be in me, and cause me to walk in the truth - "Hold Thou me up" in this.

Another enemy is popery. You may think it is not going to do much. It is gaining constantly in respect, in the nation. You can scarcely pick up a newspaper and find popery spoken as a religion not to be regarded. It is the same as all other religions in the press to-day. This is an evil, a grievous evil.

Another enemy is open atheism, loudly proclaimed atheism, godless people; and the stream is coming, coming from Russia in a terrible form. If these three gigantic evils prevail in this nation, as is probable in my own opinion, I just say, my own opinion, then what will the saints do?

As under God they will say to their own souls individually, "My soul, wait thou only upon God." Thou art weak, thou art not strong enough to meet these foes. Thou hast not grace enough, thou hast not wisdom enough, thou hast not enough fortitude, thou hast <sup>not</sup> enough faith; but wait on God who can give thee all thou needest". Wait on God who says, "Come unto Me. Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it. Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify Me. Wait on God."

"My soul, wait thou only upon God. My expectation is from Him." Do you expect anything? Do you expect anything from God? When you look at yourself, when unbelief speaks, when a sense of ruin and of wickedness in you speak, what then? Hope is very low. When your eye is on the Lord Jesus Christ, when you see His vicarious death by faith, when you see that He made an end of sin and brought in everlasting righteousness, and have a hope that all this was done for you; then you will say, My expectation of being held up, of being preserved in the fear of God; of being made more than conqueror through Christ, my expectation is from Him. You will say, I cannot trust myself. I would not knowingly lean on my own strength. I would not form resolutions in my own mind to be thus or to do that, but I look to God." The Spirit of God turns the heart to Himself, to the Son and to the Father; and faith says, This three-one Jehovah is my hope, my strength is there, my wisdom is there, my goodness is there, my happiness is there, and my expectation of coming off more than conqueror is there. Well, that will do. You cannot add to Infinity. Infinity is on the side of a worm, a poor believer. Infinite love, infinite goodness, infinite blessedness in Christ, immutability in



promise and in oath: These all stand on the side of a sinner. And so seeing these things and believing them, the man says to himself, to his soul, Now go to God. He will never disappoint you. "The expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever. God will maintain the right of the poor." Ah, He said by Isaiah seeing the oppression of His people, "What have I here, that my people is taken away for nought? " What have I here? The strength of the enemy. Ah, but in Himself there is everything necessary. My people shall know that I am their God and in that way they shall do exploits. "The people which do know their God shall be strong and do exploits," and the strength is this: their faith in their God. Faith makes victory possible. "To him that believeth, all things are possible." It made Abraham obedient even when he was told to offer up his only son Isaac, his beloved son. It will make you strong when in your weakness and in your fears and in your troubles, you are enabled to say to your soul, "Hope in God." Wait on Him. Take your case to Him. Lie as low as you can at His footstool, yea, find the dust a very healthy place for you." Bless God if you feel your weakness. Bless God if you feel too weak to stand, yea, even sometimes too weak to pray, for "By thy weakness thou shalt prove that Christ is strong." Beloved friends, this is our only hope, that God is for us. "If God be for us who can be against us?" If God stand on our side, all devils and all men, enemies to God, shall not move us. No, nothing can move a man from the Rock, nothing. No storm, no tempest, no wind, no rain can move a man from the Rock on which he is built. "On this Rock will I build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

May the Lord make us strong in this, that we may, with fixedness of heart, a fixedness that God gives, that does not belong to us naturally, with fixedness of heart, we may say to our soul, "My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from Him." I expect heaven. Yes, there are moments when the saint expects heaven, when he looks for the fulfilment in himself of that gracious word, "Where I am there shall my servant also be." Turn from yourselves. Turn away from your own resources. Put away all hope in your own arm, in your own resolutions, and depend alone and singly, absolutely, upon a good and gracious God who, by two immutable things, affords strong consolation to all who flee for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before them. The Lord grant it may be so with us as individuals and as a church and all the godly in the congregation. Amen.