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Sermon preached by Mr J K Popham  
at Galeed Chapel Brighton  
on Sunday evening 29 October 1933

PSALM 65 v 4

"Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and  
causest to approach unto Thee, that he may dwell  
in Thy courts: we shall be satisfied with  
the goodness of Thy house, even of Thy holy  
temple"

The infinite grace, free grace of God, is glorified in the Church, in each member of the Church, from time to time by divine communications. Grace was given to Christ before the world began for His people. Grace overcomes all sin and magnifies the greatness, the majesty, the holiness, and the justice and the tenderness of God. Grace turns infidels into believers, stones into sweet melting of repentance, opens blind eyes, creates strong pantings after God, puts death on everything here below, and only in Christ is seen to be the river of pleasures at God's right hand. And this grace flows in the blessed decree of election. There is a remnant according to the election of grace and this election is solemnly expressed in holy Scripture. "Jacob have I loved; Esau have I hated", and that was said irrespective of good or evil done by them; neither of them had done good or evil. God was not influenced, if I may use such a word respecting the divine Being, by anything attractive or repellant in those two men, but just simply, alone, because He would do it. He loved Jacob; He rejected and hated Esau. Do you object? God give you grace to fall before Him and confess that your objection is wickedness. I am not to speak about this again as I treated of it a little this morning.

The next thing, the great wonder and honour given to an elected sinner, is that God causes him to approach the divine Majesty. Flippancy is cut down; solemnity before the majesty of God, a right, a proper trembling before Him, every soul caused by the Spirit to approach God feels. Now whether you have approached the Almighty in that gracious, believing way, He knows, and you know who have had that

mercy, that honour. All cases are brought, all burdens are brought, all difficulties are brought; all sins you come with and confess. And one end is this, "that he may dwell in thy courts". When God comes there is a court held; there His presence is; that is a dwellingplace. It was so on that mountain on which God tempted Abraham, met with Abraham, provided a lamb for him for Isaac. O, what a meeting between God and Abraham that was. If you have been met by Him in Christ, the Passover slain for you, you have had some experience of dwelling here. No place like it in creation, no security, no comfort, no exaltation, no honour in the whole world compared with this, dwelling beneath the shadow of the Almighty. Here is room; yes, there is room and every drawn and approaching sinner finds that, and he walks up and down in the Name of the Lord. In these courts the Lord instructs people, appears for them and to them and speaks comfortably to their hearts. When you get near Him then you are in the court and, though you go out in experience, you never go out really as to your state before God. A distinction is to be made between dwelling in the courts of the Lord and never going out and the experience of distance from Him. The experience of distance is painful but the fact, the truth, of dwelling and abiding here is equally true. Who does not know what going out means that has been in. Who does not know what absence is who has enjoyed presence? Who does not know what unbelief is who has had a holy confidence in the love of God, in the death of Christ, in the blood of Christ. "That he may dwell". God elected him for that; Christ died for him for that; the Spirit quickened him for that; and the Spirit led him to approach God that he might dwell here. Everything centres here; all good is here, all mercy is here, all comfort is here. "That he may dwell in Thy courts". The Jew would understand it respecting the tabernacle, but there is a tabernacle of the Most High that no external Jew ever understood and no Gentile understands. "The tabernacle of God is with men". That tabernacling of God with men is Jesus Christ. Think of it. If you do not know this in time you wont know it through eternity. John saw it; John heard it. "The tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them." And we have this in the gospel according to John where we are informed by the infallible teaching of the Spirit in inspired Scripture: "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." Now to behold His glory is to be fixed. "My

heart is fixed". "O God my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise." Do you think that the Psalmist's heart was not fixed when he mourned an absent God? The very fact of his mourning an absent God showed and proved that his heart was fixed on Him. If your heart is not fixed on God you do not mind His absence but if it be fixed on Him then His absence is a kind of death, a grief, a sorrow, and you are set on searching the reason why He has gone from you as to sense and feeling. Yes, here is that court in which the sinner dwells, the incarnate Word of God. Here is the refuge, the peace, the comfort, under the blessed shadow of the Almighty. Now the person is changed from "the man"; it is, "we". "We", the poor people of God "we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple". "We". Who? The people of God whose transgressions God has purged away. "Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away"; that is by the precious blood of Christ. Shun religion that will not have the blood of Christ in it. No forgiveness without blood. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission", and without the sprinkling of the blood of Christ on your conscience there is no ease, no real rest for your conscience. O, wonderful Scripture is that in Peter. He exhorts the Lord's people to walk in fear, to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear. Not the fear of hell, not the dread of damnation, but the fear of the Lord, and the connection is very wonderful. "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, as of a lamb without blemish ...." That is the centre, that is the bottom, that is the continuance, that is the crowning of all religion, the precious blood of Christ, shed freely and freely sprinkled on the conscience. "We", these sinners, these blessed by the purging away of their iniquity, we whom God has heard, listened to when they have made complaints, and expressed their needs and their desires, and their affections; "we". Well, it is wonderful that in this congregation there should be some who can use this language sometimes. "We shall be satisfied". Look at your state by nature; look at your possessions in this world; look at the goodness of God to you in providence; and when you have reckoned up all, what do you say? Perhaps if you know the words you will quote them.

Thanks be to Thee for meaner things  
But these are not my God

Thanks for health, for daily bread, for friends, for godly friends, and union with them. Thanks be to God that He has a visible Church in the world, but here is the centre, satisfaction with the goodness of His house.

What is this goodness? It is Himself. Desires after this are a great blessing. When a sinner says, I am wrong, and fear I shall always be wrong; I am weak, ignorant, foolish, wicked; I turn aside constantly; no satisfaction; yet I want the Lord. Now what does Christ say to this? "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled". That is His gracious word and further He says: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out". Who is the man who comes? The man given to Christ to redeem. "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out". Newton, I think it is Newton, John Newton, who said there were two crutches he had, these two crutches: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me" - a great truth - "and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out". He leant on both of them. May we be enabled to do the same. Now when men cannot find satisfaction in either themselves or in the world, this word stands on their side. Satisfaction. Satisfaction is what is hardly known in this life, in the things of this world; there is such a continual change of circumstances. Health gives way to sickness, substance becomes liquid, friends die, props are removed. There is a constant change in providence, so that there is no abiding there and no satisfaction. You cannot rest in anything, in anybody. God designs this, my friends, for His people. "In the world ye shall have tribulation". What fools some of us have been and are, that we have looked for satisfaction where God has not put it. No providence is immutable; a difficult, painful thing to believe and experience, but it is true. You find it so, do you not? No providence is immutable. Change and decay God has stamped on everything and if you say, I thought that would abide, you find that God has not sent it to abide. We get refreshments here, we get kindnesses here in providence, but we do not get anything abiding, nothing satisfying. What is satisfaction? It is a repletion that leaves nothing to be desired. It

is communion with God; it is a sense of interest in the Person and work and death of Christ. It is a realisation, in some measure, of the love of God. It is feeling the fellowship of the Spirit, having Him for your Guide, Teacher and God. It is in some little measure realising that the end of your faith is your salvation. Satisfaction. And if it were put to you whether you would wish something added, you would, without hesitation, say, No. Not gold, not comfort, health of the flesh, but you have that which so satisfies, so supports, so delights, as that you are satisfied. Why do men gad about here and there for something on which to stay themselves? They have no God. The cry of old is the cry today. "Who will show us any good?" The feeling of the Psalmist is the feeling of the saint today: "Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us". And the double result is here, the dissatisfaction the worldling gets and the satisfaction the soul receives. "Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time when their corn and their wine increased". That sets the matter before us. May the Holy Ghost bring it. Increase of corn and wine cannot satisfy, never were intended to; they are not to be our portion. But an increase in the incomings of grace, the operations of the Spirit, will bring the satisfaction that is here mentioned. "We shall be satisfied".

And the matter of satisfaction is set before us - "with the goodness of thy house". This is divine goodness of which we read in another Psalm. "O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men". This goodness is all to be found where God the Father placed it, in Christ. Faith goes to it. If you have faith, the faith of God's elect, you go to this fulness. Emptiness will send you there; trouble will drive you there; the Spirit will take you there; to this goodness. It is the love of God, the grace of God, the Person of Christ, the righteousness and the blood of Christ. It is the Person and the teaching and the operation of the Holy Ghost. And you get, when the Holy Ghost leads you by the hand of faith to this goodness, you get satisfaction. Satisfaction in one or two particulars beside those already named. First, satisfaction of your interest in this goodness. I expect I am speaking to some who are wanting that satisfaction. I suppose, I believe indeed, that some of you listening to me sometimes pant for it. You doubt your standing

because you have not this. You doubt the work of grace because you have not this. You doubt the reality of your prayers because you have not this. You doubt the work of regeneration because you have not this. To be satisfied that God has an interest in you, that Christ has an interest in you, that the Holy Ghost has an interest in you, would be heaven below. You say, I cannot get it. You never were told to get it. You never can bring a Scripture that will tell you to get it. It will tell you to pray for it. You will find many a Scripture for that. It will tell you that a seeker shall be a finder. Holy Scripture is on the side of seekers. And then the Scripture will tell you that God is faithful who has called you, that, having begun a good work in you He will perform it until the day of Christ. God help us to call on Him and wait for this blessing. The husbandman hath long patience and waiteth for the early and the latter rain. He goes forth, he weeps, he sows in tears, he reaps in joy. So every seeking soul weeps over his sins, weeps over his many inconsistencies, and shortcomings and weeps because he has not found God. But the Word of God informs him -and O, if some of you could listen to it - doubtless shall he come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Yes, and then one day you will say, I will go, as Hannah went with her Samuel. I asked this son of God; now I will take him to the Lord and lend him. And you will say I got, in answer to prayer, the blessed assurance of my interest, and now I will praise God for it. That is one thing in the satisfaction that a sinner seeks. O seekers, God keep you at it. Go in the face of the devil, in the face of your sins, in the face of all your doubts, in the face of every kind of opposition, go to the throne of grace - faith will tell you the way, faith will speak well of God - and, as well as you can, wait there.

A second thing in this to name beside what has been named is that there is real communion in this goodness. A participation, a receiving, an eating of this goodness. It is prepared. God in eternity prepared His love for His elect people; He gave the bread of life for them; He gave His dearly beloved Son. And now He gives them hunger, will He not give them bread? "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to him that asketh". If you ask Him He will do it. "How much more shall your Father which is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him".

And this then is the satisfaction in the house of God. We are told that the house of God is the Church of the living. The Church of the living God is, in the first place, the invisible Church. There He dwells, there He gives His loves, there is His banqueting house, there is His banner spread over His children, and the wine of His love He gives to them. He brings them into this banqueting house. The King hath brought me into His chambers, into the banqueting house, and then love rules. You will never be an unbeliever while you are in this banqueting house. That monster unbelief will show himself again and again, and make his power known, but while you are in the banqueting house he is absent, that is to say he does not move. Not a tongue of a dog is moved against a child of God while he is here. His house, I say, in the first place, is the invisible Church of the living God and there is the uncontraverted mystery of godliness. Without controversy is the mystery of godliness, great mystery. Christ is there; He shows Himself; He gives comforts by His death; He gives peace by His blood; He gives establishment by His Word; He gives liberty in Himself. "If the Son shall make you free ye shall be free indeed". Every member of this body is a saved soul. Every member of this household is a member of Christ's body in particular. But there is a visible Church, or rather there are visible Churches and here there is a satisfaction because the goodness of God comes. This involves, includes, the ministry. Jesus said to His disciples, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth". Go ye therefore into all the world; make disciples, teach them to observe all things that I command thee, baptising them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost and lo I am with you alway even to the end of the world. This has to do with the visible Church. Sovereignly God plants Churches here and there; send His servants, as He said in the days of His flesh, into all places wither He Himself would come. Where He does not plant a Church, there He is not to be found. Where He plants a Church the rule is He gives a ministry and He speaks by that ministry, makes people hungry and thirsty, takes the cases of His people up, and ministers search out cases which they know not; and then He teaches them to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And the hungry people say, this is the Person we want, Jesus Christ. This is the provision that will satisfy us. This is the bread we would fain eat. "The goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple."

Christ dwells in His people; He dwells in His Churches and walks in the midst of them. It is a solemn thing to belong to the Church of God. The Church of God is not a worldly organisation. She has a proper organisation which is even on gospel principles. Ruled by love and ruled according to God's ordinances, by those He sets over them. "Obey them that have the rule over you for they watch for your souls as they that must give account that they may do it with joy and not with grief for that would be unprofitable for you". Now a real minister, that is one sent of God, will, through the Holy Ghost in him, working by him, preach just as Paul did. I do not mean, of course, in the way that Paul preached. He had gifts and he had grace beyond others, but I mean the subject of the ministry. Preaching of the gospel in order to satisfy hungry souls is the first objective, that is to say, the minister must set forth the object of faith and do his best under God to draw poor people away from being their own object. When you turn into yourself, and who does not - how often do I do it - but when you turn to yourself and say now can I prove that I am a child of God; let me see, have I life divine? are my desires right? are my prayers acceptable? have I got a broken heart? have I a contrite spirit? am I properly humble? do I really fear God? - not bad questions, but if you ask them in order to build on them, if you can come to a satisfactory conclusion about them, then you are on a wrong track. Good experience comes from the knowledge of God. A good experience of a law work comes from the knowledge of God in the law and a good experience of the gospel comes from a knowledge of Christ made known to you by the Holy Ghost. That will satisfy you in the house of God; nothing else will. It is a very solemn thing to be living today when the threatened famine of hearing the Word of God has commenced. Yes, - I will send a famine, not of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the Word of God, and men shall go from the east to the west, to the north, seeking that Word and shall not find it. God knows how soon that will be fully accomplished. It is largely accomplished today. We shall be satisfied in the Church of the living God with His goodness, and O, if He withholds it, then hunger bitten souls will be found on every hand. May the Lord look upon us. I have touched only, as it were, the surface of this Scripture, but if doing that should be the means of stirring you up to seek to know your election of God, as Paul says - Knowing beloved, your election of God - if it should stir you up to seek that infinite blessing to be



manifested to you, and if it should be the means of causing you to cry, O Lord, cause me to approach Thee, a worm, a vile wretch, a guilty person; cause me to approach Thy Majesty, cause me to dwell in Thy courts and satisfy me with the goodness of Thy house, I shall not have spoken in vain.

The Lord bless you, bless all His dear people.

AMEN.