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Sermon Preached at Galeed Chapel, Brighton
by Mr J.K. Popham on Sunday Evening
21st November 1926

Text: Romans 8 verse 30

Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.

This important verse has in it, a spiritual glory, but a glory which is seen only by faith, only to be known by the revealing light and sealing power of the Holy Ghost. It is a mercy to be brought in guilty, to justify God in the solemn and the true savour and just sentence of the law. To feel that God owes us nothing but hell. That every meal that we eat is of His goodness, that every breath we draw without pain is of His undeserved goodness. To come to that place in which the publican stood, too ashamed to lift up his eyes to heaven, too oppressed to go as the Pharisee did, but led by the Spirit of God, "but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18 verse 13).

The way to heaven is by the very gate of hell in this particular point in experience. Gospel hope lives very near to law condemnation, they are totally different both in their nature and in their power, but they live near each other in the experience of the saints. Oh it is a mercy to have a religion that brings you into contact with God, just think of it, a religion that brings you into contact with God Himself, to deal with Him, feel after Him, honour Him in His word, in His laws, in His providence, and in His ways, and to go to Him out of necessity and choice. To feel that though we are infinitely unworthy of His notice, infinitely beneath Him, still we cannot do without Him, and would not if we could. What a wonder it will be to have a religion that will stand the shaking of temptation, live in the sea of indwelling corruption, to carry the soul heavenward, to live on a dying bed, and be carried to heaven at last. Such a religion is from sovereign justification. Sovereign in itself, if I may use the word, in its inception in the mind of God, free in the decree of God, for He eternally decreed justification, making sinners just in the Person and work of Christ. Free in its communications by the Spirit. This justification will stand all that may come against it, resist all, overcome all, live through all adversity, and carry the soul "into Abraham's bosom." (Luke 16 verse 22). How much religion there can be in people without true grace and justification, God only knows. How far natural religiosity will take people after Christ, we do not know, but God does, but this is certain, that when God will save a sinner, a natural kind of religion is killed.

True religion is a living experience, faith lives and labours under load, hope is brightened from time to time, loves flashes whenever its blessed fountain is felt in the soul. I would entreat you brethren who fear the Lord, but who may feel you come very short in experience, to "follow on to know the Lord," (Hosea 6 verse 3), until you can say with Isaiah, "Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to Him shall men come;" and "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." (Isaiah 24 verses 24 & 25). This will be the crossing of the line to you, as we read, "And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." (Ezekiel 20 verse 37). This will change your spiritual state and experience. This will bring you into the presence of a Holy God without shame, this will bring His divine smile of justification upon you. This is God's act passed on to the person charged with sin, who cannot deny it, being made honest by the fear of God.

Justification is the act of God in His grace, it is God's act by His imputation of the righteousness of Christ to the sinner. Our holy religion has in it, love, justice, mercy, truth and righteousness, and thus it honours God, it makes the soul blessed, as it is written, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, and my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." (Deuteronomy 32 verse 2). And also, "Drop down, ye heaven, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation." (Isaiah 45 verse 8). There are many steps normally between the new birth and justification, in spiritual experience, it was apparently different in New Testament times, as the Apostles preached at Pentecost. When It appears that regeneration and justification came almost simultaneously to the souls who received the Holy Ghost. They were pricked in their hearts, received the word gladly, were baptized and received the Lord's supper on the same day. It is far different today, we find cases that appear to be going on hopefully more or less in the same condition year after year. Convictions do not seem distinct, cases do not seem to have those pressing desires carrying the soul out of itself, there are longings that have no response, and prayers that seem to get no answers. Such cases are very solemn, but where there is life, eternal life, it will press through, and sooner or later come to be the all important thing, then the soul will say with Philip, "We have found Him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." (John 1 verse 45). And when He is found, righteousness is found, "In those days shall he be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness." (Jeremiah 23 verse 6).

Now if any of you have this painful uncertainty, this indistinctness, this lack, I do not speak to discourage you, but I would say, "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord:" (Hosea 6 verse 3), a good many stumbling blocks are in your way, one of them you may not suspect to be a stumbling block, it is this. That if you could feel any repentance, if your heart were soft, if you could feel a love to God, if you could get rid of some of your corruptions, then you might hope. Now I tell you this is a stumbling block, you want to put graces where they are not fully developed. That is, you want to do it, to put graces as a foundation, they are but an ornament, they are not a foundation, they are an evidence but they are not the Rock. The Lord will put things in their right place in our experience. May the Holy Spirit give us grace to see just what is the foundation which is Christ alone, and give you to see that, when you are justified you will be justified as a sinner, and not as a repenting sinner. By grace ye are saved, not as having done anything, nor of having attained to something, but just as a condemned person in a law-court before the judge and your accusers, with filthy garments, death and condemnation in your conscience, just as you are. "And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13 verse 39). Being justified by His blood, justified by His obedience and His righteousness. May the Holy Ghost teach us, and put things as they should be, for we cannot do it, we are poor erring creatures. We are in danger of turning aside at every step, God alone is able to teach us the truth, and put us into the truth, and put the truth in us. Now this doctrine of justification, deserves more attention from us than we give it.

Daily to feel thyself undone,
 Will make thee haste to kiss the Son,
 And on thy knees for pardon sue,
 And praise, and bless, and love Him too. (Gadsby's 113 verse 4).

But when you are making haste, the Devil will say, look at these lusts that you indulge, and that will divert your attention, then he will say, think of the enmity you have felt against God, and that again will distract you, then he will put before you the worldliness in your mind. Look how you have been diverted and have turned aside, running after the world, and after some vanity, and again you will look at yourself, all these things are dangers, they are stumbling blocks. Poor sinner you have got a great deal to lose. But God is able to make you lose them, and to be glad to lose them. When you are altogether lost, then you will be found, when you hate your life, and lose it, when you are lost altogether, then you will be found. When you hate our life and lose it, then you will find it.

Whom He has justified, acquits, and declared to be just, is free, for there is no longer any charge against that person. And no court, or any law can condemn them, the law is still there, but it is satisfied and can not condemn, for it is pleased, and now stands on your side. Truth is there also, but it too is with you and in you, mercy is there and that melts you, righteousness is there and that covers you and delivers you. Justification is God's act, I would keep that before you, for a man is as passive in justification as he is in regeneration. For he has no more hand in the one than he has in the other, but in both cases he feels the fruit of it, for when a man is born again he feels himself a sinner, and when he is justified he feels happy in his God. I can say these things, but I know that only the Lord can show you the truth of them, and make you realise them in your own experience, it would be good to feel and know it yourselves. Those of you who I often have in my mind, for whom I pray that you may, "Break forth on the right hand and on the left," (Isaiah 54 verse 3), and find you saying, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength," (Isaiah 45 verse 24), to perceive that you are really "justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts 13 verse 39). This, this is true liberty, you may get liberty sometimes in prayer, then you get into bondage again in your feelings, you get boldness perhaps for a few minutes or more when you are seeking, but again you come under the yoke. Now and again you get a glimpse of liberty, but you are still under the yoke. The debt is not paid, guilt is not removed, bondage is not swallowed up by liberty, but justification will remove all that, it will change the scene. Justification is followed by certain gracious experiences, which I want to name unto you.

First, when justification takes place, the sinner, the now justified person stands at once in a new position and relationship to God, and God to him. Oh you will say, I have had many helps but nothing like this, I get some tokens for good, but nothing like this, I get intimations of mercy and sometimes have had touches which melted me down, but I have had nothing like this, am I changed? This is not the new birth, it is being born into liberty, it is Christ born in the heart the hope of glory. It is His righteousness received by faith and worn. It is deliverance from all the bondage in which you have walked, it puts another face upon things to you. Everything wears another and different and better, sweeter aspect to you. You stand before God, (we all stand before Him, a wicked man stands before Him, but this standing which I now mean is different) The Queen of Sheba when she had seen all Solomon's glory and heard his wisdom, looked at his servants, and said to him, "Happy are thy men, and happy are thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom." (2 Chronicles 9 verse 7).

And that is the case with a justified person. He has had glimpses of God many and many a time, many and many a day, he has had little helps and been enabled to say, perhaps, the Lord will appear for me. But Oh now it is different, he stands before the Lord, and the Lord recognises him, he stands clothed in the kings garments, and he hears the wisdom of his King, the wisdom of God in Christ, who is the wisdom of God. He sees it in the scheme of redemption in the incarnation of the Son of God, in the life, obedience, death, burial and resurrection of Christ. He sees the wisdom of God, and hears it in his heart, that it is God's way of saving his soul, God's way of reconciling him to Himself, God's way of fitting him for His Divine presence. "Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom." (2 Chronicles 9 verse 7). Happy are these justified sinners who stand continually before God in that new position. It is a new position, it is a beautiful position, it is an amazing position, Let me tell you two or three things about it, there is liberty, there is that blessed word in the Corinthians, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Corinthians 3 verse 18).

As you look on it, the very image, the beauty of which you are gazing by faith, comes into your own soul. and you are changed into the same image. That is one thing, and then there is liberty to speak to Him, a sweet blessed liberty is given. "The king said unto Esther, at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition ? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request ? even to the half of the kingdom it shall be performed." (Esther 6 verse 6). The Lord gives you liberty, and more than that, He gives \payer. Earlier in this chapter occur these beautiful words, "And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Romans 8 verse 27). This is very beautiful, the Apostle had spoken in the previous verse (26) "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." And now He says that God knows what that means in you, but you may not know all that He means, when you are groaning those unutterable groans before Him, but they have, or "are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." (James 5 verse 4). His ears receive these groanings acceptably, knowing what the Spirit meant, when He produced them in you, knowing that the Spirit was leading you to ask, for the glory, grace and mercy of God. This is liberty. Some of us know a little of it, for it is like the beginning of that eternal standing before the Lord in heaven, that every saint will experience through eternity.

The Spirit is also working, works of faith according to the eternal purposes of God, concerning men who stand before the Lord and pray in the Holy Ghost. There is great tenderness here, that is to say, there is a desire for the glory of God here. "Lead me in the truth, and teach me: for Thou art the God of my salvation; on Thee do I wait all the day." (Psalm 25 verse 5). For Thou art good, lead me and teach me, teach me Thy truth. The Lord is good, and He does teach His people the truth, by giving them the Spirit of Truth. This belongs to a justified person. You will see a condemned sinner coming, in this way, feeling after God "if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him" (Acts 17 verse 27). And he will find Him, but O when he has found Him, then begins his heaven, then begins his experience of God, he now has something he will never lose. The devil will never be allowed to take it from him, he will often lose the sweetness of it, but the blessing itself he will never lose.

Does not it make some of you want to have this experience, even in the imperfect way in which I speak about it? If you get near to God you will never be able adequately to express it, I cannot although I know a little of it. It is a wonderful experience, you will find it moving, melting your hard heart, the confidence, the hope, the love, the repentance and contrition, producing a hatred of self and love to the Saviour. A sinner realises this when he is justified and comes into the presence of the Saviour. We are not worthy of it, of course we are not, no one is, but God gives it by grace to the unworthy. He gives it to the vilest sinner out of hell, who lives to feel his need.

There is a very painful experience which some of the Lord's people get as they become older, they live in the past. I do and it is sometimes very painful and sometimes very blessed. Painful because the mind is often dwelling upon failures or failings, sins done against light and knowledge, backslidings, evil thoughts, murders. A long life to a saint means a good deal of sorrow when he gets older, he cannot undo it, and he would not if he could. Why not? Because there is one who undoes it, and he undoes it effectually. He destroys the works of sin and the devil. His righteousness justifies the ungodly, and His blood sanctifies the polluted. And thus a sinner has another thing to look back upon, and to do so with gratitude, and that is the long-suffering of God to him. I suppose that I perhaps have many, if not more years to look back on than anyone in the chapel, and I have more mercies therefore to reckon up, and cannot reckon them up. I have more sins to look back on with shame, but I also have more mercies to remember of Him. Oh the kindness and love of God, how the former, the black parts cannot undo justification.

But it does fit a sinner for the sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost, bringing that scripture, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." (Zechariah 13 verse 1). There is also another merciful thing that belongs to a justified person, this namely, that God looks on him and says, "I am the Almighty God, walk before Me, and be thou perfect." (Genesis 17 verse 1). And He begins to lay on his heart, some things concerning the path to heaven, it may be prayer that the Advocate be given to help him through. It may be a time of trouble, and he prays Oh do bless me in it, and keep me, or of temptation, when he prays, let me not be overcome. Whatever the path is, his desire is, be with me in it from the first to the last, let me know that the Lord Jesus is the author and finisher of my salvation. The effect will be for his good, look for these things, God speaks to his people about their future. He may say to one, "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be. (Deuteronomy 33 verse 26). The person that gets such a word can expect a difficult path to walk in. Or He may say, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye." (Psalm 32 verse 8). And that word indicates that you can expect perplexities with a dark, troublesome path to walk in.

But God will guide you, and all this is spoken to a justified person, the blessed word speaks to them as children. For He adopts them into His family, and then they have to walk according to the divine rule that He gives in Holy Scripture. "Whom he justified," wait on Him you who are condemned and not justified, wait on Him you who are panting for this blessed, infinite goodness to be manifested unto you, it will come. Let your prayer be, "Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the Lord have created it." (Isaiah 45 verse 8). And then you will open your mouth and receive what God conveys to you.

And next, "Whom He justifies them He also glorified." When God speaks of decrees, He speaks in the past tense, because those things are all accomplished in His eternal mind. As here He is speaking of His eternal purposes and so they are spoken of in the past sense. In the purposes of God we who are saved were in heaven before the world was made, and likewise the lost were already in hell. What a solemn thing it is to be in one of God's decrees, does this belong only to eternal glory, or has it a beginning here? It has a beginning here, for it begins when God communicates His mercy to sinners. It is written in the gospel according to John,

"For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me." (John 17 verse 8). And in the same chapter it is said by Christ to His Father, "And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." (verse 22) What is that glory that God gave to Christ ? It was grace, as it was written to Timothy, "Who has saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Timothy 1 verse 9). And every touch of the Spirit on your souls, every smile of God that falls upon your conscience to give peace, every sacred truth that the Holy Ghost reveals in your hearts, has in it glory, the glory of God.

He does not deal with other people like this, it is said of Israel. "He sheweth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for His judgments, they have not known them." (Psalm 147 verse 19 & 20). He dealt with Israel in a way of mercy, and so when grace begins, you will prove the truth of that saying, grace is glory in the bud. Peter speaking of glory says, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and goodness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue." (2 Peter 1 verses 2 & 3). The glorious gospel, the gospel of the grace of God, as it is written, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Corinthians 4 verse 6).

That is glory my friends, sin is shame, but grace is glory for it beautifies a sinner. Grace enriches a sinner, and the word glory in some places means weight. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" (2 Corinthians 4 verse 17). Now this is worth our attention my friends. When He justified those whom He has adopted, and brings them into a new relationship with Himself, whom He raises out of the dust and the dung hill to sit among princes, he glorifies them. He gives them those things which prove tokens for good, and evidences that they are ultimately to be with Him for ever. Let us look then, as enabled at this great truth "them He also glorified." Is not it to be glorified when you are justified ? What then is that robe, that beautiful robe which He puts on a sinner ? What is it dear friend ? It is the glorious God, glorifying the obedience and blood of the Redeemer. And when you wear that robe, you wear far more beauty than all creation, there is nothing to be compared with it.

This beautiful robe of righteousness, hence the commendation of the Church, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?" (Song of Solomon 6 verse 10). and "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." (Song of Solomon 4 verse 7). She is all fair because she wears that precious, spotless, seamless robe, the righteousness of Jesus Christ. That is the beginning, what is the communication of grace? It is the gift of the Holy Ghost, and His work is glorious in the saint. The communication is the gift of the Holy Ghost, that divine Person who is one with the Father and the Son in the Trinity. And He comes in the beautiful grace and love of His own Person, coming as the messenger of the Father and the Son. He comes to teach, to open the doctrines of grace, and the covenant of grace, and to reveal the Son of God in the sinner's heart. This work is a glorious work, hence the Church is said to be all glorious within, "The King's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold." (Psalm 45 verse 13). You may say, I have nothing but corruption, if that is true you are no Christian, but a Christian may lie against, or deny his right position through darkness and temptation. And he may say what is not true about himself. If he says, now I am full of corruption that is true, but if he says, I have nothing but corruption, and he has grace, that is not true. May the Lord help us to say the truth about ourselves.

Now a child of God has grace that brings him into conflict with sin and Satan. Grace is glory in the bud, it is a glorious thing that flows from God Himself. It is a sanctifying power, it is a raising power. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghill; That He may set him with the princes, even the princes of His people." (Psalm 113 verses 7 & 8). And again there is a glory in the word of God, that word which was magnified above all His name. "For Thou hast magnified Thy word above all Thy name." (Psalm 138 verse 2). Have you got a word in your heart, spoken unto you by God himself? Do not hastily say no, if God has spoken to you, but think on this, that God has magnified and will magnify above everything in creation that word which comes from Him. It is firmer than heaven and earth, for, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." (Matthew 24 verse 35). If you have a word from God it will not pass away, and He will never deny it. He will not leave it unfinished, a matter begun but unfinished is a painful matter at times to the saint, but it will never end unfinished as to the soul's experience of it. God will complete it, "Though wilt perfect that which concerneth me: Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever forsake not the works of Thine own hands." (Psalm 113 verse 8).

A man to whom God has conveyed Himself in mercy will be brought honourably before God. There is a glory here, remember this word is God's word, and any part of it that which you have got in your soul is God's word to you. And that attaches you to Him, and listen my friends, that obliges Him to fulfil it. It is a great thing to believe, but if it is true, that the Lord has spoken to you the word He has given obliges Him to you. For, "He cannot deny Himself." (2 Timothy 2 verse 13). What a mercy it is then to have this glory in your soul, and one word more, when you have the witness of the Spirit in your soul. That witness which becomes a seal to you, becomes an earnest of your inheritance. "In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." (Ephesians 1 verses 13 & 14). Then God has glory in you, it is the beginning of that which is to have no end.

Oh think of what the Divine Spirit does when He comes into a sinners heart, and as it were bears testimony, or a witness that is infallible, He says to the soul, you are the Lord's. You are the Lord's child, and the sinner receives the witness, and lays hold of it by precious faith, and says I am the Lord's. "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine:" (Song of Solomon 6 verse 3). And can there be anything less than glory in The Holy Spirit's decent, in His indwelling, in His Divine Witness. What a sacred certainty there is in this, what contrition flows from it, and what amazement fills the heart, what gladness fills the mind, and what peace rules in the conscience. "Whom He justified them He also glorified."

But then we are in danger, that is to say we are in the enemies land, how shall we get through ? Why the Lord has promised to bring His people through, "For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Hebrews 13 verse 5). Now He gives faith to lay hold of such a word as that, and when He gives that faith, there is a beauty, there is a glory in it and the sinner is thereby sanctified, for his trust, his only trust is in the Lord. What is the end of this to be ? It will be this, "And If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14 verse 2).

Oh what a wonderful prospect it sets before a believer, an eternity, a blessed heaven with his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It sets before the poor sinner a conflict, and a victory, for "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son." (Revelation 21 verse 7). and,

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne." (Revelation 3 verse 21). If we receive this doctrine, can we wonder at what follows, this text follows it immediately, the question. "What shall we then say to these things ? If God be for us, who can be against us. ?" (Romans 8 verse 31). What shall we say to predestination ? What shall we say to effectual calling ? What shall we say to justification ? What shall we say to being glorified. "If God be for us who can be against us ? The devil is against us, the flesh is against us, the world is against us, but the meaning is, who shall overcome us ? "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

Now may the Lord bring heaven to you and to me, for grace is heaven, effectual grace being a sweet testimony of heaven. The Spirit's witness is a testimony of heaven, and brings out what Luther said, Doctrine is heaven' May God make us acquainted with it, and make us the subjects of it.

Amen.