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GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS

Sermon preached by Mr. J. Raven at Shaw's Corner, Redhill on Tuesday, 17th. September, 1946 JR/3

"Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

"He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you." John 16. 13, 14

The Lord, as He said, was about to go to His Father, and He had to go that painful way of the Cross, that way of humiliation and of shame, of darkness and desertion. He was to pour out His soul unto death, as the Apostle says, "He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross", and it was His precious atoning death that opened the way for the pouring out of the Holy Spirit of promise. That Holy Spirit could never have been given apart from the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was Jesus who opened the channel of mercy, and it was through the merits of His death and the power of His intercession that the Holy Spirit came down to poor sinners to visit them, to dwell in their hearts, quickening them and raising them up to a life unto God in Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus speaks for the comfort of His disciples of the Comforter, that Paraclete, that Advocate whom He will send to them from the Father, and He here calls Him the Spirit of Truth because He is the witness to the truth. In our fallen state, in our ignorance and in our total inability to attain to any right knowledge of God and of the things of God, we need a guide and teacher, we need no other than the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. God can only be known as He makes Himself known. "Canst thou by searching find out God?" It is impossible for any man of our sinful and fallen race of himself to attain to a right knowledge of God, and therefore if God is to be known He must reveal Himself. It is true that He has revealed Himself in part in creation; He has revealed Himself too in the Scriptures. It was necessary that He should do so to condescend to the weakness and infirmity of poor sinful men. He

spake to them in times past by the prophets, sending His word to them time after time and causing these Holy Scriptures to be written, men speaking as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. God has given us the Scriptures to show us the vileness of our hearts. Such is our native folly, the power of unbelief and the darkness within us, that we do not understand the Scriptures. We may read the Word, we may attain to a considerable knowledge of the letter of the Word, but there is no true understanding. Who were better instructed in the letter of the Scriptures than the Jews? They learned whole passages and books by heart. They carefully studied the very jots and tittles of the law, and yet they understood not. Their hearts were hardened and blinded through unbelief and so we see that the Holy Scriptures by themselves are not sufficient. Therefore, the Lord promises His Holy Spirit, "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed and my blessing upon thine offspring". And He said, "They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them". Also He speaks another precious promise, "I will give them a heart to know me". I remember how I felt that to answer my deep need as a sinner, "I will give them a heart to know me". I found that I had a heart that was incapable of knowing Him, a heart that desired not the knowledge of Him, but then that promise, "I will give them a heart to know me", was so suitable, and where the Lord applies a promise He enables the soul to turn that promise into prayer. Lord, do give me a heart of flesh, give me a heart to know thee. "Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me".

The Lord Jesus Christ in His discourse with His disciples tells them of this great gift, the Holy Spirit that He would send from the Father. "Howbeit, when He the spirit of truth is come". This Holy Spirit of God, being Himself God, a person in the Trinity, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son, knows the mind of God, and therefore His testimony is a true testimony of the mind of God and of the things of God. The Spirit of truth bears witness to the

truth in the heart and conscience of a sinner, and it is He who opens the understanding of a poor sinner to understand the Scriptures. It is He who causes that word to enter and give light and understanding to the simple, bearing witness in the heart and conscience to the Scriptures. Do we know what it is for the Holy Spirit to bear His gracious and solemn witness in our hearts and consciences to the truth of the word of God? O when He does, we know it is the Word of God, we know that the word is faithful and true, and it is the Holy Spirit's testimony that brings a sinner to tremble at that Word. "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word". It is the Spirit of Truth that brings a man to fall under the testimony of God in His word, to take to himself all those solemn indictments that are to be found in the Scriptures, to take to himself the blackest of them, to receive in his conscience with humility and with solemn compunction the testimony of God against himself. The natural man rises up in rebellion against it. He will not have it. He reads in the Scriptures for instance, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked", and he says, "I will not believe that my heart is thus bad". He reads in the Scriptures, "There is none righteous, no, not one, there is none that doeth good", but he says, "I will not believe it, I will not believe that I am totally destitute of good, that I have no righteousness". When he reads that "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God", he will not have it. O no, he supposes himself to be a very good sort of person. There may be some blemishes, but still, God is so merciful that He will take no notice of those, and God will be so pleased with what is good about him that He will pass by all the rest. But when the Spirit of Truth comes, O how the iniquity and falsehood of all that is exposed, and the man has to fall down before the Lord.

"The man is convicted and feeleth its hell,
And groweth afflicted more than he can tell."

The Spirit of Truth does it. By the word of truth He convinces His people of their sin and of righteousness and of judgment to come.

He shows them what unbelievers they are and how their unbelief is the blackest and basest of their sins against God. It is a terrible sensation to be convinced of being bound hand and foot by this terrible sin of unbelief, to find the utter impossibility of believing. The Spirit of Truth will reveal to you the truth about yourself, the truth that naturally, and in the pride of your heart, you would hide from yourself, but the Holy Spirit will bring you face to face with it. "The Spirit of Truth".

Not only does the Holy Spirit do that, by bringing in the law of God, the testimony of God, but also He leads the poor afflicted sinner to the sinner's Friend. We are told here that "He will guide you into all truth for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come". He will not speak of Himself, that is to say, He does not lead sinners to build their hopes even upon His work in their souls. The foundation of their hope is Jesus Christ. Not even the graces that the Holy Spirit imparts, vital as they are, are the ground of the sinner's hope. Mr. Hart well puts it:

"That blessed Spirit omits to speak
Of what himself has done,
And bids the enlightened sinner seek
Salvation in the Son"

"He shall not speak of himself". An exercised sinner may be properly encouraged, and the Holy Spirit does impart this encouragement by showing the sinner marks and evidences of grace, for instance, that

"..... heart once hard as steel
Now made for sin to feel,
Bears tokens of a ransomed soul"

Similarly, the Lord uses the ministry to trace out the footsteps of the flock, and show a poor thing who feels altogether out of the way, that after all he is in the footsteps of the flock, and to show some poor thing who cannot see his signs that he bears some tokens of grace, some tokens of a ransomed soul. The soul is encouraged thereby, but it is not his resting place; the ground of his comfort is not there, but rather the Holy Spirit in showing

him these signs, does it to encourage and to strengthen him, to spur him on to follow after Christ, and to seek to come closer in upon Jesus Christ. "He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

Then the Lord says, "He shall glorify me". That is the great and the blessed work of the Holy Ghost in the sinner's heart, to glorify Christ. You remember that in one place we are told, (in Isaiah's prophecy, chapter 2) about the loftiness of man being cast down, the idolatrous worship of the people being overthrown, and then follows this, "And the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day". And there you have exactly what the work of the Holy Spirit is in a sinner's heart. It is to throw down all idols, to cast them out; it is to disappoint all fleshly confidences, everything that a sinner trusts in and loves and worships in the place of the Lord Himself. All unworthy loves have to go; all idolatrous love has to go; all vain and lying confidences have to go; and in the process it looks as if the Lord is bringing a poor sinner to nothing. He is being broken with breach upon breach; it seems as if the Lord is about to make an end of him. "Surely against me is he turned." But "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest and teachest out of thy law". The Holy Spirit does this great and solemn work in a poor sinner's heart in order that the LORD alone may be exalted.

"He shall glorify me". We read in Isaiah that "there is no beauty that we should desire him", and naturally man sees no beauty in Christ; there is nothing attractive to him in Christ. The carnal mind rejects Him and says he will have none of Him. "We will not have this man to reign over us". We do not want this gospel we loathe it, and so there is by the carnal mind a total rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ. As the Jews said, "Not this man but Barabbas", so the carnal mind chooses any base thing rather than Jesus Christ. But when the Holy Spirit comes and overturns things, and begins by His solemn teaching to cleanse this idol-house, to expel the idols, to show their hideousness, to show their vileness,

and to reveal the folly and wickedness of having bowed down to them, it is that the LORD alone may be exalted, that He may glorify Christ. Down with the idols and up with Christ, that is the work of the Holy Spirit; and there is one idol that goes down with the rest, and that is that big idol, self. Do we realise what an idol self is? The

poet sings - "O crucify this self, that I
No more, but Christ in me, may live;"

and the work of the Holy Spirit is to bring us to a striving for this, for this self to be crucified, for this idol self to be cast down, that the Lord alone may be exalted. "He shall glorify me", says Christ. Men despised Him, men counted Him as vile. They treated Him as a malefactor, they accused Him of all sorts of things which could not be proved against Him; but the Holy Spirit, by the testimony He bears, lifts up the name of Christ, He clears that name from all the aspersions and all the filth cast upon it by unbelieving men. Christ is lifted up, is declared to be the Son of God with power, by the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. And as Christ is revealed in sinners hearts, He is revealed there as that holy, harmless and undefiled Lamb of God.

"He shall glorify me". Where there has appeared nothing to attract, now what a beauty and what an attraction there is seen in Christ when the Holy Ghost glorifies Him. Do you remember the first glimpse you got of Him? Bunyan very beautifully describes it in his Pilgrims Progress, where he tells us that Evangelist said to the poor man clothed in rags, with the burden upon his back, and the little book in his hand, with tears of anguish streaming down his face, "Do you see yonder wicket gate?" "No", said the man. "Do you see yonder shining light?" "Methinks I do." Now it is just like that often when the Holy Spirit begins to glorify Christ, begins to set a poor sinner's heart towards Jesus Christ, to follow after Him. "Do you see yonder shining light?" "Methinks I do". That is all you can say about it. "Methinks I do". But O the attraction of it! The attraction of it! O there is then such a hunger and such a thirst for

Christ that can never be satisfied short of Him. Thus the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ. He glorifies His Person. We sometimes sing,

"O teach me to love Thy Person most sweet"

and the Holy Spirit glorifies the Person of Christ. Immanuel, God with us, the Word made flesh, the Son of God become the Son of man, dwelling among us, taking upon Him the flesh and blood of the children, being made in all points like unto His brethren - O how attractive and how great the Holy Ghost makes Him in His person as He reveals Him in the soul! Nothing less than this Person, this mighty Saviour, will do for my soul, says the poor sinner.

"So guilty, so helpless am I,
I durst not confide in His blood,
Nor on His Protection rely,
Unless I were sure He is god."

The Holy Spirit exalts the Person of Christ as an able Saviour, as a divinely sufficient Saviour, mighty and most fit to perform the work the Father sent Him to do, able to stand in the breach, able to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, because He is that glorious Person, Immanuel.

"Immanuel, thrice-blessed name!
The God we trust is still the same!"

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever!" The Holy Spirit glorifies His Person, and He shows this, that it is because Christ is who He is and what He is, because He is the glorious Person the Scriptures declare Him to be, that there is a value and a sufficiency in His righteousness. There is virtue and efficacy found in His blood because He is the Person the Scriptures declare Him to be. It is in Him and by His blood that sinners who were sometime far off are made nigh, and all that is felt of the power and virtue of Christ's atonement, all that is felt of the sufficiency of His precious righteousness, hangs upon the majesty, the glory, the kingly power of His Person as the Christ of God. The Holy Ghost glorifies Him in His Person. How His atonement sparkles, how His righteousness does glitter with heavenly lustre in the eyes of a

sinner, and in every view of Christ the Son of God and man, there is that which satisfies the soul. "He shall glorify me". And as He glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ, it is by revealing Him in answer to the deepfelt necessities of the soul. The Holy Ghost does not bring in the revelation of Christ where there is no hunger at all for Him, but where He reveals Christ He makes room for Him; where He brings in the things of Christ He creates hunger for them and thirst for them. For instance, when He will glorify Christ in His atonement, in His precious blood, He causes the sinner to feel something of the filth and guilt of sin and the burden of it, and then the power and the efficacy of Christ's blood is proved in the sinner's conscience by the removal of that burden. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin". So one says,

"I felt it applied
And I joyfully cried,
Me, me thou hast blessed,
And for me thou hast died".

The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ in His atonement, in His precious blood, by making its power felt, removing guilt, sealing peace, reconciling the soul to God from every folly, every fault. And when Christ is thus exalted in the heart and glorified, O how love springs up to Him! And the Holy Spirit glorifies Him as the Lord our righteousness in this way, that He shows a sinner how destitute he is of righteousness, that he must have a righteousness, or be rejected of God and perish for ever; and the more a sinner searches his heart and life for righteousness the farther off he gets from it. He cannot find it; his righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and he has to take home to himself the words, "There is none righteous, no not one". But when he is just sick at heart at the sight of his own filthy rags, when he is sickened into self despair, as he realises that he is all unrighteousness, then the blessed word comes in, Jehovah Tsidkenu, the Lord our Righteousness. Then O, what a precious needful thing the soul sees Him to be, how desirable, how the soul hungers for Him, longs to win Christ and be found in Him, and have His righteousness put upon him! So the Holy Spirit

glorifies Christ. None but Christ can satisfy this sinner, none but Christ. No righteousness but that of Jesus Christ will supply his deep need as a sinner before God. So Christ becomes an object of attraction to him, and what a following after Christ there is in the desires and the affections of the soul! That I may know Him and be found in Him. O to be near to Him, to be at His wounded side, to sit at His blessed feet, to hear His voice, to hear Him say that He is mine and I am His! Thus the Holy Spirit glorifies Christ in the heart.

He glorifies Him too in His everlasting Priesthood. You know, the priest of old had a golden plate on the front of his mitre inscribed with the words, "Holiness to the Lord", and there is a wonderful sweetness in those words of Mr.Hart,

"Christ has perfect holiness for every sin-sick soul".

As the great High Priest He ever lives to make intercession. He pleads His life and death on behalf of His people, and calls their sins His own. He opens His mouth for the dumb and in the cause of all such as are oppressed, and maketh intercession for transgressors. Oh, He speaks, His blood speaks, His wounds speak, His righteousness speaks, He, the great Head of the Church speaks in the court of heaven as the great interceding High Priest. The poet beautifully says,

"The Father lays His vengeance by
And smiles upon His Son"

"He shall glorify me". He glorifies Christ in His priesthood, makes Him precious as the great High Priest. O the attraction of that to a poor soul who is so weak and so filled with guilt and shame that he cannot speak, knows not how to pray, and then gets just a glimpse of this great High Priest in heaven, and the truth that "He ever liveth to make intercession", and will be attentive to the cries of all those that are destitute and needy. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever". O how it puts strength into a poor weak soul! "Will he plead against me with His great power? No but He would put strength in me". Do you know what it is sometimes to be a little strengthened and encouraged by a view of Christ, of

what He has done, of what He is? How His blood speaks!

"What voice is that which speaks for me
In heaven's high court for good,
And from the curse has set me free?
'Tis Jesus' precious blood".

"Let us draw near", says the Apostle, "with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water". That is the effect of it. Something speaks to the heart and says, "Let us draw near... Seeing we have such an High Priest let us come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." And as the Holy Spirit thus glorifies Christ how it removes the lustre from all inferior things! This it is that brings poor people to choose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt."

"O may I sin forsake,
The world for Thee resign"

That will be the desire and the language of the poor sinner's heart as Christ is glorified. The sinner must be after Christ and there is an irresistible attraction as he finds Christ thus glorified by the Holy Ghost. The world loses its charm, those things that are the delight of the flesh are seen in their right proportion, seen to be dung and dross, worthless things. "He shall glorify me, for He shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you". You see there the condescending grace and the power of the Holy Ghost; He "shall shew it". He takes the fool and makes him know the riches of redeeming grace. May the Lord add His blessing, Amen.