

ADDRESS GIVEN AT WORTHING ON BEHALF OF
THE SOUTH EASTERN AUXILIARY ON FRIDAY 28TH MAY, 1965,
BY PASTOR L.S.B. HYDE.

Mr. Chairman, Dear Friends; Whilst wondering what I should say and the course that we might be led into, I picked up a little leaflet that the Secretary had sent to me, and the verse which some of you may have read, I read; and the last two lines greatly impressed me and have influenced my thinking, I trust as led by the Spirit of God, this evening. If you will bear with me I will just read this verse to you. It is one of William Cowper's:

"Easy it were to reach,
A mansion in the courts above,
If swelling words and fluent speech
Might serve instead of faith and love.
But none shall gain the blissful place,
Or God's unclouded glory see.

(Now these are the two lines which struck me forcibly)

Who talks of free and sovereign grace
Unless that grace has made him free?"

In consequence my thoughts were very much led into the very great importance, not only of the doctrines of Grace, but also the experience of Grace. There are three essential aspects of religion spoken of often - the doctrine, the experience and the practice. Each of these spheres is very important and should receive our deep attention, because, if we should be behind in any, we shall do well to look into the matter.

This led me to a text which you will find in the book of Exodus 33rd Chapter and the 16th verse -

"For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

Sometimes when people talk about the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, they almost seem to indicate, that before Jesus Christ came, grace was something unheard of. If we go back into these ancient days of the Old Testament, we shall see so clearly that grace is spoken of even there, and it is spoken of, because there was a feeling sense of the need of it, I believe, in the hearts of those people. Certainly Moses was very much in need of this grace to be manifested to him, and at this particular time the children of Israel had been rebellious, and there were indications of the wrath of God coming down to consume them. It was on this score Moses was so concerned in respect to the presence of the Lord going with them. But, I shall not proceed through this text as I normally would do, but rather shall we look principally at this latter part -

"So shall we be separated, I and thy people from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

Now this part of the Scripture is quite contrary to what is very eminent in the minds of religious leaders today, as they speak of the Ecumenical

get-together, putting aside those things upon which they may not be able to agree, and glossing over those things, so that they may be made one; and one wonders whether they have ever looked into some of these scriptures, which continually set before us separation. There is one things which is very important for us to consider - and it is a point in which some have erred, not knowing the scriptures - and that is this, that separation, where it is right, comes from God; separation where it is wrong comes from man; and we need a great deal of grace given to us that we may observe this separation which God works in the heart. If we go to the first Epistle of John, we read this, "Try the spirits, whether they are of God." (Ch. 4 v.1.) I can well remember the time when looking at that scripture, I thought it referred to everyone else apart from myself, but I believe the Sovereign Grace of God came to me and suddenly directed those words into my own heart. This was the spirit that had to be tried, the one that was in my heart, not the other person's - though there may be some circumstances in which this latter has to be done, yet who can try another spirit? And yet by the Grace of God, God will bring us to try our own spirits, and in the same way separation by the Sovereign Grace of God will be the work of God in order that it may bring Glory to God. That is what we have to consider here.

In our meeting this evening we have joined together in the interest of the Sovereign Grace Union, perhaps it has caused some of you a great deal of concern lest the motive that has brought us together has been a wrong one, to which some may say, "How can it be a wrong one?" Well, it can be a wrong one if our motive is otherwise than for the promotion of the Glory of God. Now this will take a little bit of sorting out, and I sometimes feel it is more than you or I can do to do it. But, may we not venture to say this, that if we have come to the meeting, as we trust we have, there will be a petition in our hearts, that whatsoever we do, we may do all things to the Glory of God? There is a way in which things may be done, but the spirit may be wrong. How searching this can be to us sometimes. Doing it to the letter, promotes even the doctrines of grace, and yet underlying, our spirit is wrong. Why? Because instead of desiring the Glory of God, instead of desiring that by such meetings even other sinners might be gathered into Christ's fold, we may perhaps have very different ideas and would wish to project ourselves into the forefront. "When we have done all," as the Scripture says, we should say, "We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do".

Since the Sovereign Grace of God will separate, what kind of separation is it? - It is an inward one. There are those, of course, who separate themselves; they go into a Monastery or into a Convent and thus they interpret this word separation; whilst we may come into another circle of people who will act in a very strict and particular manner in respect of things outwardly. Now, when I say that, I am not suggesting that we should in any way be loose in our conduct and should go in for this and that and the other, but I am quite satisfied about this, that where there is an inward separation, we can leave the outward separation, because God will so work in our hearts that we shall not want to do those things associated with such and such people, not because we have any objection to their persons, but because their very environment, and their very outlook is so different from our own. How is it different? Well, others may "seek their own, and not the things which are Jesus Christ's". (Phil. 2 v. 21.) Now you see friends, if we are born again, God has implanted within a new creation, breathing after holiness, breathing after the things which are Jesus Christ's. That is that which

will separate us from all others upon the face of the earth. This is the point in Moses' words here. It was God's presence with them that separated them from all the peoples that were on the face of the earth. I do not believe we should interpret this scripture in the way that some write, viewing Moses and the people of Israel moving about in such a way, fencing themselves in, in such a way, looking upon others with that feeling in their spirits, "Come not nigh me, for I am holier than thou". Indeed, I believe where there is an inward separation in the heart by the grace of God, we shall marvel sometimes that people ever come near us because we feel such sinners, let alone standing on our own, saying, "Do not come near to me". This is the effect of Grace upon a person, Sovereign Grace in the first instance.

What is the Sovereign Grace of God? Why, it is the unmerited favour of God. And what does the unmerited favour of God do to a person in the first place? It brings that person under a powerful conviction of their sins. I know that it is the Sovereign prerogative of God as to how deep or how less deep this conviction is, but sure I am that God will begin in every heart with this measure of conviction: a sufficient measure - we may safely say that - a sufficient measure that will cause you to see that you need salvation through someone else other than yourself. Now would we have known sin, as some of us, I believe, know it, but for the Sovereign Grace of God? Would we have felt what sinners we are? We may meet plenty of people doubtless, who would own a measure of sinnership, though they will say it in this way. "Well of course, I know I am not what I ought to be, I slip here and fall there as stray words drop from my lips sometimes, but generally speaking I can see a lot of other people worse." Now you see, the Sovereign Grace of God, when it comes into the heart of a man, or a woman, or a child, will bring them to stand on a very different piece of ground; it will bring them to the place where they will see, and not only feel, that they are sinners, and sinners above everybody else. Now you know friends, it doesn't matter what other people may say about you, it doesn't matter whether they say, "I think you are going a bit too far; I think you are castigating yourself unnecessarily; you live an upright life, you do many things which I feel are commendable". This may be the kind of words that you may hear from some, but you know if God has convinced you of your own sin, such supposed commendations will not make the slightest difference to you. Your inward reaction will be, "You don't know, you can't see into my heart: you don't know the things I am feeling, the things that I am thinking sometimes: and I marvel that I am kept within bounds as much as I am". Now to have such a knowledge of sin will be that which is produced by the Spirit of God, through the unmerited favour of God. You know, it is a favour! we don't always realise it or put it into that category, but it is a favour if God has shown us that we are sinners.

"Sinners can say, and none but they,
How precious is the Saviour."

It is, therefore, very important that we should bear this in mind. It was said of Mary the sister of Lazarus, "She loved much, but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little". (John 11 v. 2. & Luke 7 v. 47.) And this may be the sad observation which we have to make sometimes as we look at some, some whom we have hoped well of perhaps, and we have been a little disappointed in them, as we have discovered that what we hoped was a deep work of conviction on their spirit, wasn't so great after all. Perhaps you may say, "How can you judge that?" Well, just on the same basis as we may read the

words of the Lord Jesus concerning Mary, "She loved much," for much was forgiven. Now the more you feel God has forgiven you, the more you will love Him. The greater sinner you feel yourself to be, the more you will love Him when you realise His mercy toward you. Now this will have the effect of separating you from the world in a very different way to that which you expected. O yes! a very different way indeed. Now you will be preserved from the spirit of Pharisaism because God by His infinite favour has shown to you what you really are - the unvarnished condition. And so, it will not be a question then of crowing over any of your neighbours, but you will say like John Bradford when he saw the man being hanged in Northampton Square for his sheep stealing, "There go I but for the grace of God". Some might have said to him, "But John Bradford you are a very upright man, you are a preacher of the Gospel; how is it possible that you could make such an utterance as that?" But you see friends, by the Divine favour of God, John Bradford was convinced that had he not been kept by the power of God, there was such a sink of sin within him that the propensity to do the very same thing, with the opportunity, and the temptation concurring at the same time, there would he have been in the same place.

Indeed friends, this will bring us to another aspect of the power of God's Grace, and that is, "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation". (I Pet. 1 v.5.) Now this will separate us, won't it? The keeping power of God will separate us. You will find many people who will say, "Well I can keep myself". Perhaps you can remember the time when you thought so too; but you see, this inward separation has made a difference between you and the Egyptians. God puts the difference there, He gives you different feelings now, you cannot go forward in your own strength saying "I shall be able to withstand all this evil, and I shall not absorb the error which is abounding on every hand". You know if we are the subjects of God's Sovereign Grace and Mercy, we shall know this, we shall need Him to keep us. "Kept by the power of God." We have also to remember "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour". (I Pet. 5 v. 8.) Sometimes he appears as an angel of light, and I have felt sometimes that this is the most dangerous, most dangerous approach that Satan can ever make. When arguments seem so plausible - and even in religious circles today we may sometimes hear things put forth in such a way that they seem so plausible - but you know, friends, you will need to come to the Word of God with this; everything that is presented to you bring to the Word of God. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word," says the Scripture, "it is because there is no light in them". (Isa. 8 v. 20.) My old Pastor used to say in respect to that scripture, "In that particular thing". It was a good rider, because even the best of men are sometimes deceived in something. So, to the word and to the testimony, "And if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" in that particular thing. Now what will the Grace of God do for us under such circumstances? Will it separate you from that person? Well it will not if the Grace of God is invoked. Will it not give you a deep concern that that person's eyes may be opened? and what will you do? will you cast it to one side and say, "If that's what you believe, I am going to have nothing more to do with you", or will you evince the Grace of God given to you, the Sovereign Grace of God, and desire to walk in the precepts of the Gospel and say, "Pray for your enemies and for them which despitefully use you"? You know friends, we do not always have to look outside the Church of God for enemies. Peter was an enemy to the Lord Jesus Christ when he said unto Him, "This shall not be unto thee Lord". And the Lord had to say unto him, "Get

thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things which be of God, but those that be of men".(Matt. 16 v. 22,23.) And therefore we shall find that God has separated us - "So shall be we separated I and thy people from all the people that are on the face of the earth."

Now we shall be separated by this wonderful Grace of God in the teaching of God. Who teacheth like Him? "He teacheth to profit." (Isa. 48 v.17.) And the teaching which He teaches us, I venture to say, we shall never be able to receive, certainly not in our hearts, certainly not by a gracious experience unless we are taught by the Spirit of God. We shall find many in our day even, very erudite in their reading of the Scriptures, but O how unreceptive they are to the Doctrines of Grace. And why is this? The Scriptures tell us quite clearly, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I.Cor. 2 v. 14.) Now the Lord Jesus said to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes for they see: and your ears, for they hear". (Matt. 13 v.10.) "Many kings have desired to see those things which ye see and have not seen them, and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." (Luke 10 v. 24.) Now why? Why did His disciples see and hear? It was by the Sovereign Grace of God. That Sovereign Grace which opened their eyes to perceive and their ears to hear. Now this is so important, because if we turn to the Epistles we shall find this written, "Faith cometh by hearing." (Rom. 10 v. 17.) And therefore if our ears are not opened we shall not be able to hear, and if we cannot hear, then how useless will be the best of teachers to us. But you see friends, God opens the ears of His people so that they are able to receive instruction. But not only is it needful for them to have their ears opened, it is necessary for their hearts to be touched, because though their ears may be opened their hearts may not be touched at all. Perhaps some of you know what this is. The woman by the well, you see, she had her ears opened insofar that she could understand the conversation of the Lord Jesus Christ, and when He spake to her about living water, what was attractive to her natural mind was that she would not have to come every day and draw. It was attractive to her because the natural mind is fond of idleness. But you know friends, God was going to deal with her. This was but the leading up; He was going to bring something to her attention soon that would touch her heart, that would make her realise that this man was not an ordinary man; He was going to tell her all her past life; and He was also going to reveal to her that He was the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, the Saviour of her soul.

But now, "Unless that Grace has made him free", merely to be convinced of our sin will not make us free, we shall need to be taught by the Spirit of God that "There is one mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus". (I Tim. 2 v. 5.) Has His doctrine ever made you free in the experience of it? Have you ever felt the necessity of it when you have felt yourself to be a sinner sometimes? The experience of it comes into your hearts, when perhaps you feel you cannot draw near to God because of a sense of sin felt upon your spirit, then you hear that word of the Spirit teaching you and leading you inwardly applying these precious words, "There is one mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus".

Then there is another important doctrine which the Spirit of the Lord will teach to everyone of God's children, that, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous". (I John 2 v. 1.)

Now has He taught you that? As we go on from point to point, may this be in the back of your mind: "I have known the favour of God, for He has shown me a Mediator after having shown me a sinner. He has shown me that there is an Advocate with the Father, that Holy God, unapproachable: there was One that could speak in Heavens High Courts above; One that could wonderfully intercede, and not only wonderfully intercede but He was such a High Priest which 'became us'". (Heb. 7 v.26.) You see friends we can come across priests and high priests in various spheres of religious circles; they wouldn't become us, they wouldn't do us any good, they wouldn't understand our cases; they would be completely confounded if we came to them and said we had been very guilty of sin. If we went into the confessional box and spoke to some of these priests or high priests, and confessed some of the things that you and I feel, some of the things that you and I confess unto God sometimes in secret, why! they would be completely confounded. But what about the High Priest which becomes us? He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate, from sinners". (Heb. 7 v.26.) But if we turn to the Fifth Chapter of Hebrews, we shall find there such a wonderful description which to me has often been very precious. In the opening of the second verse, we read these words, "Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity." Now you know friends, this will be individual teaching, it will be separating teaching, it will be inward teaching. This kind of teaching from God the Holy Spirit will separate you from the world. But how very different this separation is from that which sometimes people regard as separation. This will not only be a separating from the world, but also a separating to God. Now we have to bear this in mind when we think of separating and especially separating by the Grace of God. The evidence which Moses sets before us so particularly is, "Is it not that Thou goest with us". Now, you see friends how important this is to us, that God should go with us; how can He teach us afar off; how can He tell us about His Dear Son afar off; how can He tell us about the holiness of God afar off? And so the Lord Jesus Christ sends forth His Spirit to take of the things of Jesus.

Then again there are the occasions when we slip and fall. Have we not been very discouraged sometimes because of those things which have overcome us? You know, many a man and woman has had to smite upon their breasts sometimes saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner". And you know friends, this plea is not reserved for any particular place; this is not reserved for chapel - this isn't reserved for church, wherever it might be - no. I have known the time, and no doubt you have known the time too, when, rooted to the very spot - it may have been in the street, in the office, at the bench wherever we may have been - we had to cry out because of something which escaped our lip, "God be merciful to me a sinner". Now you see friends, such are separated to God by His Grace. Those that heard your soul disturbing sentence didn't think anything about it at all, yet you did and it was the power of God's Grace working in your heart which separated you, separated you to God Himself and caused you to realise that what you had said, and the spirit in which you had said it, was done in the presence of God, and known to Him because God is in every place beholding the evil and the good. You know friends, it will be good to realise that more. How much would we be kept from foolishness and lightness and anger and clamour and all things which are not convenient, if we were aware more of being in the presence of God! And what the Scripture says, "Thou God seest me". (Gen. 16 v.13.) But then there is a blessedness in this separation by the Grace of God

because by His Presence with those Israelites, though by their wanderings and departures and evil speaking sometimes, God came to the spot where He was at a point to destroy them; (but Moses so wonderfully interceded for them, saying, "What wilt thou do with thy Great Name.") Yet what God said must be fulfilled, and it was decreed literally that Israel should be brought into Canaan, as at the appointed time they had come out of Egypt on the selfsame day. Now friends, here is another Divine favour from God, leading us on day by day, hour by hour, watching over us. You feel sometimes -

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies,
Ever gracious, ever wise,
All my times are in Thy hand,
All events at Thy command."
(Ryland)

"Unless that Grace has made me free." Free from what? Well in Romans 8 v. 2 we shall read this - "Free from the law of sin and death". How do we become free from the law of sin and death? It will only be as we have faith in Jesus Christ. Now you see friends, we shall be very conscious of this as we are taught by the Spirit. Faith is the gift of God; we shall not be able to procure it, we shall not be able to buy it, but we shall be dependant upon God to give it to us. You know those words of one hymn writer are not altogether out of place; sometimes the people of God come into the experience of them very vividly -

"O could I but believe,
Then all would easy be."

Believing is not as easy as some make it out to be, and yet faith is so needful, faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, taking you, communicating faith so freely in your heart, "Look here!" the Lord replies, "Thy beauty's all in Me." You look at yourself, you get depressed, you say, "What hope is there for me?" But the Scriptures declare to us, "Look out of yourself, look unto Jesus Christ". "He is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by Him." (Heb. 7 v.25.) And this faith comes from heaven, enters into the soul and it makes us free because "Christ has died for the ungodly". "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." (I Tim. 1 v.15.)

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