

Sermon preached by MR. R. KINDERMAN at "Rehoboth" Chapel,
Swindon, on Thursday evening, 21st August 1958

Text: II Peter 3 v.14.

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

This last part of the epistle to the Church of Christ of which Peter could speak and write as the "beloved," is very gracious, and for one end and purpose, that it might be for their establishing, and, as he tells us at the last, that there might be a growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. So, in coming to the end of the epistle, he writes about matters of importance, matters of which the Lord Jesus Christ Himself had spoken, the things which belong to our eternity, and outside of which there is no comfort of hope, outside of which there is no entering into peace and joy. For "if there be no resurrection from the dead," says the apostle, "then is your faith vain, and ye are yet in your sins."

There is an eternity; and the apostle wrote this also; he says, "In both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance." That is a very great mercy. If we are really born again of the Spirit of God, that will prove from time to time to be a great benefit. It came to my mind in prayer, (and you that are under divine teaching will come in line with the truth, though sometimes it is painful because of our nature), that Martha was in a place where she was cumbered, and she was "careful and troubled about many things," seemed to be weighted down unduly about matters that concerned time; and the Lord Jesus graciously reproved her. That was in love, that was to stir up her pure mind by way of remembrance. So the apostle by the Holy Spirit, puts things in the right place. This is not to stir up the flesh. The stirring up of the flesh is of no value, at best that could only be something spurious. There is no reality in the flesh; there is nothing to honour God in the flesh. A religion of the flesh is not of God, neither will that stand in the day of judgment; so that, my friends, it is nothing but that new creation that can enter in. But what a mercy to have a pure mind, a mind that is upon the things that belong to God, and though we are in the body of this death, (and the apostle writes to the beloved as such) and know what it is to be cumbered by it, know what it is to have to deal with it, know what it is to feel its workings, and sometimes in such a manner that you may have even to confess that it has almost appeared as though there were no pure mind, everything seems to be in turmoil, confusion, and carried away, - I say, what a mercy it is for the Lord to come '.

It has been on my mind during the week, the Lord is not silent to His people. One prayed that the Lord should not be silent, "lest," he says, "If Thou be silent unto me, I become like them that go down into the pit." God is silent to the wicked. He is longsuffering, and that longsuffering is counted by some as slackness, as though the Lord does not look down, as though the things you sang in the opening hymn (Gadsby's 6) were not true, because there is a continual going on, perhaps for many years above the allotted span, and going on in those things that are contrary to the workings of the Spirit, seeking all and devouring all that is of the flesh; and they may have no stumbling.

Asaph fretted himself because of evildoers, and at the time it appeared to him in his flesh as though the Lord did not look down, but "the Lord," says the apostle in this chapter "is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering." And while He is longsuffering to His people, He is longsuffering even to His tenderness to the wicked; that is, in providence. I just mention it that we may be helped and stirred up in our pure minds, that we may view things rightly.

O, how often you may have looked upon matters, and looked upon the wicked spreading themselves as a green bay tree, no appearance as though the end would come, nothing to check their pace; but the Lord does speak. He has spoken from the time of the fall, and He has come again and again, and "though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet," says the wise man, "this I know, that it shall be well with them that fear God." The promise of God will be manifested. But He comes and removes from time into eternity; and we shall be removed from time into eternity.

I have felt much of late respecting our young people. I would not willingly discourage you, I feel there is time before you, there are many exercises, many matters that are right and honourable. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled;" that is the word of God. There are many matters that concern it; but there is an end. We are born to die. The apostle enters into the truth of that, and tells the beloved in this chapter again by way of remembrance, that it might be a good and gracious blessing.

Coming to the text, he reminds us that the Lord will come. "The day of the Lord will come," and it will come "as a thief in the night." There is a point in that. I feel sometimes it is good to look into matters as we view them around us. How solemnly is science put to wrong use! How it proves the heart of man by nature, and the design of man to enter into things that belong to God! I do not want to speak irreverently in the pulpit, but it solemnises my mind - they would even aspire to enter and see what is on the moon, which is not the prerogative of man. But you know, there was a time when man built a city; he went to build a tower to reach to heaven, and God looked down and spoilt the imaginations of their hearts; and God will. Though man appears to be strong, and though all things that are in the world appear also to be strong, the Lord will speak. He spoke in the day of Noah, and the floodgates of heaven, and beneath, were opened, and man, apart from those who were safe in the ark, perished in the floods and waters, justly - O, they looked, upon God, they looked upon His truth, and they counted Him as though the promise would never come, "The Lord is not slack concerning His Promise, as some men count slackness;" and Noah knew it, and was diligent, by the mercy of God. His pure mind was continually stirred up; the remembrance of the promise of God was continually before Him, and he prepared the ark, under divine teaching and blessing, to the saving of his house.

So the apostle speaks to the church, and to you and me I hope, and he says, "seeing that all these things shall be dissolved." There is to be a dissolving. The flesh dislikes it; flesh does not want to know that things are going to be dissolved. Our hearts are fashioned alike.

Unless we have this pure mind given by God to enter into the truth, we do not want to see things dissolved. Has any man looked, except in solemn ignorance, at the end? Some have gone so far as to desire to leave this world because they have felt they would be out of trouble, being ignorant of the truth, ignorant of eternity, that something must be done, something must be proved. How solemn would be the case for any of us here to be left to think or consider for a moment that to leave this world - this world of trouble, and the trouble you may have, or have had, in your life, - that to leave it without a knowledge of and vital union to Christ would be to have a better part? My dear friends, I would just say in passing that there is not a trouble that any person has ever had, even the greatest that this world could ever know and bring, that can be compared to the solemn reality of being in an eternal hell, banished from God eternally. O to be saved from that! You do not wonder the apostle desired by the Spirit of God that they might be stirred up in their pure minds by way of remembrance.

What a gracious work it is at times, what mercy that has proved to some of you, when, it may be through some providential dealing, it may have been by the hand of death, or by some solemn work or affliction - not to lay down any prescribed way - but by the mercy of God there has been an examination, a looking into things; there has been a stirring up of the pure mind, by way of remembrance of the promise of God, that the time of the end will come, and that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." The time of the end will come. Sometimes I feel the Lord is making manifest that we are fast hastening to it. I would not prophesy; I have no grounds for that, no leading of the Spirit in myself for that; but there are evidences of the latter days. The righteous are taken, "none considering," says one - few do - "that they are taken from the evil to come." Over many years - and many of you can testify, - God has taken and is taking these that, under His divine blessing, have been pillars in the church, who had a pure mind for the truth, and whose conversation has been in heaven. I would say it soberly, - I used to feel that the language of one of our hymnwriters was very cutting; I wondered whether it was real, I must admit; but, my friends, I have had to come to the point: "And scorners rise up in their room." May God bless this church, and bless Zion, that there may still prove to be "a remnant according to the election of grace." I know I have digressed a little, but those digressions, as dear Mr. Philpot used to say, may prove to be a blessing; there is no stated line.

But here the apostle says, "Nevertheless we." O that we may be found amongst that people; "According to His promise." If there were no promises of eternal life, if there were no promise of heaven, if God by His prophets and by His dear Son, had not made manifest a promise of eternal life, then it would be despair for those that are taught of the Spirit. It would indeed! There is nothing here can satisfy, there is nothing to look forward to. You may challenge that; but to the pure mind there is not. For you that are born again there is nothing here can satisfy. Nothing but heaven and all that that means can satisfy a living soul, and there is a looking for that promise, "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." The fall made manifest what real corruption is, and what death is. There is no righteousness here. I know that will be challenged by nature, but there is no righteousness here. Man is a fallen creature, and all the acts of man are sin; everything that belongs to man is attended with sin. Solemn truth! It is too deep to know. We often speak of it; you hear it continually;

but it is a tremendous truth to know; and yet it is a great mercy to know, because when the Spirit brings by His divine teaching the knowledge of sin, and what we really are, and what we live in, we shall look forward to the promise, we shall look forward in hope, we shall seek for a knowledge of that kingdom in our own souls.

But the apostle gives an exercise in this, brings an exhortation: - "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things." There is a looking for such things. That is the very ground of hope. Hope anchors in that which is within the veil. That is heaven. The manifestation of Christ in truth is heaven. All the things that belong to Christ are eternal joy and blessedness. I do not speak now as man looked upon Him when He was here on earth and despised Him. I speak as the church in their pure mind look upon Him as their all, their salvation.

"He Whom I fix my hopes upon;" says one,
"His track I see, and I'll pursue
The narrow way, till Him I view."

O, there is heaven for the church ! And they look for that. That caused those in old time, under the teaching of the prophets, and under Moses, to "look for a city which hath foundations." They all died in faith; and they were not disappointed. They looked for a city which had foundation. When God came to Abraham and made manifest he was a child by divine blessing, then he went out, not knowing whither he went. He sojourned, he dwelt in tents "with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." That was his joy, that was his comfort. So did Jacob, and when Jacob was about to leave this world he blessed his children, and in that blessing was all heavenly truth, everything that belonged to Christ and His kingdom revealed to him by faith, and he looked for "such things." That was the rejoicing of his heart. The sadness of his spirit and of his countenance was when he felt darkness of mind; and so it is with you that have a pure mind.

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing ye look for such things," he says, "be diligent." And for what purpose? Well, there is a possibility of coming short, there is a possibility of falling away. It tells us in the end of the chapter, "Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things," - the same truth - "beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness." There is an exercise in this. That may solemnly have been to stir up your pure mind, "when any turn from Zion's way," when there is a turning from the truth, when it may be, there is something crept in which is made manifest. The apostle Paul solemnly says this, "There must be also heresies among you; that they which are perfect may be made manifest." What is the purpose of that solemn teaching? I believe it is to stir up the pure mind, I believe it is to bring this diligence. Some times when there has been a falling away, a being "led away with the error of the wicked," if we should be brought into that place, my friends, that would solemnly prove that the root of the matter was not within us. There would not be the stedfastness. It is a very solemn part of teaching, but it belongs to the diligence. By the error of the wicked moved away ! When John the Baptist came, in the short time of his ministry, - which was a perfect ministry; for the Lord Jesus said, "What went ye out for to see? A man moved about with the wind, moved about with winds of doctrine?" - he had only one ground of salvation, one ground of hope. He testified of Christ. He said, "I am not that Light, but am sent to bear witness of that Light; that is the true Light which lighteth

every man that cometh into the world," - the testimony of Christ. I mention it because all apart from that standard is being led away with the error of the wicked, moved from the steadfastness, moved away. If the Lord does not bring to repentance, that would solemnly prove one to be a bastard; and, my friends, what a solemn case that would be! So that the apostle, in the desire to stir up their pure mind, and seeing that they knew and looked for these things, he says, "Be diligent."

"Be diligent." In other words, look into your own case, look into your own soul, look into the matters which you hope and trust and believe. Look into your own case, because it is personal. Though the mercy of God has drawn together a people - for He speaks to them as a church and could speak to you as a church - yet He speaks individually; and this is not without a ground. There were twelve disciples chosen. They were chosen by Christ. They walked with Him; they heard His word. They all preached, the twelve of them; and they went all through the time of Christ's earthly mission until the end, when the Lord made manifest that there was one who was not in the covenant of grace. He was a devil! He fell, because he was never in the secret. So that the apostle gives this exhortation, "Be diligent; look into the ground upon which you hope, lest it should prove to be something short." "Be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

There is another cause for this. When the Lord Jesus was here upon earth He gave many instances, especially to His church, in order that there might be a diligence. He tells us the kingdom of heaven is likened unto ten virgins. That is a solemn declaration; so that we cannot take things for granted. As the church of God, as partakers of the ordinances, you could not in your pure mind, stirred up by way of remembrance, just say, "We are all the children of God; we are all born again by the Spirit." You would not have the authority, nor would I; but you would come to this, in this diligence,

"With them numbered may I be,
Now, and through eternity."

The Lord Jesus, then, said there were five of those virgins that were foolish, and there is a solemn mark respecting them, - they were never diligent. I do not mean in a natural way; not diligence in the flesh. It is diligence under the exercise of the Spirit. This diligence is by the Spirit of God; it is not something we can create, not something we can bring forth of ourselves; but it is the proof of God's work within; it is the proof of His divine grace. May I say this solemnly and be understood? - a vain professor is like a foolish virgin, never diligent. They were surprised, solemnly so, because their lamps went out and they had no light, they had not that which was needful, they were not found "in peace, without spot, and blameless." They were blameworthy. The Lord Jesus tells us in the parable that they were to go and buy. Not that we can manufacture diligence, but if the Spirit of God dwells in us there will be a stirring up of His Own grace and power and truth in us to this end, that we may continually be exercised. That is a mercy; and it is proved in this that we are in union to Christ.

There is no peace out of Him; there is no perfection out of Christ. Everything out of Christ has a spot upon it.

There was one in another parable who came unto the wedding feast, and the king said, "How camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?" It was spotted! That may never be seen by mortal eye; you know what you have sung: "He in the thickest darkness dwells." Ah, my dear friends, that may never be seen by mortal eye. That may be sufficient to pass the standard of man; it could even come into the church and pass the standard of man; but what you and I need is a proof that we have within us that which will stand acceptable before a holy, heart-searching God. And there is - all blessings on the Name of God! there is a standard; and the church of the living God, the church of the firstborn written in heaven, have that standard given, because they are in union to Christ eternally; and here is the work of the Holy Spirit. By the Holy Spirit they are brought to that standard. "Be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace."

Do we know the Holy Spirit? That is important. Do we know the power of the Holy Spirit? None but the Holy Spirit can reveal the truth; none but the Holy Spirit can make manifest in us our union to Christ: and peace is in Him. "Peace by His cross has Jesus made." There is no peace out of Christ; and there is no peace apart from the Holy Spirit's bringing us into a living union to Christ. But how gracious that is, when, in this diligence, by living faith there is at times an enabling to feel a little of this peace with God! And it is for sinners. The beloved, the church, they are sensible sinners, they have no hope in self, no comfort in self, no peace in self, and consequently they never find peace out of Christ.

But is it proved that this is in us? Has that been made over? May I ask, do we know "the peace of God which passeth all understanding?" There is a peace. The church of God have witnessed it. All those of the church of God who have gone before, up to this very moment, have given testimony of the peace of God in their souls in believing. It has proved to be in different ways, but they had the peace of God in their souls.

But "that we may be found of Him in peace." We must stand before God, we must come to the judgment; for there is an end to all things, and yet there is an eternity to spend. "That we may be found of Him in peace." What a wonderful day that will be when all the church of God are found of God in peace, through the preciousness of the merit of Christ! That has been on my mind - to feel, really to know, a living union to the Lord Jesus. My dear friends, in experience that is worth a lifetime's seeking. I do not mean you are to be satisfied, nor could you be; but it is worth a lifetime's seeking if in our end we shall be "found of Him in peace," really found in Christ, really favoured, because it is through His word that peace and reconciliation come. There is no peace apart from reconciliation. And how can we be reconciled to God out of Christ? There is no reconciliation out of Christ. Man has tried it.

There have been those, and we have read of those, who have trusted in the law as their ground of hope; so that the apostle said, those that live by the law shall be judged by the law; and what a standard that would prove to be! How can man born in sin perfect the holy law of God? So that there is no peace there. You may have gone to the law, you may have tried to find comfort there, but it gives you no comfort; and that is a mercy to you that have a pure mind, because it has been your schoolmaster, it has brought you to Christ to seek peace in Him who has perfected that law for his Church, who has honoured it for His Church, and by His Own shedding of blood has brought remission, so that there is reconciliation between a sinner and God.

"Be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot." There can be no coming to that place, only as we are clothed in the righteousness of Christ. O, how great a matter it is! But how gracious! We see that right in the beginning. Abel knew it. God made him diligent, blessed him in his soul, and his diligence brought him to sacrifice acceptably to God; and "he being dead yet speaketh." He speaks of the only way of righteousness. His sacrifice speaks of the only way of acceptance before God. It was a sacrifice of blood; it was a sacrifice acceptable to God. Cain fell. He was "led away with the error of the wicked" in his own soul. He brought a sacrifice acceptable to himself, in which he was well pleased. What a mercy to be taught of God!

"Without spot." I would desire that each of us, by the mercy of God, before we leave this world, may enter into the truth of the poet:

"And lest the shadow of a spot
Should on my soul be found,
He took the robe the Saviour wrought,
And cast it all around."

O, my dear friends, to be really clothed, really to feel the sweetness of a living faith in the righteousness of Christ, - it is a gracious diligence to prove that! Why, if we are under divine teaching, as the beloved, we cannot rest out of that, we cannot feel comfortable out of that, we have no hope out of that. Yet God comes to poor sinners, and gives them a gracious diligence. Have you proved a little diligence? a gracious diligence in prayer? Have you proved sometimes what it is to plead your cause? Job said he would. "Oh that I knew where I might find Him!" he said, "I would order my cause before Him, I would fill my mouth with arguments." Do you know what that is sometimes? You may even say, "Job's case, was it like this?" It was! The matters that came into his life brought him into a solemn exercise about his soul's eternity; the matters brought him into an exercise that he might prove the truth of Christ. He said, "I look on the right hand, and on the left, but I cannot find Him. Oh that I knew where I might find Him." Is not that a gracious diligence, that you might really be found in Christ, and find Him whom your soul loveth, that you may be without spot?

You could not die without that blessing, could you sinner? Simeon could not. He waited for the consolation of Israel. He came into the temple continually.

He came as a waiter. He was diligent. Only God knows how we come. There is not another creature really knows how you come, sinner; but God knows. Simeon was one blessed of the Spirit. He came according to the promise. O, and the apostle speaks, "Nevertheless," he says, "We, according to His promise, look." He came looking, he came exercised, he came diligent. God has given him a promise that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ. I really believe that, though it may not be in word, that is given to the whole church of God. That may never be spoken in actual word, but that is the exercise, that is the grounding of the hope and faith of every living soul; and there is a diligence in coming, there is a watching. Have you come watching? Diligence is watching. Habakkuk said, "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what He will say unto me." O to be diligent on your watchtower, lest you might fall from your stedfastness, and by the error of the wicked to be led away. Well Simeon, was diligent in watching, and he proved the Lord's mercy, he proved the promise, he was found of God, he was found in Him, he was blessed, he had peace, he was without spot, he was blameless; blameless before a holy, heart-searching God. And how did that come? He was in Christ. Precious faith! Why, you will seek for it. O that diligence! Sometimes in reading your soul has been exercised, and you have said in effect, "Be this religion mine! Lord, I cannot live without it; I cannot die without it." It is not only that you cannot die without it; you cannot live without it. Well, the day came when Simeon embraced Christ in all the fullness of His power, and then he was willing to go, he was ready to go. He looked for that precious truth. He saw the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, and he was willing to leave it all. "Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." What a wonderful truth! And that must be brought to you and me if we get to heaven. We must embrace Christ, my friends, if we get to heaven; really embrace him, really lay hold upon Him, really have Him in the arms of faith.

"Be diligent." As though the apostle would say "It is not sufficient to speak about it, it is not sufficient just to attend where it is spoken of; it is to have it in possession." Simeon had Christ in possession. He was his by rightful blessing, by covenant mercy, by promise. That is the point.

What a mercy, then, to be diligent! O, you come to the word of God, and there is a diligence. Christ said, "Search the scriptures." "Be diligent." But He tells us to what end. Not that they are the ground of your hope. He said to the Pharisees, "In them ye think ye have eternal life;" - not in reality. I believe there are those who are "led away with the error of the wicked" whose ground of hope is in the letter of the word. Yours is different from that.

Your diligence is that you may "be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless." that Christ may be made known in power through His word. "They are they which testify of Me. What a sweet grace that is at times in this diligence, when Christ is revealed in His word; as He was to the one in the wilderness who was reading the scriptures and felt his darkness and his ignorance and the need of a guide, and he was graciously led into the word and partook of that word, so that there was an embracing of Christ, and there was love in his heart; Christ was his only hope of heaven. He entered into that. There was love in his heart to Christ.

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things." Are you looking for heaven? Are you looking for that which the apostle has set forth in his truth? Well, that place, my friends, is a holy place. John in his Revelation tells us that nothing that defileth or maketh a lie can enter there. Then what is it that comes to the standard? Only Christ. I say again, the Lord grant us this mercy! Be diligent. O, seek no other healing, sinner, seek no other righteousness, seek no other salvation but that which flows from God through the Person and merit of His Own dear Son. Let me just mention in connection with this diligence another thought.

"When we live on Jesus' merit,
Then we worship God aright;
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
Then we savingly unite."

O, what a gracious truth that is! Why, to live on Jesus' merit - there is nothing else for a sinner who has this pure mind. May I ask, what do you live by, sinner? Dear Mr. Gadsby desired; and this was the language of his soul - "O that my soul could love and praise Him more." He says in that blessed hymn:-

"Immortal honours rest on Jesus' head,
My God, my Portion, and my living Bread;
In Him I live."

"Be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace." Just another thought; we know not the time when the Lord shall come. He is a sovereign. None of us here knows when He will come. "O," says the flesh - my flesh - "we will put that aside." Well, if you have this pure mind you cannot put it aside; you will be brought to it: "Be diligent." We know not the time when the Lord will come and remove us from this time state, that He will come is a truth. We shall all be removed. There will be a day when all of us here will be no more. There are those under the teaching of the Spirit that have been enabled to look into that truth. I hope we are diligent to look into the time when we shall go from this world. May it not overtake us as a thief! May it not find us without oil in our vessels! If you have oil in your vessel with your lamp, you are blameless, you have that which is needful, you have divine light which flows from Christ. That is the secret.

You have got that oil of grace that flows from Him, which alone can be the means of blessing, and when heart and flesh fail, to have a divine light and a divine life which is in Christ. Says the apostle in his diligence, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, that I might come before God, and be blameless and without spot, and so receive that joy. "Come in, thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you." - for sinners ! Sinners ! All through the merit of Christ ! without spot, in peace, blameless ! The Lord grant it !. But particularly may we be helped in this, "Wherefore, beloved, seeing ye look for such things, be diligent."

May none of us come short ! I often seem to close with that word, "May none of us come short," and I feel this - the Lord may spare us many years, but it has been on my mind that it may be the last sermon to come. There will be a last sermon. There will be a last time that you will come to Chapel. There will be a last time that you will meet with God's people. There will be an end. But the apostle says, "I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance;" lest you take things for granted, as though we intend to go on and go on. There will be a last time. Be diligent, that when that time does come and it will be said, "He is gone, she is dead," we may "be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

If any further copies are desired please write to:-

Mr. D. Kinderman, Mount Pleasant Farm,
Manningford Bruce, Pewsey, Wilts., SN9 6JQ
or phone Pewsey 2286.