

Speaking to one another in godly fear (Quality: Good)

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[0 : 00] And through the prophecy of Malachi, chapter 3, verses 16 and 17.

And the third chapter of the prophecy of Malachi, verses 16 and 17. Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it.

And a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day, when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

This very short prophecy, four verses, four chapters rather, was written almost 400 years before the Lord Jesus Christ was born.

And as we read in the third chapter, the coming of Christ is mentioned as the Lord's messenger.

[1 : 25] Behold, I will send my messenger. He shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.

Behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. We could read, and you may read, if you are so led, to see the state of Israel in the days of Malachi.

For it was grievous to the Lord, distressing to Malachi, that the state of Israel was such that it needed reproving, and without going down the many ways in which to prove those points.

But their religion and their exercises were seemingly, but nothing more than, duty and letter.

The services, of course, were those ordinances which surrounded the sacrifices, and the sacrifices they offered were that which cost them nothing.

[2 : 46] It was no more a sacrifice, but a way of appeasing conscience. And we read of those that they offered the blind for sacrifices, and they offered the lame and the sick, and the Lord said, is not this evil?

is not this evil? And I read somewhere too how cold and indifferent they were to the house of God even.

For I believe I came across these words where they did nothing for love, nothing for love's sake.

They wanted pain for what they did, and there was no love in their hearts to Israel's God, nor Israel's, or the ways of God. And the house of God was well set at naught.

They were in a very low state. Spiritually, I'm speaking about, of course. But as in the state of Israel, so in the state of the Church of Christ, there is amongst the Church of Christ, those who fear the Lord.

[4 : 01] And despite the poverty and the desolation, there were those in the days of Israel, in the days of Malachi, who feared the Lord. And it is that although this small prophecy was written and the Lord brings to the light the poverty, the desolation, the lukewarmness, the indifference, the duty that they felt they was to do, but not really from their hearts.

And yet amongst them all, there were a few that feared the Lord. And it is that remnant which the Lord so blesses with great and precious promises. You read down the chapter three, and he speaks about these characters.

He said, Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith. Sath the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, empty out, as the margin said, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Or has that not been sometimes the very exercise and desire and prayer of these that fear the Lord? That there might be such a blessing.

And I've often thought how in the days of the Lord's servant David, he knew those days when he said, My cup runneth over, and surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

[5 : 43] Oh, that we might have a day when there shall not be room enough to receive it. But I also am reminded too of the simplicity of these words that we have in the verse 16 and 17.

The Lord doesn't speak of those who are graciously gifted. He doesn't speak of those who have attained great knowledge of the truth.

He doesn't speak of those who can boast of certain blessings to their souls. He comes down, and I feel it is a wonderful way in which the gospel is so suited to all cases.

It is spoken to those that fear the Lord. And as it closes the 16th verse, And that thought upon his name.

That's very sweet. That's very instructive, really, I feel. Oh, if we looked at these well-taught, grace-taught characters, and we can't walk in the shadow of them.

[6 : 53] They seem so far well advanced in the things of God. They seem to be in possession of so many things that we don't seem to possess. They have gifts as well as grace, and so on and so forth.

But that's not written to those people. It's written to those that fear the Lord. Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it.

And a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name. Well, I don't think you could come much lower. The fear of the Lord is a great mercy if it is in your heart and mine.

It was in Nehemiah's heart when he reproves the people, the leaders and elders of Israel because of their exploiting of the poor of Israel.

And he looks at all those things and he said, so did not I, because of the fear of God. Oh, it's a wonderful mercy, my friends. The fear of God is grace in the soul.

[8 : 04] The fear of God will also, if it is active in one's own soul, will prevent and will keep one's feet from falling.

Then they that feared the Lord. It had the principle of grace in the soul. Oh, this fear is not the fear that was demonstrated at Sinai. Oh, it was a dreadful fear at Sinai.

They said to Moses, pray ye for us, pray ye for us. Oh, how they feared the lightning and the thunders, those things that demonstrated to them and made them apparent of the holiness of Israel's God.

Oh, how they pleaded that Moses might be as one who stood between them and a holy God and plead for them and pray for them. It isn't that fear.

Then they that feared the Lord. It's a filial fear. It is really, as we would look at the word, it contains so many blessings.

[9 : 06] It is love in the exercise of it. It is desire in the exercise of it. It is the principle that lies in every needy soul, every seeking soul in Zion, the fear of the Lord.

It's not that they possess in their feelings all their blessings and all their mercies. It is that they have the Lord in respect and they have the Lord in their heart in desire and there's a love in their hearts to the Lord.

This is the fear of the Lord. And as I said, it is a preventative grace as well as it is an encouraging grace. Then they that feared the Lord. Now, those that fear the Lord have, they're bound together.

They're a people. They're a community. They have union one with another. They can walk with and they can talk with such that are in the fear of the Lord.

It crosses all boundaries, you know. It doesn't matter what color that these that fear the Lord possess, what nation they come from. If they fear the Lord, they are of one in the things of God.

[10 : 27] They speak and they speak the language of Canaan. They know the language of Zion. And they speak one to another in the things of God.

They fear the Lord. And that's their uppermost. That is what's uppermost in their spirit. They speak of the things of God, not in proudness, nor in arrogancy, not in possession, not as if they know more than the next person, but in a humble hope and in testimony and a witness to the grace of God within.

But there's something here, you know, it says, spake often one to another. I wouldn't alter the scripture. I wish in these desolate days that might be abundantly true.

And we might say, in these days, we might indeed have to say, then they that fear the Lord spake infrequently one to another. But, my friends, may the Lord so touch your heart and mine that we may speak of the things of God one to another often.

Was it on Wednesday night we sang that lovely hymn as we close, 144, and the hymn writer wrote, Then will I tell to sinners round what a kind saviour I have found.

[11 : 50] I'll point to his redeeming blood and say, behold, the way to God. My friends, these are those who fear the Lord. These are those who speak often one to another.

Their subject, their desire, really, is to glorify the God of Israel. It's not, when they say here, what the Lord has done for me, it's not for any sense of worthiness, but rather in sense of mercy that they speak.

To speak of the things which the Lord has done is to speak of his mercy and his goodness. They speak often one to another.

The subject is the goodness of the Lord. Is the kindness, is the mercy, is his compassion, or his wondrous compassion, how they would speak, how they would honour Jesus Christ, how they would honour the Holy Ghost, how they would honour God the Father in what they speak.

Oh, you know, sometimes we need grace to exalt Christ and to be the lowest. Then, they that fear the Lord spake often one to another.

[13 : 09] And I pray this, you know that it might be so. I really do in this house of God amongst us as a people. My friends, there's more profit in this than there is in gossip.

And there's more profit in this than tale-telling. My friends, because it honours God. It honours God and that's what we should be doing. My friends, if you have been the witness of grace, my friends, and that grace has worked in your heart and is in your pathway, if there are things to be told which are God honouring, it should be told.

Oh, it should, but who shall you tell it to? Those who fear the Lord. My friends, it's no good casting your pearls before swine. They don't understand it. But the mercy is, my friends, if you have a people and you are part of that people in union and communion with that people, they understand the language of Zion.

And they understand, my friends, because they in a measure have walked in the same ways. They would rejoice in the same blessings and comforts that you may be able and indeed led to speak about.

Then they that fear the Lord spake often, often. Or it would seem, and we mustn't exaggerate, or we mustn't try and put there what's not there, but it would seem as if as opportunity came they spoke.

[14 : 35] Often, it may be every day, but as often as there was an opportunity to speak of the things of God, so they spoke. When their souls were affected, when they were in sorrow and distress, when their souls were in blessing, in joy and comfort, so they spoke one to another.

We sometimes do say, do we not, I suppose, when we talk about the services of the Lord's house, and we ask how we got on. Well, some may not agree to that statement, my friends, but you know, when you sit under the truth, you long to get on, you long to hear something profitable, you long for the Lord to bless the word to your soul, and if the Lord blesses the word to your soul, then you can't keep quiet.

You know, rather the very stones speak, if the Lord's children touch my grace, don't speak. then they that fear the Lord spake often one to another, and the subjects, my friends, can only be those things of God, those things of grace, those things of mercy.

to speak of those things. Paul was before Agrippa and Festus, and he was, as you know, his pathway was fraught with trials and troubles, persecutions, the unbelieving Jews were his enemies, and enemies to the truth that he was in Jesus Christ, but he says this, having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both the small and great, saying none other things than what Moses and the prophets did say, that Christ should come.

My friends, do you speak of Christ? Christ, you know, you say, well I've got nothing to say regarding Christ. I didn't say that. I said, do you speak of Christ in your conversations?

[16 : 34] Do you speak of Christ in the want of him? Do you speak of Christ in the longing for him? Do you speak of Christ in how he indeed is revealed to you, though you seem not to possess the blessing that you seek for?

My friends, this is the conversation of those who fear the Lord. They speak of what they want. Something that I miss more than anything else in this house of God, and I've said it before and it needs saying again, is public prayer meetings.

And when we can have a real prayer meeting, when a poor sinner that's needy gets up and prays audibly before the Lord, then you know where he is in the things of God, then you know what he desires, then you know what he wants.

I don't, I'm not, talking about these orderly prayers, these conditioned prayers, I'm talking about the cries of a poor sinner, a beggar in Zion.

My friends, these are what fear the Lord, and they speak often one to another. They tell of the things of God, not only what is in possession, but what's in need.

[17 : 43] My friends, they don't hide it under a bushel. Oh, the Lord will draw you out to speak of the things of God, not in that loose, flippant way that professors do, but to speak of the things which the Lord works in your heart in desire, works in your heart in want, works in your heart in need, and then he may please, it may please him to touch your heart and grant you some token from him of his special love, and then to speak of those things which you have tasted and handled and felt.

Psalm 66 has those words, isn't it? Come and hear all ye that fear God and I will tell you what he has done for my soul. Then they that fear the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened.

Oh, that's very sweet, you know. You know, there are certain things really, I suppose, those secrets of the heart, those exercises of the soul that the Lord's dear people are the subject of.

The Holy Spirit so works in their heart in that secret and sacred way, and you know, no one knows about it. No one knows about it.

You can sit next to people, and they carry an exercise, and they carry a desire, and they have laid up in their hearts the exercises, exercise of prayer before the Lord.

[19 : 16] You know, and that's a wonderful word, and the Lord hearkened. No one else heard it. No one else heard it. You come to chapel like that, you bow your head, you close your eyes, and you speak before the Lord, and you speak in secret.

Do you remember that sweet account in the first chapter of the first book of Samuel? Oh, that we might have those dear ones that are found in the scriptures of truth with such cases that they might be in Zion today and in Zohar today.

Sweet times. We read that she was in the house of God, was Hannah, and we read she rose up, and after they had eaten in Shiloh, after they had drunk, now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord, and she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore, and she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look upon the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but will give unto thine handmaid a man-child, that I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and it shall not raise a come upon his head.

And it came to pass, as she continued, multiplied to pray, as the margin said, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth.

Now Hannah, she spake in her heart, only her lips moved, her voice was not heard. The Lord hearkened. My friends, the Lord hearkened. You don't know the prayers, the secret prayers, the secret exercises, the secret desires.

[21 : 05] Oh, you know, when you bow your head, and like the poet, you say, tell me, tell me, can there be amongst thy children room for me? And when you bring your trials to the Lord's house, and you lay it before the Lord, and say, Lord, send a word, send a word in season.

Nobody knows the heartaches, and no one knows the inward spiritual sorrows of God's children. They're out of sight of you, like Eli, you know, she thought she was drunk.

He thought she was drunk. She saw, he saw her lips move, but he didn't know the content of her prayer, he didn't know the secret prayer.

I believe you know that's one of the most strongest point, really, in a church of Christ, you know, it's not the public prayer, although, as I said, I long to hear public prayer in the house of the Lord.

My friends, it's the secret prayers. It's those secret prayers. When you read of Moses, when he prevailed against Amalek, and he only prevailed because Aaron and Hur held his arms up, well, that was literally, of course, seen, but you know, those dear ones in Zion that secretly pray, that secretly pray, that carry you to the throne of grace, not only the minister in a pulpit, not only the preacher, whoever he happens to be, my friends, but carry one another, bearing one another's burdens, we read, and so fulfil the law of Christ, secret prayer meetings, you know, between your soul and God, and nobody knows about it.

[22 : 56] Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened, the Lord hearkened, he didn't just hearken, my friends, he took note, he took note, and I want to be careful and very reverent, because there is something here that of course is not literally to be understood, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him, my friends, he doesn't need a book, but that's written spiritual language, his everlasting mind and eternal mind is ever towards his people, and he knows their secret groans, he knows their wishes, those wishes so weak, he knows those exercises, those desires, it is a common expression, but oh what a true one, where a child of God will say, Lord thou knowest, thou knowest, and what a mercy we can do that, and the

Lord hearkened, he listened to the cries, the supplications, the breathings, he notes the upward glancing of an eye when none but God is near, you know there's a case, and that's in the book of Nehemiah too, and it is very evident my friends, that it is very applicable to this case that we have here, in the second chapter of the book of Nehemiah, dear Nehemiah was afflicted with the afflictions of Zion, for the state of his people, and the state of Judah, the state of Jerusalem, and what a weight that laid on his spirit, and what exercise was formed in his heart for the Lord's appearance, and for the Lord's deliverance, and when we read in his employment he was the cupbearer before the king, Artaxerxes, and the king said, why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick, this is nothing else but sorrow of heart, then I was very sore afraid, and then the king said unto me, for what dost thou make request, so I prayed to the God of heaven, the upward glancing of an eye, not turning away and descending on one's knees, in a moment of time, the upward glancing, his heart went up in prayer, his very spirit prayed, his eyes, the eyes of faith looked towards the

God of heaven, so I prayed to the God of heaven, and I said unto the king, my friends, there was no such things as moments, there was no, it wasn't I'll come back in five minutes and tell you, it was that inward looking, that inward searching for the Lord's appearance, he was in captivity, and what wonderful things the Lord did appear, in that it provided, I should have looked to, as we were reminded, first of his sacred prayer, the Lord hearkened, and we read this, that, for what dost thou make requests, he had as it were, an open request, to ask for those things, and so he asks, and so he brings before the king what things were needed, to repair the gates of Jerusalem, and to build up the walls, and the very king, the king himself said, how long shall I journey be, and when will thou return, and he sent him, but you know,

I was trying to find, yes, in the closing verses of that second chapter, we read that he speaks to the Jews, and he said, you see the distress that we are in, hell, Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire, come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach, but this was the word that dropped in, then I told them of the hand of my God, which was good upon me, I told them, he didn't say, well I've been given the job, this is the ability I've got, it was the Lord's hearkening that he speaks of, that the goodness of the Lord that was seen, then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it.

what an encouragement you know for secret prayer, those exercises then that are formed in your heart, the burden that lies upon your spirit, those secret things no one knows about, the Lord knows, the Lord hearkened and heard it, those prayers, those feeble cries, those glances of faith into heaven, the Lord hearkened and heard it.

[28 : 09] And my friends, what does David say in the 55th Psalm, cast thy burden upon the Lord and he shall sustain thee. Oh, what need there was, prayer was made of the apostle because of his thorn in the flesh, and the answer to his prayer was, my grace is sufficient.

Then they that fear the Lord spake often one to another. I suppose I'm old enough to remember the days when we didn't have such things as we have today, we didn't get transported about quite so easily and simply we walked to chapel and we walked home from chapel and those that fear the Lord spake to each other of the things which they had listened to that service.

I remember as a child well, well betide me, I suppose if I should ever try to speak to those that spoke one to another, they were speaking one to another of the things of God, there was no interruption, there was nothing that should hinder communion, you know, that's a wonderful word that is, communion, and it is found between like precious souls, those who fear the Lord, those who love the same gospel, those who love the same Christ, and those who fear the Lord seek to honour him in their words and conversation, and there are people set apart, you know, they that fear the Lord, they may be small and they may be insignificant, my friends, we as a denomination are insufficient really, or insignificant of ourselves, we don't count for anything, but my friends, I do hope amongst us are those that fear the Lord, and they that fear the Lord spake often one to another, and the

Lord hearken, these conversations, these spiritual exercises, they are sent to glory, even God's a witness, and a hearer, of the desires, and of the exercises, of the concerns, and the cares, secret prayer, prayer, you know, we often feel, and perhaps we should not feel, that wrestling prayer can wonders do, but that doesn't always mean that they are public wrestling prayers, how many cases has it been in your life and mine when we've had to turn aside from what we've been doing, or we might have to, might be in the midst of a busy life, and have to look up to the Lord spiritually, in faith, and lay the burden before the Lord, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name, well, really my friends, the Lord takes up the case of his children, and I fear this speaks of a time that he said, and a book of remembrance was written before him that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name, as I said when we started, what a simple description of the seeking ones in

Zion, no great gifts nor no great evidences of attainments, but all they had, it was said of them that they feared the Lord, it's sufficient, you know, to live upon that knowledge, they feared the Lord, now a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name, my friends, I feel that it is an indication to us of the Lord's mind and will in the matters concerning his children, a book of remembrance, he doesn't need a book, like you and I might put something down to remember in times that are to come, my friends, it's in the eternal mind and in the internal purposes of God that his people's prayers are sent to glory and as they are holy ghost taught prayers, so will they receive answers to those prayers, but my friends, it may not be tomorrow that you'll have an answer, it may well be tomorrow, it may be that you have to walk in what we spoke of recently, on a

[32 : 48] Wednesday night, when Jehoshaphat lays the burden of Judah before the Lord and of Jerusalem, and the Lord spoke through Jehoshaphat and he speaks of a tomorrow and the Lord's appearance and deliverance, but you know when God writes a book of remembrance, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, he means this, my friends, that your prayers and mine will not be forgotten, those Holy Ghost, Holy Spirit indicted prayers can never be forgotten, they're laid in heaven, my friends, in the appointed way, in the appointed time, the Lord answers those prayers and brings them to pass, brings the blessings and deliverances to pass, to pass, they brought, my friends, before the Lord and the Lord appears, the Lord hearkens, the Lord indeed works in the lives, in the pathway, in the experience of his people at his appointed time, and in his appointed way, my friends, it all comes to pass, that they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the

Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name, not forgotten of God, my friends, what a mercy, what great blessings are stored up for those dear children of God, those seeking one, those that lay there exercises of desires before the Lord, the day the Lord is appointed, we sang on Wednesday afternoon, something about the time, the time of love will come, when we shall clearly see, not only that he shed his blood, but each shall say for me, tarry his leisure, then wait the appointed hour, wait till the bridegroom of your souls reveal his love with power, blessed is the man, O God, whose mind is stayed on thee, who waits for thy salvation,

Lord, shall thy salvation free. I'll have you those prayers that are found in glory, those cries, those petitions, those exercises, respecting your soul, that you've laid before the Lord, it may be for many days in your thoughts and in your exercises, they've been there many a day, I've often said, you know, the longer the Lord retains those petitions in glory, that's no bar nor hindrance to an answer, but I have to say this in experience, that it gives opportunity to Satan, oh, he'll say unanswered prayer, oh, what an evidence is that you're not right, what an evidence is that you never will be right, your prayers are only formality, your prayers are only the breathings of your mind, or the gathering together of your intellect, and it is so evident, he'll say to you, because they're not answered, it will be because they're not real, my friends, it doesn't say that here, then they that fear the Lord spake often one to another, and the

Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name, and the day of blessing, and the answer to those prayers, and the fulfilment of his promises, and a bringing to pass of the exercises of his dear people, oh, they go into the fire, don't they?

They are the subjects of temptation, are the subjects of the talks and derision of Satan, my friends, but Holy Ghost talk prayers promised of God will be answered fully, completely, and really, my friends, to the joy and rejoicing of your heart.

[37 : 13] You know, there's something which I believe we don't give the Lord the honour and the glory for, that is because we're so weak in faith, but you know, in his answers, he answers more than we can ask or even think.

Then they that fear the Lord spake often one to another. Well, may you and I indeed, as we communicate, my friends, the things of time are nothing to be compared to spiritual blessings or spiritual desires either.

The things of time are nothing to be compared with it. How soon we get back into the things of time and sense. We leave the Lord's house and in a moment or two it seems as if, well, we're back into those times when we're more concerned with time things than eternal things.

Well, we must leave the word there. Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it. And a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name.

Amen. The closing hymn 189. O let my voice proclaim the joys my heart has known and felt, and let my tongue declare the woes my soul has known by guilt.

[39 : 12] Long in the paths of sin I trod and in her foulest way provoked a kind and gracious God and grieved him day by day.

But when the Lord his arm made bare and took my heart in hand his equal cleansing work was there which I which I could not withstand.

189. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[41 : 11] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[44 : 55] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. The love of God the Father, communion of Thee, and fellowship of the Holy Spirit the Comforter, abide with us now and forever.
Amen.