

The Gospel for the poor (Quality: Average)

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- [0 : 00] I will speak again with the Lord's help from the Epistle of Paul to Philemon. This evening we will read verse 18, from which I had thought to speak this morning.
- The Epistle of Paul to Philemon, verse 18. If he hath wronged this, for thou is he ought, put that on mine account.
- If he hath wronged thee, for thou is he ought, put that on mine account. As we said in our closing remarks this morning, the word that we spoke from this morning in the 13th verse, that he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel, was suddenly laid on our minds just before the service.
- The two texts really, of course, are part of a whole, the whole of this blessed Epistle, which gives us a simple, loving picture of the affection among the Lord's people.
- that which God works in their hearts, is distinct from a natural religion. And how many there were of them.
- [1 : 26] I set the children the task this morning, of trying to list the number of children, of workers with the Apostles.
- And how these were all bound together in the bond of the gospel, that we felt in prayer this evening with one exception.
- And that was demons. But Paul did not know that at the time, until he had loved this present evil world and left them.
- This need causes no sudden shock or alarm, because it is widely prophesied and foretold, that many shall say unto me in that day, Lord, hast thou not prophesied in our streets?
- And in thy name have we not cast out devils? And Jesus says, and I will profess, unto you I never knew. So that warnings are a vital part of life.
- [2 : 44] A vital part of the upbringing of children. You can't bring up a family properly, you can't bring up an individual child properly, with a warning.
- And warnings mean dangers. And in the kingdom of God, and in the pathway heavenward, look at the number of warnings around.
- to the young, to those of middle age, and to the old ones as well.
- And although one might think that the older they got, the safer they got, the actual truth is, that the older they get, the more they need keeping.
- And it is this safeguarding power of the Good Shepherd that he is so blessed. Indeed, he's promised it. So that this epistle reveals the inner workings of a little church of people gathered in the house at Colossae, of the home of Philemon, where Onesimus was once a slave or a servant.
- [4 : 12] And as I said this morning, he, through dishonesty, or some other purpose, or poor failing, ran away. He ran straight into the arms of the gospel at Rome, any miles distant.
- And there the Lord called him by his grace. And the evidence from that is, as we read in the chapter, to let my end in view, one of us.

One of us, Paul says he is now, one with us. He wasn't. And how true this is, the church of God in this earth, composed of men, women, young and old, who were at one time strangers, without hope, without God in the world, as the second of Ephesians tell us.

But now, in Christ Jesus, there's Paul, no doubt, considering himself also, ye who sometime were afar off were made nigh by the blood of Christ.

And this goes on. And is going on. And this is our great hope, in the glory of the gospel, that it will go on. Whatever men say, or whatever human means they devise, to increase the progress of the kingdom, as they call it, the work of God in salvation will go on in its stately, divine form.

[5 : 56] One here, another there. the appointed time shall come, as it came without nessiness. And then there shall be that surprise of the established believer that such a one could be sent back home, as was the slave, with this testimonial in his pocket, to give back to his master, Philemon.

Oh yes, the glory of the gospel is impregnated in this simple letter. And then, the apostle turns to Philemon and he brings the matter home to his.

In case there should be any hesitation in receiving this slave and servant, Paul points out to Philemon that he is indebted to him.

And that, what was that death? Monetary? Far from it. I say not, he says, how much thou owe it unto me, even thine own self beside.

Verse 19, what does he mean? Why, he means that Philemon was called out of nature's darkness under his own preaching, brought into the bond of the gospel and now the servant is.

[7 : 38] So that these two become level, equal. And Paul makes it abundantly clear how and in what way, not now as a servant, but as a brother beloved.

Verse 16. Now this is the bond of the gospel. This is the beauty of that work of grace which blends hearts together, doesn't matter who they are.

If the poor man come in, you're not to say, well, take a back seat there, my friend. And if the man with the gold ring come in, you're not to say, come and sit up under my footstool.

this wonderful spirit of the gospel which spiritually equalizes us all. And gives an open heart and a warm welcome and a tender spirit.

This is the bond of the gospel and if you felt it, you will know. But if you haven't felt it, then you obviously will not know. because it is a powerful good working within the heart.

[9 : 02] Paul therefore reminds Philemon for the day when he was called like Onesimus is now good.

But in doing this, in this 18th verse, which is very beautiful, he brings to light a deep spirit of the gospel.

And that is, if he is wrongly or oh, if they all put that on my account. Now can you think of anyone who did this in a far greater way than Paul, H, Philemon, Philip?

Could you answer the question, do you know of anyone who has said, if he oweth the altar, put it on my account? I will repay it.

Do you know of anyone? Was it Moses? Was it Abraham? Was it David? Was it Paul himself? Was it Peter?

[10 : 10] Or was it Jesus Christ? Did he, in the annals of history and the purpose of his father? Did he receive the judgment that was due to his people?

In other words, as we were speaking last Sabbath, concerning the spirit and the bride saying, come, not the Lord Jesus Christ say, in the reality of the covenant of grace, if they owe the ought, put it to my account.

He did indeed. The transparency of build from the church of God to the Lord Jesus Christ is the hope of the church of God.

We are not given lengthy chapters and intricate reading and dark saying, the poorest, and I don't want to sound wrong, the most uneducated.

and we must remember, you see, that even 50, 60 years ago, there were many who couldn't read.

[11 : 41] They can't today, I know, but from a different reason. But then, in those days, think of the ministers, the pastors that couldn't say to their congregation, well, you go home and look it up.

I can say that to you with the greatest of freedom. You can all read, even you children read, you know your Bible. But with regard to this simplicity of the gospel, it is for the poor.

And by that, we do not speak scathingly or coldly or proudly. No, John received this, John Baptist received this message in prison.

But Paul had the gospel preached to them. And this wonderful gospel is preached to the poor. And it is put to them in this simple way, that the Lord Jesus Christ was made sin for us who knew no sin, so that it becomes a vital part of the belief of the saved sinner, however erudite he may be, whether he can read or whether he can't.

Teaching of this gospel by the Holy Spirit's gracious influence brings about this great belief that the Lord Jesus took the sins of his people and that they were transferred in total to him not by human hands but by his father.

[13 : 35] The few short verses that we have are in the gospel as he entered into the garden of Gethsemane and there was withdrawn from his disciples a stone face away, stone throw away and there he said that my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death and he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down the ground and that is nearly all that is said about this most blessed transaction if he oweth the oath put it to my account the vital fight that is needed and given to this most glorious truth gives the believer that absolute liberty and freedom of all the guilt of his own sin he therefore seeks an interest in this and a desire that he may know and the very fact that he has been called is positive proof that his sins were laid upon

Christ onesimus sins sins or whatever his present action was sufficient after his call by grace to give complete evidence that his sins were laid upon Christ the church that is in thy house the great point therefore of the imputation of the guilt of the church to Christ is doctrinal a foundation stone immovable a truth that you will if in the bond of this gospel ever be exercised enough it will be in your life it will be a concern with you from time to time you have many things to press worry and give you anxiety we all have but utmost of all things will be this great question were my sins laid upon

Christ indicating first of all a full belief that sin was laid upon Christ the prophet Isaiah declares in the 53rd chapter the Lord has laid upon him the iniquity of us all not universal salvation but the laying on the head heart and soul of the Lord Jesus the iniquity of his own people if it were universal salvation then there would be no need to preach any gospel there was no need to make any distinction salvation it it would be us universe we should all be safe and sad our sins would all be blotted out but the word of God teaches us very differently but what

I want to come to is this the underlying belief of the apostle Paul that his sins were laid upon Christ and I would say he was no ordinary sinner he was a man who absolutely hated the name of Jesus he was fired by a peculiar zeal of hatred there's no one to equal Paul with regard to persecution he is what he says he is an example God picked him out as one of the basest of characters he said I persecuted the church of God unto death and gladly did he receive letters from the elders to persecute men and women and as I have often said he is a poor man who lays hand on a woman isn't he for any reason whatsoever oh yes this is one of man's greatest honors never to lay hands on a woman violently

I mean but he did yes so absolutely he infatuated was he with his hatred of the name of Jesus that he hailed them to prison and he knew what this meant to have such sins as this laid upon Christ not only this but his profession the years of learning and study at the feet of Gamaliel so filled him with pride because he had natural ability that he was able to declare himself a Hebrew of the Hebrews the superior Hebrews and the things that he knew and learned were above all others so that his heart was full of pride and that is of course one of the greatest and the biggest sins for the

[20 : 26] Lord hated pride and yet there he was proud of what he could do and had done and we're not left to say well is that true he tells him he tells him in the third of Philippians those things he says were going to me those I counted last my eyes were open to see the vanity of and in this way he knew what debt he owed and what sins were his sins of a peculiar nature so that when he says to Philemon if he wrong he could ask that deep down in his heart he very well knew the sacred spirit of the gospel that having been forgiven himself he should forgive others and

Philemon also having been forgiven which the evidence of his call proved he too should receive Onesimus willingly as the 14th verse says thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity no he says we want nothing done in a slavish way the gospel knows nothing of slavery nothing at all we had no wits and scorpions in the gospel they are absolutely excluded willingly is the gospel word willingly and this is the whole secret of the matter to refer to the bonds of the gospel willing servants who do not serve one day and then regret it follow one day and then turn back the next not those whose service is absolutely squeezed out on them for some exterior show but willing the spirit of the gospel underlies this 18th verse therefore if he have wronged it how much did the apostle wrong the lord and yet look at the opening words of the lord Jesus to him at that great day when he met him he watched him all these several years now standing at the right hand of his father the time came for him to strike how did he strike was it not a blow of love soul soul why persecutest thou me and the immediate answer is who art thou lord this is the instantaneous chain you see in his heart this is the new birth this is what we were speaking of this morning in Onesimus relish 11 who art there and what is the answer I am Jesus whom thou persecutest this is the gracious outcome of bearing his sins away here is a sin pardoning saviour meeting a pardoned sinner though the sinner knew it not he at once replied lord what wilt thou have me to do could anything be more clear simple than this and yet more vital this is the way to the kingdom this is the bond of the covenant this is the gospel bond what would thou have me to do do what does this mean do look at the willingness and does

Paul ask of Philemon similar willingness as he himself exhibited at Damascus day why of course he does he knows how vibrant it is it is the very outcome it is natural to his spirit is breathing to his body what wilt thou have me to do and in this way we are told that a sinner sins are laid upon Christ though that sinner know it not and the call out of nature's darkness into life is the first proof of proof of it God doesn't call you or me for nothing there is not a lot of work to be done when a sinner is called by grace it's done it's already finished the joy and rejoicing of the

Saviour set out in Psalm 16 is pleasure that thy right hand our pleasures forever more so that this bond and the covenant entails heaven security faith that not few there is as in all these things that warning concerning the reality of it this is where we can't go full stop can't run on in gospel ways without we tread very very carefully very soberly as to our own standing as to whether we know that gospel now which we spoke of this morning the bond of the gospel and

Paul therefore goes to Philemon with these words or O.F. the Lord well he did didn't he how much or what we don't know but he evidently robbed his master as he generally assumed I don't like saying assumed or I think I'd far rather say I know but in certain cases it isn't a vital important what the sin was but from the inner reading of it or O.F.

[28 : 16] the old well he did and he had defrauded his master in some way how is not this the whole point of the request put it on my account I will repay it and he underlines it gives his guarantee I have written it with mine own hand see the sacred gospel the bond of the gospel the influence of the gospel beneath all this who could talk like this except a believer one whose hope was in the merits of Christ one who believed in the imputation of sin to Christ where is sin going to be discharged if it isn't in the body of

Christ in the death of Christ how will your sins be removed unless they were removed in Christ do you hope to find some other way are you looking to your good work well you have an example here of several men who certainly did there is no other name under heaven there is no other doctrine under heaven but imputation of guilt to Christ I was speaking last Sabbath wasn't I of the imputation of righteousness to the bride of Christ speaking from the 22nd of Revelation and the spirit and the bride say come there are these two mighty mighty forces the spirit and the church of God the bride of Christ ready and they say come in that awful day of judgment they are calm placid and ready when

Christ shall appear with ten thousand of his saints this is their great hope upon earth and this is their constant desire you may measure yourself by this therefore as to whether you look to the burden that Christ bore in the garden of Gethsemane and identify your prayers with that great scene and see there God the Father in that inscrutable work fulfilling what the prophet Isaiah and others had saved lay upon him the iniquity of us all now this reception in the holy soul of the Lord Jesus who knew no sin was beyond words no words are adequate to describe nor are we allowed to fear well what effect this had on the

Lord Jesus we have given just in a few sacred words and they are sacred they affected his human body they were seen by what Dr.

Watts calls matchless grace and there the intolerable load as it is called caused the holy frame of the Lord Jesus to sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground I know it's solemn but in the day of judgment my dear friends it will be everything everything well want anything else in that day but that your sins were laid upon Christ now not be any other question who else is with you no it is as David in his 51st Psalm how solemnly confesses against thee and thee only by sin and done this evil in thy life it's my sin here therefore we see the overflowing spirit of the gospel which is an example to us oh yes this would be leaving the matter unfinished if we did not come to what the old

[33 : 27] Puritan called the practical part what is our religion worth if it isn't practical what is it worth really nothing is it the whole outcome of vital religion is practice good works from religion in the heart faith toward God the outcome of this blessed matter must of necessity be works but not works for merit or salvation by any means but works as we view fruit upon the tree put that on my account now let us look at Philip he too had heard the gospel he too had received the teaching of the apostle

Paul you may read and see in his epistle to the Colossians something of the thing that we no doubt Philemon was well acquainted with and believed and see there how Philemon would appreciate what the apostle meant in this way that his sins had also been laid upon Christ Philemon sins this could have been no less he could not have possessed anything other than this at the faith of God in it so that when he is enjoined in this way with regard to a mess what would be his reaction would it be like the parable the man who owed five pence and his master forgave him all he went out and found a fellow servant to owe him five hundred and he took him by the throat and said pay me that thou owe it and he cast him into prison would that be the spirit far from it oh the spirit of the gospel in the bond of the gospel is this that

Philemon knew that his sins had been laid upon Christ I determined to know nothing among you says the apostle save Jesus Christ and him crucified and this was the preaching this was the preaching that was preached by Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch he preached down to him Jesus and the eunuch had his finger on the 53rd of Isaiah hadn't he so that these things all come full circle let's look at our text there this morning the bonds of the gospel how many others abound in these sacred unbreakable bonds I must not I could not attempt to speak of them separately but what are these unbreakable bonds of the gospel that there you are with perhaps your nearest and nearest on earth down together in the bond of the gospel there you are perhaps with your child down in the bond of the gospel there you are with your fellow member in the church in the congregation as we are here it would be wise if I dare not do it not because

I can but I can say with the greatest sweetness that there are those of you to whom I am found in the bond of the gospel yes yes it is the amount that you say and I would not confine these words to those who are within the church so I'd love to see you in it now there is the union the bond of the gospel and that bond of the gospel is not merely a name but a living a practice something of vital nature so does the apostle put it therefore to Philemon albeit I do not say to thee how thou always come to me even thine own self beside yea brother let me have joy of thee in the

Lord refresh my bow in the Lord having confidence in thy obedience I wrote unto thee knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say isn't this beautiful more than I say not just doing the new things or just the part that that is beautiful enough more than I say now where does this come from can you let me put it to you guys in the form of a question do you know any scripture that would come parallel with this as Paul say elsewhere as he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or even think is there such a scripture as there you see the believer is impregnated with the word of

[39 : 56] Christ and also with the practice of Christ and so was the apostle called he said I know you will receive him strange you got to come into your household again he was a servant probably a slave but now you got to come in just like the returning prodigal came back home you know yes bring forth the best robe what to this slave we heard about him he ran away bring forth the best robe is this the gospel yes it is more than I say restore him yes but Philemon might say it's not going to be easy it's going to cause some jealousy there are those who are going to say he oughtn't to be given this slave as a brotherly love no not in the church of

God it will cause any jealousy not in the bonds of the gospel there is no such thing as being wrongly jealous of another's lessons oh no the elder brother may as in the parable say that I have never left home but the point of that parable is not the elder son it's the prodigal and the point set before us in the gospel is this that we are enjoined upon these greater instructions our hearts should overflow we should do more I know it's a standard of considerable height I expect it will make you feel pretty short as it does me but you wouldn't want me to lower it would you you wouldn't want me to say well you do your best my friend the

Lord will accept your best you may be poor but would you I dare not in love to your soul no if it wrong me or put it on my account I thought of written it in mine own hand here it is if you want it so to speak in black and white here it is and is it not the spirit of the gospel and the Lord speaks to it dear people just the same I blotted out my transgressions as a thick crown and will remember thine iniquities no more and with regard to God blotting out and forgetting the sins of his people I will remember them no more forever this is a divine mystery you can't say that you'll never forget we have a saying among ourselves haven't we forgive and forget yes well forgiveness yet you can't forget our minds may deteriorate as we grow older we may say my memory is getting pretty poor but really you cannot say you'll not forget a thing and God does

God the Father in his divine majesty promised he says I blotted out their sins as a thick cloud and I will remember their sins no more they have never come to his mind oh the majesty of this beyond their understanding when we think what strange remembrances we have I'm sure sometimes I'm shocked at some of the things that come to my memory which happened 50 60 years ago I thought I'd forgotten no but not so with this blessed matter of divine forgiveness so we have the bond of the gospel and the imputation of the church's sin to the precious sinless body of the

Lord Jesus Christ who was made sin and being made sin he was made a curse and he died under the strict justice of God enduring that curse instead of his people amen we will close this evening service by singing in number 187 to 494opt Jude 494 Jesus brought the chosen race by his sweet, reckless grace, causing them to hear his call and before his bow to call.

[46 : 26] Jesus brought the chosen race by his sweet, reckless grace, for we come to the end of the world.

And we come to the end of the world.

The end of the world is the end of the world.

The end of the world is the end of the world.

The end of the world is the end of the world.

[47 : 45] The end of the world is the end of the world.

The end of the world is the end of the world. The end of the world is the end of the world.
The end of the world is the end of the world.

The end of the world is the end of the world. The end of the world is the end of the world.
The end of the world is the end of the world.

igence Thank you.

Amen. Amen. Amen.