

1 John (Quality: Very good, Quiet)

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Preacher: Gosden, John C (1911-1996)

[0:00] 1 John chapter 1 verses 6 to 9 If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness we lie and do not the truth but if we walk in the light as he is in the light we have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness Those of you who were here this morning may remember that we commenced to look at the 6th and the part of the 7th verse We saw that this epistle inspired by the Holy Spirit which John wrote was addressed to those who had been affected by error and difficulty in their life and that the purpose of the epistle is shown in those great words in the last chapter that these things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that ye may know that ye have eternal life it was in other words to encourage them to reestablish their faith to show them where they stood

The apostle in these words starts at the beginning He starts to uncover that which is hypocritical and that which is a false profession before he commences to build up on a firm foundation the fact that they were redeemed from the hand of the enemy We spent the most of our time this morning looking at this 6th verse and we saw in it that it declares clearly that if our life is inconsistent with our profession of faith in Christ then there is something drastically wrong John says if ye say that we have fellowship with him if ye profess faith in him and continue to walk in sin ye lie and do not the truth

We went on to examine briefly one or two of the many tests that are shown in this epistle whereby we may examine ourselves to see how matters really stand with us It is a searching test many searching tests and I believe that they will leave none of us satisfied with ourselves Indeed if we were to depart from this epistle having examined ourselves according to the standards that God here lays forth and we felt satisfaction with the progress we've made I believe it would demonstrate not that we had made progress but that we were deluded this is not to say that we ought to be striving daily after progress

Paul Peter exhorts the believers in his day to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ I believe we too readily become accustomed to a day of small things we become accustomed to a dull hope at best whereas there is in the Lord Jesus Christ that fullness of salvation that fullness of grace which he is pleased to bestow upon poor sinners but he will be inquired of for these things we shall not receive them unless we ask great things from him their dull hearts are so often an encumbrance to us and we seek for little and we therefore receive little but these verses that we looked at briefly this morning are not all that John had to say it's a wonderful thing they're not if we were to be left here with this exhortation to self-examination according to the tests in this book and nothing more was said surely it would leave us in dejection in hopelessness in self-despair because who of us this morning was not aroused by these things who was not made to see how far short they came sin and whether we have been redeemed from the hand of the enemy or not sin is sin and sin must be got rid of otherwise our soul's communion with God will be interrupted so

John wisely under the guidance of the grace of God by the Spirit goes on to show that there is a remedy a remedy provided for sin goes on to say if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness there is a remedy I believe that John was inspired to insert those words just here for this dual purpose that if by a consideration of their life as compared with the profession any came to the honest conclusion that they had not known the saving grace of God well here is hope here is instruction for them alternatively if one of God's children by examining himself against this standard comes to the conclusion that his sin is hopeless his life is hopelessly tainted by sin well here is the same remedy for him there is a remedy for sin and it's shown for here to be the blood of Jesus

[7:12] Christ his son well this eighth verse we must look at because it connects up to what we said this morning if we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us if we say that we have no sin whoever we are we deceive ourselves we are sinners by birth and sinners by nature and even those who have been redeemed from the hand of the enemy those who have had their sins forgiven are in the flesh and they are sinners still let us go back and think about this statement we have just read together in the epistle to the Romans some statements regarding man's condition by nature we can see perhaps from these how right

John is to conclude that if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves by nature man unconverted I am speaking of now Paul made it abundantly clear in the two previous chapters in this epistle to the Romans of the fearful plight and condition of man whether Jew or Gentile all were sold under sin there is none that doeth good no not one all have sinned and come short of the glory of God sin is universal this universal plague which is upon mankind needs dealing with it needs dealing with in a way that you and I cannot deal with it because it's inbred in us it dwells within our hearts we came into the world as those who were affected by this hereditary disease nothing less than that born into our very bodies minds and souls sin sin which is separating us from

God sin which if it is allowed to remain in us to our dying day will separate us eternally from God this is the condition that you and I came into this world sold under sin under condemnation of the law because of sin we cannot repeat this too often you see it's one of the one of the truths of scripture which is fearfully neglected in our day and age the total depravity of man through sin and I believe that if this is left out of the preaching of the gospel then the gospel does not have that message in it which it ought to have you see this is what's affecting not only the life of Christians and non-Christians but it's affecting the whole of the outlook of the world

I believe I've mentioned this on the last occasion I was here that the modern thought the modern theories which are being put forward as remedies to the various maladies that the world is suffering from are all really doomed to utter failure because the concept of man being a depraved creature that is fallen from his created estate is denied the supposition is made that he's coming upward not that he's gone downward and so of course all the remedies that are put forward are hopeless doomed to failure but to get back to the point that we were making the condition of men the condition of you and I as we came into this world was one that was grossly affected by the fall by sin we were morally separated from God we have souls which are morally dead toward

God because of sin now if we don't accept that if we don't believe this to be true then the gospel's got no meaning to us at all this is where we must begin John said if we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves everyone is a sinner everyone has this problem of sin this problem of sin which is in the heart of man not something that affects the outside only it affects your will it affects your thoughts your ambitions your desires your outlook on life is distorted by sin we speak of man not having a free will we should be careful to qualify and say exactly what we mean because the will of man is free to operate in the direction of the bias of the heart and will it is not free absolutely but it is powerfully free to go the broad road to destruction and unless

[13:13] God intervenes and turns the heart to him we should proceed on that road you see freedom but bondage what fearful bondage it is we are only free to operate in a distorted depraved direction this is the only freedom we've got I say unless God intervenes and does something to us and for us we should continue in the direction of our hearts this is the awful plight that you and I are in by nature can we really understand this that unless God does something to us we shall merely choose to go that easy comfortable way along the broad road we may be very respectable about it we may be very religious about it but we shall still be going that broad an easy road that leads us to destruction because we should be following the mind that we have which is basically an enmity against

God this is your condition and this is my condition unless God has done something to us and in us and for us to change the direction and the bias of our minds and our hearts away from self away from the world toward him what a fearful thing it is sin you see not only is there this moral the heart condition there is the actual fact of sin because God did not make us moral creatures without placing us within the framework of law his law his structure of government and because we have minds and hearts that are distorted from him and enmity toward him we are actual sinners as well as sinners by nature and birth not only were we born in sin and shaped in iniquity as

David describes himself but we all have known what that sin taking effect in our life as it did in David's life and has brought us into conditions of actual sin so we have the heart which is wrong the mind which is at enmity against God and we have a broken law all this is against us and if tonight my friend you are outside of Christ if you have not fled to him for refuge this is what you have got in opposition to you this is what you are carrying along the broad road an utter impossibility ever to see his face oh if God left any of us to that plight in which we were born what a fearful end we should make what a fearful life we should live what a fearful end we should make and yet multitudes are freely choosing to go that way against the warning of scripture scripture many have not heard the way of escape in this world but many have and because they have heard it and because they have understood it they have rejected it and they have chosen to go the way of their own devising the way of pleasantness to the flesh well how is this sin this awful plight of man to be dealt with what can you do about it can we do anything about it well if you look back here at Romans 3 again there's one thing that can't deal with the matter and that is the works of the law therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law and yet I believe this is the way that we each have endeavoured to

God and we constantly endeavour to God according to the works of the flesh I believe that almost the natural reaction of man to a sense of sin is to justify himself can you not look back to the day when your conscience was made aware of the fact that the law had been broken that you were under the condemnation of that law I believe many can and what was their initial reaction it was to justify themselves by the works of the law it was in some way to put matters right between themselves and this offended God I believe that many of us attempted to turn over a new leaf we attempted to live a religious life we attempted to purchase salvation by our regularity at church or chapel we sought to do everything in accordance with God's word and it's a good thing to endeavour to live according to

God's word but by the deeds of the law we cannot purchase salvation we cannot purchase salvation the hymn writer said the more I strove against sin's power I sinned and stumbled but the more I was talking to a friend of mine the other night and he works with a man who is perhaps being dealt with by the spirit he has certainly come to recognise that at least he is a sinner that there is a God and that there is a holy law my friend was telling me that this man came to him and said I went to church on Sunday and I'm from today I'm going to turn over a new page I can see the truth of these things my friend said to him you come back and see me in a month's time and tell me how you're getting on well this is the point you see that if the heart is wrong if the mind remains at enmity against

[20 : 01] God all our striving will be marred by sin our best endeavours will not meet the demands of God's law the point really is this that if we are to find acceptance with God through the works of the law in accordance with justice and law then perfection alone absolute obedience in every respect to God's law is alone that which he would accept and not one of us can rise to that and even if we could from this day forward what of our past sins one of those sins of years ago how could they be dealt with no it's a hopeless hopeless thing to endeavour to justify ourselves through obedience to the law of God perfection alone will satisfy the justice of God in this respect well how is this situation meant to be met well it's shown back here in the seventh verse of our text the blood of Jesus

Christ his son cleanses us from all sin there it is till late I heard my saviour say come hither soul I am the one there is only one way that sin can be dealt with there is only one way that salvation can come to men and women whoever we are it is through the application of the blood of Christ to our hearts and to our consciences no other way every other way is held out by false religions the works of the law you consider any of the modern religions the eastern religions all they're doing is putting forward another scheme whereby it is supposed that men and women can justify themselves in the sight of God by some code of morals some code which they are to follow this is all it is hopeless hopeless all alone the Christian faith alone is realistic by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight in one short sentence all hope in any other non-Christian religion is gone forever the blood of Jesus

Christ his son cleanses from all sin there is the only remedy the only remedy to be found for sin well here we are at the heart of the gospel the old gospel of the grace of God he provided that sacrifice that atonement which was necessary for the redemption of sinners from the bondage the guilt and the power of sin he did it in the person of his own dear son God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have eternal life the whole of the gospel really is incorporated in that and if we have not experienced ourselves an application of the blood of Christ to us individually then salvation is not begun oh we can be religious we can be pious we can be with God's people in a congregation in God's church and be outside of this this is the only thing that matters it is not the denomination or the connection or this or that the only thing that really matters is am I in Christ has his blood washed my guilt away the blood of Jesus

Christ his son cleansed from all sin yes even from the sins that we have incurred against light and love and knowledge all sin even though sins that were discovered in our consciences this morning when we looked at the first part of this sixth verse and they do discover sins even though sins are not outside of the bounds of the efficacy of the blood of Christ to deal with them the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sins he who he spared not but sent him forth into this sin cursed world took upon himself the form of a servant took upon himself human flesh and blood came and lived in this world of sin that salvation and life eternal life might be made over to elders early sinners this is what we are talking about the actual historical fact of the

Lord Jesus Christ coming into this world he came to do that great work of redemption he came to pay the penalty that the Lord demanded he came to merit eternal life on behalf of a great multitude of poor sinners who to the end of time shall come and cry to him for mercy he came and in the perfection of his life vindicated the holiness of the law that law which lies broken by you and I that law which lies broken by human beings in every generation that law was lived to perfectly sinlessly completely by the Lord Jesus Christ himself but he went on to Calvary and there died a sin atoning death he did not die that death that the

[26 : 56] Lord demanded because he was a sinner he died it on behalf of those for whom he came on behalf of all those who shall call upon him for mercy these are the people that he came to secure salvation for he secured it on Calvary's cross he paid the penalty of the law the law demands on those who are lawbreakers who flee to him for refuge their Lord at his pay by him substitutionary death vicarious death the centre of the Christian's hope and faith union with Christ in his death and resurrection the only hope of poor sinners my friend do you have warrant in your life to believe that this transaction incorporated you do you believe that

Christ came to save you or perhaps there's other questions we ought to ask before that for whom did Christ come and lay his life for sacrifice in order that they might be redeemed from the hand of the enemy that the power and the guilt of sin might be removed from them and in their life for whom did Christ die you see it's necessary at times to ask this question because scripture is quite plain that there is a rich man there is a Lazarus in the day in which we live the old theory of universal redemption constantly rears its head but surely the testimony of scripture is clearly stated that this is not true the rich man and

Lazarus we needn't look further than that but Christ was most specific on this point he spoke of those that are saved and those that are lost those that are sheep those that are goats those that are blind and those that see and so on there is a radical difference between the two there is not an intermingling so that we do not know who is who and what is what no there is a cleavage in scripture over those that are lost and those that are saved have you then any warrant can we say that we have any warrant to believe that Christ died for us what is the answer to this question that scripture gives it gives a number a number of answers but it's the same answer nevertheless you see some would say that

Christ came and died that substitutionary death on behalf of all the elect scripture speaks like that in some places it's not untrue at all it is quite true that he did come and he did die for those who are turned the elect but it has other references as well it calls them other things and I believe that we must be careful that we hold a balance here because Satan is so apt to come when the mysterious the secret counsel of God is ever mentioned he is so apt to come and say well you prove that you're one of those and then you'll have a solid hope of salvation but until you do and unless you can then what is the point in hope and what is the point in looking you see

I say there are other definitions of those for whom Christ came I believe that here we must be careful you see it is impalably true if we take the view that it was for the elect that Christ came it is true by scripture that not one of those elect will finally be lost that every single one of them will be dealt with in time justified and brought home to glory not one more and not one less absolutely true but it's no less true and really this is the point that concerns us it is no less true that every poor sinner who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved exactly the same people in God's eternal mind unknown to you and I the point

[32 : 24] I'm making is this that if we overemphasize the one position against the other Satan must have an advantage and in any case you see the one is a declaration of God's secret working which is really not our concern he says here by Moses in Deuteronomy the secret things belong unto the Lord our God but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever applicable to this problem you see God's secret will will never be known by us we do not know who in Tunbridge Wells tonight will be plucked as brands from the burning not our business not our concern what is our concern what is our business as a church our business is this to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature it's God's work to apply that as and where he will not ours and as individuals what is our concern it is to know this simple fact that whosoever calleth on the name of the

Lord shall be saved my friend there has never been one who has been brought to the foot of the cross to cry for mercy that has not received it never allow any distortion of the sovereignty of God regarding election to be a hindrance to your coming I believe you'll see afterwards after you've come that that was the foundation on which you stood and why you came that's another matter another matter altogether whoever you are tonight there is a message for you in scripture that whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved is that Arminianism is that free will well if it is pause in Arminian that's all I can say but it's this is the truth of scripture that whosoever calls why he comes to call is another matter and when you've come to call when you've been received by him you'll see why it is a great a blessed truth it is the undergirding of the covenant of grace

God's eternal invincible purposes of grace but now let's let us not become confused by Satan's wiles by pitting the one against the other the persons referred to in both of those texts will in the final allowances be the same persons but you poor sinner want to know tonight not that you're elect but that you'll not be cast out if you go as you are in all your need and sin to him this is all we need to know and this is adequately cleared by those great calls of the gospel that I've referred to the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ then saves us cleanses us from all sin from all sin and it's applicable to either groups of those persons if you want to look at them as separate groups but they're the same those that call those that be forenead same people

I say let not Satan come and confuse your mind that you must have some infallible evidence that you're one of the elect before you cry to inform us it's clear by the promises of God's word well how do we receive and what do we receive from the cleansing of the blood of Christ how do you and I come into the possession of that effectiveness of his death well look at verse 9 it tells us if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness if we confess our sins you see the man in the street wouldn't recognize that he had any sins to confess but I'm speaking now of those that know they have those that are concerned to know that they are one of the elect those that are concerned to know that he will in no wise cast them out if they come to him as they are how do they receive forgiveness of sins how do they receive this cleansing from the blood of

Christ if we confess our sins there's the turning point it is to recognize our need of salvation and it is to come to him in our sins in confession with repentance if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness if we confess our sins it is this which is necessary in order that you and I might know in our conscious experience the forgiveness of sins the reception of the benefit of Christ's death we come to him then not as those who have already justified themselves by the works of the law this is an impossibility we come to confess that we are sinners this is what we must be brought to do we must come to confess our sins now what does this mean does it mean that we've got to find some spiritual experience within us that we can recognize as the work of the

[39 : 13] Holy Spirit and then go for salvation I believe it means nothing of the sort it means what it says it means to come to recognize that you're a sinner you may say to me well this is the work of the Holy Spirit yes it is every wit of it is but the experience of sinners in conviction of sin is such a bewilderment to them at times that they would never recognize the deathliness which they feel within as being a sign of life worked by the Holy Spirit John doesn't speak in this way if we confess our sins all he requires you and I to know is that we're sinners lost hopeless through the fall through sin and in that condition confess our sins have you considered the case of the publican case of the thief on the cross you see there was confession of sin there was no claim of anything the one said

God be merciful to me a sinner the other said Lord remember me when thou comest to thy kingdom this is what he requires of you and I and when we come there with just that the whole question of our sins is dealt with if his word is faithful and true which some of us know it is you see we have become much too complicated and much too elaborate in these things and we have expected people to be able to say a lot more than scripture demands are you a sinner tonight longing for salvation are you a sinner who knows that there is no hope for you save in God's salvation and yet are you looking for something more are you looking for some evidence that you're one for whom he came are you looking for some deeper experience of conversion have you been reading biographies which give an account of a depth of conviction that you know nothing of and you're waiting you're holding back until that time comes this text doesn't mention that holding back at all it says this if we confess our sins my dear friends

I believe that it's just this that if we confess our sins if we went for God tonight as that dying thief went with no hope for works no hope for anything in life pinned to the cross of Calvary and said Lord remember me if we went to God in the quiet of our room tonight with that cry of the public and Lord God be merciful to me a sinner we should know the truth of this simple word beware of the complication that men have placed on the gospel beware of the readiness that Satan will come with half truth and keep you from the only source from which salvation and peace with God can be obtained oh top lady that great him nothing in my hand

I bring simply to thy cross I clean he knew what it was to come here confess our sins where do you suppose you'll ever get anything else from to assist you to go more than you've already got more than you've already had it must come from him if there's anything spiritually good it must come from him why tarry till you're better if you tarry till you're better you will never come at all this is the thrust of the gospel this is the truth of those great hymn writers they knew it and this was the simple gospel that was proclaimed when God poured out his spirit upon his church oh that he'd returned to us in this dry land in this dry time and raise up those who are able to preach the unsearchable riches of

Christ as the friend of publicans and sinners in such a way that the man in the street the man in the pew can understand him oh my friend tonight if you're one such poor sinner longing for salvation here is your answer here is the only answer confess your sins and he is faithful and good to forgive your sins is that not sufficiently complicated for you are you still believing that something else ought to be said well this is the word of scripture not mine if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and when when we come with that nothingness in our hands the whole of the purchase that Christ made with his own heart's blood is made ours everything that the poor soul needs is given freely to him then what other gospel can you conceive of that so meets the case of sinners for nothing with nothing come and admit and confess that you're worthless that you're hopeless that you've got nothing good about you that you've heard that he is the friend of publicans and sinners that he is the one that can give life where there is death that he is the one that can give him a new heart with new desires come and cast yourself upon his mercy and he will in no wise cast you out but he will give you all that he purchased on Calvary's cross he will give to you in exchange for your rags of self righteousness that perfect robe of righteousness he merited eternal life by his life and by his death this he gives you this robe of righteousness in which poor tainted sinners may appear faultless before the father's throne give them freely to poor sinners when they come he undertook the responsibility for your sins for my sins for every poor sinner sin who has been brought to the end of himself to cry for mercy he gives that justification justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ there is our only hope payment he will not twice deny once it might bleed in short his hands and then again my guilt transferred to him his righteousness graciously transferred to my unworthy soul this is the basis my friend the only basis on which any poor sinner ever can appear before the throne of God clothed and in his right mind or is it your possession is it your possession not what you have done the fact that you have relinquished all hope in yourself and fled to him for mercy is this your hope for time and for eternity it is the only hope that man has oh my friend if not what are you expecting from life and in death what is your hope what is your mind tonight

[48 : 19] set upon there is nothing else but destruction there is nothing else but eternal separation from it because your mind and your heart is still at enmity against it you're on that broad road and there's crowds behind you thrusting you along to a never ending eternity of destruction and despair you've heard the gospel from God's own book the gospel of liberty and life my friend where are you tonight oh that God would come by his spirit and awaken you out of your sleep that he would awaken you to the extent that you had no peace until you find peace in him oh we can sit back we can sit back and be contented or we can say don't make a fool of yourself to the preacher all these things but the day is coming my friend when your attitudes when your theories when your belief and your unbelief will be put to a final test how foolish how foolish will your unbelief and your determination to go your own way appear in that day now there is life and there is hope there is all that the poor sinner needs available freely when he is brought to the foot of that cross there to cry for mercy may God put that cry in some poor sinner's heart this night what must

I do to be saved he never puts that cry there and leaves it unanswered a prayer may the Lord help us to sing as our closing hymn 1156 to the tomb Stratapro 863 what sacred fountain yonder springs up from the throne of God and all new covenant blessings brings is Jesus precious love what voice is there which speaks for me in heaven's high court for good from the curse and second grave is Jesus precious love in 1156 save

Oh uncle and that Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[54 : 27] Amen. Amen.

Amen. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us this night and forevermore.

Amen.