

# Romans Tenderden Centenary (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Delves, Stanley (1897-1978)

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The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End The End For he has to come This time has come The wise and world

As the Lord may help me I will speak from a few words from the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans and the sixth verse The ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans the sixth verse Not as though the word of God had taken an effect Not as though the word of God had taken an effect The chapter opens with a very remarkable expression of the Apostle's concern for the Jews of the people

[ 6 : 31 ] For he said that he had continual heaviness great sorrow and continual heaviness upon his heart concerning them So much so that he said what may seem perhaps to us an amazing thing to say that he could wish that himself were accursed from Christ for his brethren for his brethren's sake And it was seen as though the Apostle himself thought that he would hardly be believed that he could feel the matter so deep as that And so he said that he spoke the truth I lie not he said my conscience bearingly witness in the Holy Ghost that I have that continual sorrow and that great heaviness on my heart

That expression of his that I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren's sake that is not an expression to be analyzed by a cold mind a heartless mind The only way to understand what the Apostle meant in that expression would be to feel what the Apostle felt a cold mind a cold mind can never understand the expressions of such a warm heart as Paul had He said I could in the same day and we may now feel in this expression see a reflection of the Spirit of the Spirit of Jesus Christ himself who not only could wish but did actually bear the curse from God for all the sins of his dear people when our dear Redeemer thus expressed his overwhelming distress my God my God why hast thou forsaken me wasn't he in that sense accursed from God for his church's sake through sin and guilt and curse he was even then bearing in his own body on the tree and by his death he put that curse forever away forever and ever there was an eternal end to it when the Saviour atoned for all that guilt and sin by his precious death

I don't mean that the Apostle Paul was in any sense whatever in the same substitutionary position as Jesus Christ stood in it does seem to me that there is a reflection of the same Spirit that was in Jesus Christ in the Apostle Paul well now why should he feel this so deeply why should this continual heaviness way so sorrowfully upon his heart about the Jews for although the Apostle believed that no one believed it more that God has a people an election of grace that he will certainly call effectively but that did not make the Apostle unconcerned in this matter of his kinsmen and brethren he was deeply concerned about them there were three reasons for this concern one was of course his national affinity with them they were his kinsmen his brethren after the flesh he was of that very nation and he had the feeling that the Jews had one for another in that way another reason was that that nation had been especially favored of God to be a people unto himself in the old dispensation to them were given the adoption and the covenants and the glory and the other special blessings that they enjoyed as a nation it seemed very very sad to the Apostle that they should reject the Gospel who had been especially favored of God but there was one reason more than all the others that caused the Apostle to have this profound feeling towards the Jews and that was that from them according to the flesh

Christ came Christ was born of that people his mother was a Jewish and after the flesh Christ came that way not of Gentile birth and the Apostle having mentioned that way that after the flesh Christ came he had something else to show that though he came after the flesh that way yet he was more than flesh himself who is over all God blessed forevermore what a plain impressive unmistakable testimony that is to the eternal divinity the supreme Godhead of Jesus Christ he who came he who came after the flesh from the virgin

Mary was God over all blessed forevermore and the Apostle adds to that amen I just make this observation as I go on the Apostle wasn't the only one who felt that continual heaviness on their heart of that great sorrow because those that they love and most dearly long to see brought to the knowledge of the truth made for takers of grace and to be walking in the ways of godliness turn away from them this is a heavy sorrow many many parents have had it to bear many are bearing it today they have continual sorrow in their heart over this matter that those they love so much turn away from the ways of truth and I must say that where parents live to see their children in some cases all of them called by grace and manifestly children of god well but have continual cause for thanks giving to god on their account for we cannot give our children grace if they turn away from the truth and the lord does not work effectively in their hearts we can do nothing but cry and grieve and sorrow for it brethren gospel ministers and perhaps especially pastors know something of this they have those from their hearts often that they long to see showing signs of the grace of god and we preach hopefully and prayerfully and affectionately hoping that the word we preach will reach their hearts with power oh how thankful we would be to see it so but when we see it not so and perhaps there's a turning away from the very sanctuary itself we have a continual sorrow in our heart about this matter and it may be that these few opening words of mine tonight have reached more hearts than one but now then my friends there's another side to this and it wasn't all dark and distressing to the apostle mine heavy as he felt this sorrow to be for he adds in the words of our text tonight not as though the word of

[ 16 : 21 ] God had taken none effect as I would say the gospel hasn't been a failure the word of truth hasn't been preached in vain the word of God's sovereign grace is going on the Lord is fulfilling the counsels of his will in this matter souls are being saved the gospel is being blessed the word of God is having an effect that Old Testament word concerning this is being continuously fulfilled that as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven and returneth not dither but watereth the earth and causeth that which is sown in it to spring forth and bud so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth it shall not return unto me void but it shall accomplish that which

I please and prosper in the thing where to I sent it that word is being continually fulfilled the word is going forth out of God's mouth to this day and it is prospering in the thing where to he sends it it may not prosper as we would like to see it nor in those in which we would like to see it but in this may the Lord give us grace to bow to his just and righteous will in the matter but the gospel is no failure and the word of God is not without effect and the work of the Holy Spirit is going on and when the whole election of grace have been gathered in and the dear Redeemer will see the travel of his soul for the travel of his soul was not a death travel it was a birth travel it was travel and the whole church of God is born of that travel and when he shall see of the travel of his soul in the salvation of every one for whom he traveled in sorrow he shall be satisfied he shall be satisfied and so will all his dear people be we shall all be satisfied then if we are gathered into that final and blessed and eternal salvation the text then not as though the word of God had taken none effect and this word of the Lord has been preached in this sanctuary ever since it was built there's been truthful faithful ministry here and the word of the Lord has not been without its effect in every generation that have heard we can look back over the long years that have passed and say that this text has been in continual fulfillment in this sanctuary the word of the Lord has been continually preached and it has never been without effect it has prospered to that end and in every heart to which it pleased

God to send it with divine and gracious power and application salvation and remember this my friends for consideration about all spiritual and true religion and all true experience in spiritual things in our hearts and all true fruitfulness in every good word and work is the effect of the word of God in our hearts it is because the word of God has had effect within us all true experience is divine truth made effectual in the heart in some way or another and whatever may purport or be considered to be experience that is not traceable to truth and the word of God as being the cause of it and may be considered perhaps to be more a mere sensation in the heart than a vital experience of the truth

I very believe that every branch of spiritual experience can be traced to some part of the word of God that is some way which the word of God has taken effect so that the word of God and true experience in the heart are inseparably united now may the Lord direct our meditation into this matter not as though the word of God had taken none effect now let us consider first what is implied by the word of God it means of course the word that God has spoken and God has spoken to men he has spoken to men in different ways ever since man was created at all in man innocency there was a communion between man and his maker but what a solemn word that was that God said to

Adam in the day they eateth of that tree thou shalt surely die and Adam transgressing his maker's word and restriction broke the commandment transgressed it and death passed upon him and then God said what hast thou done but I must not take up too much time with these considerations I would just briefly remind you of that word in the epistle to the Hebrews God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets for God had been speaking all down the ages having these last days spoken unto us by his son and that word of

[ 23 : 58 ] God which he has spoken unto us by his son is the word of the gospel and that is the word especially meant in this text the word of God in this is the word of the gospel but let us consider this that if it is the word of God then it is the revelation to us of his holy mind and will only God knows his mind and will it is a mystery hidden in himself and this is true regard to the word of the gospel the apostle speaks of it as a mystery that has been hid from ages and from generations but is now made known unto us by his holy apostles and prophets the gospel of redeeming love and saving grace that profound revelation of God's mind and purpose towards men was a mystery hid in his own eternal mind until he caused that mystery to be made known unto men by the word of the gospel so that the word of my text the word of God is the word of the gospel now if it's the word of

God then it must be true it is the word of truth it is the word of him who cannot lie who cannot lie he cannot say or cause to be said anything that is not true and not only true but truth itself there does seem to my mind in my feeling something which I can hardly express a feeling that truth and the word of truth is something so solid so real and it's a great mercy if it may so to us and if by the teaching of the Holy Spirit we can feel in our hearts that the word of the Lord is so solid in its truth so real that we can rest upon it as being true believe it as being true trust it as being true cleave to it as being true and presently when heart and flesh fail and mortal life shall cease we can die on it as being true but mind you this my friends it must be truth known and believed and felt in our hearts for us to trust it like that oh my friends how could I speak and the

Lord's servant speak with any authority the word of God if we have not in our own hearts and real inward persuasion that it is true and how could you receive it with any comfort or feel it to be any blessing or any strength to your heart unless you could feel the same persuasion that it is true that heaven and earth will pass away that that word will never pass away and concerning the word of God consider that his faithfulness is in that word he is faithful that hath spoken it faithfulness belongs to God it is one of his divine perfections he is a faithful and unchanging

God and therefore the word of God will be as unchanging as God is himself there is no yea and nay with God's word it is yea yea will always be the same brethren the word of the Lord will endure forever and will always be the same word the word that we hope we have received into our hearts and felt in its effect our spiritual forebearers believe the very same word and generations before them they believe the very same word for there is only one word of the Lord only one gospel and that is the same unchangeably the word of God but I must open this up a little more fully the Lord may help me the word of God then is the word of the gospel the revelation to us of that deep wonderful mystery of his will and the word that endures the same generation to generation because God is faithful in his word what then is this word well

I might keeping it now to the gospel say that it is in general the word of salvation concerning the person work redeeming blood and perfect righteousness and saving grace of Jesus Christ it is the word of God concerning his dear son Jesus Christ and it is in that sense the word of salvation to you we read is the word of this salvation sent God has sent he is still sending the word of salvation to men and it is a salvation too it is a salvation that is brought out in all the conditions of it by Jesus Christ and it is a salvation that has in it every spiritual blessing as it is made effectual the word said concerning

[ 31 : 03 ] Jesus Christ look look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth for I am God and there is none else this is a good word that speaks salvation to us and it is a good thing to be in a case to hear it and to be in a case to hear it we must have some sense feeling of our own lost and helpless state to hear that joyful sound our ears must be open as only a conscious sinner's ears are open to hearing the Holy Spirit prepares the heart to hear the word of salvation by convincing of sin and causing such that too long after the word of the Lord may be it will be a good word to them a little more in detail on this point it is the word of forgiveness through Jesus

Christ and his precious blood listen to it now brethren listen to the word of the Lord from my poor lips through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses of course they could not be justified by the law of Moses neither the moral law of ten commandments which can only condemn all transgression and give to those who feel its power a sense of sin by that law comes not the knowledge of salvation but the knowledge of sin another could a ceremonial law by Moses justify anyone for not all the blood of bulls and of goats could ever cleanse or clear a soul from guilt but now through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins it is through his mediation through his atoning blood through that one sacrifice he has offered once for all in which he has put away sin but this man when he offered one sacrifice for sins forever is set down at the right hand of the throne of God forgiveness full free and eternal forgiveness that cancels all guilt lifts the burden of the conscience brings the soul near to God a pardoned soul to a pardoning

God through Jesus Christ this is the word of God brethren and a blessed word it is rich rich with blessedness is that word that proclaims forgiveness of sin to sinful men neither is there salvation in any other we are entirely shut up to this one way of grace there is salvation in none other for there is none other name given under heaven amongst men whereby we must be saved then again the word of God is the word of peace preaching peace by Jesus Christ that's the word of God for in our natural state with all men by sin we're far off we're at enmity with God in our state and many are at enmity with God in their feelings and their spirit or at enmity with God in their state but he has made peace first by the blood of his cross made the foundation for it and then having made peace by the blood of his cross he comes and preaches it as a very word of God to us it is the word of peace through

Jesus Christ it proclaims it it promises it and when applied by the Holy Spirit it conveys it it conveys it and in hearing the word of God in this particular at times of spiritual blessing we can feel the word conveys the peace and a very sweet a very holy a very heavenly peace it is too this is the word of God proclaiming peace by Jesus Christ besides that the word of God as mentioned in our text is the word of his grace it is a very gracious word oh full of grace it is and so the apostle when he did bid farewell to the elders of the church of Ephesus at Miletus said and now brethren

I commend you to God and the word of his grace which is able to build you up and to give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified for as the word of God is the word of grace to save us it is the word of grace to build us up in the knowledge of the truth and in faith and in hope and to give us that is to give us the knowledge of and hope of the inheritance of the saints in life when the word of God takes effect the grace of God is always felt it is felt to be a most blessing a most suitable perfection of God his graciousness for we are brought to feel this that nothing can meet our case but the grace of

[ 38 : 03 ] God nothing can deliver us but the grace of God and nothing can satisfy us but the grace of God and nothing can sustain us but the grace of God and the word of God is the word of that very grace and as God himself is a gracious God so the word of God is a gracious word in the gospel and it is that graciousness in the word of God amongst other features that that very much a feature of it that makes it such a joyful sound to those who hear it and who know it oh blessed are the people that know the joyful sound of grace in their hearts and feel to respond to it feelingly brethren the word of

God is the word of God's love for in his word he commends his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us isn't isn't this wonderful that God should condescend to commend his love to such as we are not only to give his only begotten son to die but to commend to us his love as though to say now it is all in love that I have given Jesus Christ my beloved son to die for you it is all in love if you want to know what love is think of that consider that that I have given my only begotten son to die while we were yet sinners Christ died for us oh brethren

God could never never commend his love in such a suitable such an impressive such a heart affecting way as that when we can feel it to have effect upon us the word of God and I must leave this point now the word of God of saving grace saving love saving blood and what is more of the saviour himself not as though the word of God had taken none effect it has taken effect it has taken effect in some of our hearts I would bless God it's taken effect in mine I should never be where I am today nor speaking such things as these if I had been left to the natural bank of my own carnal and earthly mind disposition it's entirely of God's grace that I stand here to preach it and of

God's love that I stand here to set it forth now this word of God takes effect then this is the great point if it doesn't take any effect we don't benefit by it by reading it in the scriptures by singing it in our hymns of truth by listening to it from our pulpits unless it takes effect this won't be of any real saving benefit or good to our hearts it must take effect now there are several things come into this and first of all these two things come into it first the sovereign and effectual operation of God the Holy Spirit now the

Holy Spirit always works through the word of God and never distinct from it or separate from it the work of the Holy Spirit is not a separate entity in religion and experience it is essentially connected with the word of God however the Holy Spirit works in our heart it's through the word of God it's by making that word to have an effect which it would never have if the Holy Spirit didn't cause it to have that effect effect of why even those of us who have experienced the effect of the word of God know very well that we can hear that same word and it have no effect we feel that we do much need we often pray only that the word of God may have the same effect upon us that it has had in years gone by the same word has the same effect because we know that not hearing the word is the

[ 43 : 30 ] Holy Spirit making it to have an effect in our hearts nothing can prosper where the Holy Ghost nothing it is not by power of men not by persuasiveness and not by the wisdom of men or the wisdom of men preaching the word that it has effect secondly there is the preaching of the word God has appointed the preaching of the word as an instrumental means to the effect he intends it to have a careful reading of the New Testament will make us abundantly clear that the preaching of the gospel is the main feature of this dispensation not to the exclusion of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's table and other things that are scriptural but the preaching of the word is the main appointment for the carrying out of

God's purposes of grace through his word as the apostle traces it out in that chapter to the Romans faith cometh by hearing but how shall they hear without a preacher and how shall they preach except they be sent God must send the preachers to preach the word that men may hear it and hearing it it may have that effect in their hearts that God intends it to have therefore the preaching of the word should have its right place in our estimation we should regard it as a divine appointment esteem the Lord's servants in love for their works sake often pray that the Lord will bless the preaching of the word to every spiritual and gracious effect of it if men neglect

God's appointments can they expect his blessing if the preaching of the word is disesteem does that honor the Lord who has established that appointment if people can do as well without a gospel ministry as with it God would never establish a gospel ministry no my friends these things need to be rightly understood these two things the preaching of the word of God faithfully graciously and affectionately and the Holy Spirit acting through the word preached in the hearts of men that is the way it has effect look how it was at the day of Pentecost when Peter filled with the Holy Ghost preached a very plain and a very solemn sermon without any sort of oratory or the like plain things solemnly and plainly preached the Holy

Ghost worked wonderfully through that preaching of Peter and a thousand said what must we do their hearts were pricked the word wounded them and then the apostle Peter directed them in the exercise and the stress of their hearts to repent and to look to Jesus Christ and the word had that effect for they here in the word believe well now let's come to a conclusion it would be very for as much consideration to consider in what diverse ways the word of God has effect how suddenly in some cases how gradually in others but the effect is always the same now I've not only just very briefly mentioned where the word of

God has effect it has a quickening effect an awakening a regenerating effect that is the first effect of the word for souls are born again through that incorruptible seed of the word it so affects them that a new life is brought forth in their souls another effect of the word of course is to bring men to repent of their sinful state and to turn to God to seek his mercy the effect of the word is that sinners forsake their sinful ways that the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and the word of God causes him to do just that and to turn unto the Lord that he may have mercy upon him another effect of the word is to believe in

[ 48 : 58 ] Jesus faith cometh by hearing that is when the hearing is made effectual and the truths of the gospel that are preached are the means of raising up faith in the heart to believe them and especially to believe in Jesus Christ and love is another effect of the truth of the gospel the word of love when it has effect upon our heart causes us to love love in our hearts is a response to the love of God toward us felt within through his word that commands it and as the word takes effect inwardly it takes effect outwardly as it took effect for the Thessalonians when they heard the word of God they turned from their idols to serve the true and living

God men turn from the ways of sin and unbelief and ungodliness and God forsaking ways for their cause to think upon their ways and turn their feet to God's testimonies that's an effect of the word another effect of the word is to profess the faith that the word of God produces in our hearts for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession of that faith is made unto salvation salvation it is an effect of the word of God when men come forward to profess their faith in Jesus and being constrained by that love feel they must follow him in his appointed ways for the honor and glory of his name union with the people of God is an effect of the word of God in our hearts it brings us together we feel the same things believe the same things love the same things and therefore love one another well now brethren all these are the effects of the word of God and as I said when I began this has been going on in this sanctuary this hundred years since first the word of God was preached from this pulpit one generation after another has passed away but there's been a people here in every generation ministers have passed away but still the same gospel of the grace of God is preached and now this day we give thanks for this together with our friends that this sanctuary has been such a favored place only the Lord knows how many have received and felt and believe his precious word as it has been preached within these walls and in these changing days it is a great blessing when in this or any other sanctuary the same truth the same word is preached let any variation without adding to it or taking from it the same solemn word i may for just a moment i feel that it's a great privilege to me to be here today and to take this part in the services and that it has pleased god to raise me up in time from my very great and extreme weakness to give my testimony to his word on this centenary day because i have a very special affection for this sanctuary whether i am the oldest standing minister now that has served this church i don't know but i think i must be mostly oldest minister now because there are very few ministers alive now that were preaching when i began to preach and i remember so well my first entrance into this pulpit i shall never forget it for i hadn't been preaching very long and i was very young and as i felt in experience though i felt then and i feel now that the lord called me to preach but still i was very young and very nervous and good mr weeks

the pastor of this church had been afflicted with a stroke and was unable to preach and i was invited to this pulpit mr weeks was here at the time and i remember when i came to tentative i felt very desolate in my spirit i'd never been here and i didn't know anyone here and i knew that this would be a congregation of experienced heroes of the word that they'd been accustomed to a matured ministry and altogether i felt very very unhappy about myself and i remember that saturday night was one of the most wearisome and restless i've had and the next morning i came to this chapel i didn't know how to preach i remember and i could only think of one of the words in the salons that was expressive a desolation of spirit when i went into the vestry i thought i'm a stranger among strange people and we had a meeting in the vestry that Sunday morning a good man stood up and began to pray i wasn't in the meeting but i was in the adjoining vestry and as he prayed i thought it changed him over my spirit he seemed to speak in such a way as to quite attract my affections and i began to feel enlargement apart and i felt i shan't be a stranger to this people and i came into the pulpit with quite a different text i laid my text beside it was expressive of desolation of spirit and preached from this instead now therefore there are no more strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens with the saints and of a household of god and the lord was pleased to give me i feel an entrance into the hearts and affections of the people here at that time most of them have passed away i suppose nearly all of them have for this was just on fifty years ago and from that day to this i felt an affection for this sanctuary for i felt the lord came with me that sunday morning delivered me from my feelings gave me the opening of the mouth in the midst of this congregation and commended my ministry such as it was to their hearts and they received me very kindly most if not all of those who received me then are passed away now and i'm not the young inexperienced minister that i was fifty years ago i'm there in the evening of my days but i've always felt all through my long ministry a union to this place and i've often felt the lord to help me and enlarge me in feeling and in utterance when i've stood in this so that you will see how i feel how thankful i feel the lord has spared me and give me the privilege of taking this part in the services today now my friends you know not how long our time is but most of us know one thing will not be so long in the future as it has been in the past there's no question about that and we do hope we do pray that the word of the lord may continue in this sanctuary when we are going that will have the same effect in future generations that it has had in the past and has had in the present that the lord's precious name may often be sweet and fragrant with grace and love and mercy

that the gathering of the people may often be to his blessed and holy name may the blessing of god the father the son and the holy ghost rest upon jireh amen i give us tonight just a few announcements first of all for the benefit of friends who are not here this afternoon friends here of gara have had a little booklet printed in remembrance of this centenary service and those would like to have one and have one from the deacon in the lobby as they go secondly if their friends have a long distance to go and would like a little refreshment that can be provided in the vestry behind and then the benefit of friends you may not know mr.

clausen's funeral will be god willing on friday at 2pm at union chapel at bethersfield and after the benediction we will sing the doxology hymn 631 tune primal 851 631 the should be high name or 631 The Lord himself be with you all to teach you his own will and guide you safe from every throne to Zion's heavenly hill.

[ 60 : 21 ] The Lord himself be with you all to teach you his own will and guide you safe from every throne to Zion's heavenly hill.

The Lord himself is amazing. Thank you.