

One God and father of all. (Quality: Good)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 29 October 1967

Preacher: Delves, Stanley (1897-1978)

[0 : 0 0] the course of our meditation upon spiritual unity as it is set before us in the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians we come to the sixth verse the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians the sixth verse one God and father of all who is above all and through all and in you all the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians the sixth verse one God and father of all who is above all and through all and in you all this is the seventh and the last feature of spiritual unity as the apostle was directed and instructed of the Holy Spirit to express it we have considered I hope with instruction and profit the six features of it before the text the one body the one spirit the one hope the one Lord the one faith and the one baptism all of these distinctive features of the unity of the spirit and the last is in some sense the crowning truth of all that there is one God and father of all this means of course beyond doubt the father in the trinity there is God the father and the son and the Holy Spirit in the unity of the Godhead and as I have explained to you the unity of the Godhead of the trinity is the foundation of the spiritual unity of the church and we have seen that in the one spirit who unquestionably is the Holy Spirit of God and the one Lord the Lord Jesus Christ and now the one father

I'll just say this at once that though we read it here one God and father of all we must not misunderstand that to imply that the father is the one God and the one God is the father and the Lord Jesus Christ is not God nor the Holy Spirit God because in other scriptures we learn very clearly the truth of the divinity both of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit but now we have the divinity of the father one God and father of all and the subject is very deep and very rich in instruction and very rich in blessing if the Lord is pleased to make the word of it a blessing to our hearts there is very much here for us to feed upon and I hope it may be spiritual food to our souls and we'll come at once to the consideration of it and the text offers to our minds these points of truth first that if there is one God and father of all then the unity of the spirit is the unity of a family for when you read one father it implies there is one family first then we learn from this word that the unity of the spirit is the unity of a spiritual family then secondly that there is one God and father of that living family and of all who are in that family unity he is the father of them all then thirdly we have before us in this word that this one

God and father this glorious father who is the father of all is above all and he is through all and he is in all the subject is so profound as I seem to fear to enter upon it that I should confuse things that are so beautiful in their simplicity and yet so profound in their meaning the unity of the spirit is the unity of a family as the apostle had expressed it at the end of the previous chapter the whole family the whole family in heaven and earth now nothing can express the unity of the spirit so exactly as the unity of a family there are other similitudes that are used in the scripture to express this same spiritual unity but in every case they are similitudes they are not literally true what I mean is the unity of the spirit is not literally what the similitudes are themselves let me explain what

I mean now the unity of the spirit is like the unity of a building you are God's building the apostle said you are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets and Jesus Christ is the cornerstone but now that's a metaphor that's a similitude it's intended to show us that all who are in the unity of the spirit are built in their faith and in their hope on Jesus Christ and joined together as stones in a building but then there's no real life in a building it's only similitude it's not literally true that the church of God is a building but that expression is used to instruct us in those particular features of the church of

God it's built on Jesus Christ like a building rests on its foundation or if you take that other similitude that the Lord Jesus Christ used with such beautiful and tender instruction in it that his people are like a flock they are his sheep but then that is not literally true they're not actually a flock of course but the meaning is that like as a flock are gathered to a shepherd and as he watches over them cares for them guides them and attends to them in their various necessities that is how Jesus Christ cares for his people they're his sheep but then that's a similitude that's not an exact representation and so I might go through the various similitudes used in the scripture to express the unity of the spirit and show you that though they instruct us in the nature of the unity they're not literally true only similitudes but now when we come to this that the unity of the spirit is the unity of a family that's not a similitude that's an actual literal spiritual blessed fact they are exactly that they really are a family the whole family in heaven and earth are a real spiritual family and they have a real spiritual father as much as any earthly family has and they partake of one nature exactly as an earthly family does and they derive their life from the

[11 : 10] God and father of Jesus Christ exactly like a literal family receive the family life from the parents you see it's not a similitude it's an exactitude the unity of a spirit is not like the unity of a family it is the unity of a family a whole family in heaven and earth named after Jesus Christ and as we've been reading and singing this morning already it's a very blessed privilege and favour to be in the unity of the family of God and I might spend a few moments upon this point for as I have said if there is a father there is a family and if we belong to the family then God is our father if we do not belong to the family

God is our creator but not in that sense our father and keeping still in mind the way I have expounded this truth of spiritual unity we may regard this family as the whole family in heaven and earth those in heaven the sons of God and those on earth the sons of God but all in one family or we might take it of the whole family on earth all born of the Holy Spirit or we may take it more closely as a family where the members are gathered together and united together personally in their own spiritual unity together such a family

I feel we are here by the grace of God and such a family I pray there may always be here now before before I speak of God as being the father of this family I must direct your minds a little to the features of it who constitutes that family of which there is one God and father well first all who are alive to him spiritually for God is not the God and he is not the father of the dead but of the living we know not of course how many there may be now who are as dead to God as they can be who yet presently will be quickened by the power of the grace of

God and brought into newness of life through the new birth but all while that condition of spiritual death prevails in the heart and mind there is no evidence whatever how can there be any of belonging to the living family of God and that death that prevails in the natural condition of men's hearts is real death there is no life towards God at all there's no desire really towards his holy name there's not the slightest living affection to his blessed name no voice of prayer to God echoes from their heart no love to him ever springs up in their affections no longing to be embraced in his love his fatherly love ever animates their spirit but all who are in the family of

God pass from death unto life and they pass from death unto life through the only possible way in which any can do and that is through the new birth and where there's been a new birth there will be spiritual life and where there is spiritual life it will be evident by spiritual feelings and where there are spiritual feelings there will be feelings invariably towards God whatever deep painful convictions may attend the quickening of the soul the feature of the Holy Spirit's work within is always to give life towards God and a God is the father of all who live to him whoever they are brethren spiritual life is the great matter in religion you know

[17:06] I don't say nothing else matters but I do say that's the great matter whatever views people may have or whatever form of worship they may prefer it matters nothing at all if their souls are dead to God dead in sin all real religion I know you've heard me say this before but if I could impress it more and more upon your hearts and minds I would all real religion springs from the life of God in the soul and what doesn't spring from that isn't worth a straw with regard to religion and it may be very deceptive people may think because they're religious they're right with

God believe me brethren all real religion springs from the life of God in the soul that's the root and nothing else can ever produce it but that root the life of prayer the life of repentance the life of faith the life of love the life of worship the life of hope the life of communion with God it all springs from spiritual life in the soul itself and spiritual life comes from the God and Father of all it comes to us through Jesus Christ but it comes to us from him and so the apostle Peter puts it whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature having escaped corruption that overwhelms the world through lust we have escaped it by being made partakers of the divine nature if that thought seems very difficult for you to receive and believe

I can understand it I can understand the truth of it better than I can understand it of myself that it can be so but brethren it must be so if we are alive to God it's the divine nature in our hearts not to make us God but to give us the nature that is from him the divine nature and the divine nature is the nature of Jesus Christ now that's the family and then again there is one God and Father of all for all who are in this family have this proof and evidence of it they believe in Jesus when you sang that line just now I thought now that is exactly what I want to say presently this they the seal of this receive when in

Jesus they believe the apostle says you know all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ I don't understand that it means exactly that you are made the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ because that is through the new birth I believe he means you're all evidently the children of God because you have been brought to believe in Jesus Christ Christ now to believe in Jesus Christ with all the heart that is sincerely feelingly to believe in Jesus Christ shows that you belong to the family of God for my friends there are no unbelievers in God's living family not one

I know that those who are in it are troubled with unbelief which is perhaps as well because it's a proof that there is something opposite to unbelief working in our heart there is one God and Father of all who believe in Jesus all well someone might say and perhaps is saying I would be thankful really to know where I stand with regard to this now you need not always be at an uncertainty about that for there is a witness of the Holy Spirit with our spirit that we are the children of God if we really are the spirit itself bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God and if children then heirs heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus

[23 : 14] Christ if so be that we suffer with him that we may be also glorified together now I think that this question of the witness of the spirit and what the witness of the spirit is in its nature and experience has puzzled many the spirit itself bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God and it is important to notice carefully that it doesn't say the spirit itself that is the holy spirit of God witnesses to our spirit to assure us of our sonship but witnesses with it so that here you see you have two witnesses witnesses the witness of the spirit and the witness of our spirit and these two witnesses agree the one witnesses with the other you know if a matter is brought into court as matters continually are being brought into court and witnesses are brought forward with regard to it they must need witness together for if one witnesses against the other the whole case falls through it is essential that witnesses should witness together that their witness should agree in order that the matter under consideration may be proved and established now your spirit that is to say if you belong to the living family of

God your spirit of itself will not satisfy you that you're a child of God and the witness of the Holy Spirit could never satisfy you that you're a child of God without the witness of your own spirit indeed brethren the Holy Spirit would never witness except with their own spirit never the Holy Spirit never witnesses with the spirit of an unbeliever with the spirit of a man not quickened into that new and divine life I've set before you never because if that were so there would be a there would be a clash between the two perhaps now I've mentioned just you would like me to make this clear to you now what is the witness of our spirit the witness of our spirit is to this that there are those things believed and felt in our hearts that spring from spiritual life

I'll be more clear about that in a minute what is the witness of the spirit of God it is that where those distinctive features of grace appear there is real sonship and how and where does the spirit itself bear this witness in the scriptures brethren in the scriptures in the scriptures as for instance in that passage in the epistle to the Hebrews where you read whereof the holy ghost is a witness to us in that he said and there's a reference to what the holy spirit had said in the old testament on that particular point the holy spirit is a witness to us in what he has said in the scriptures now we will take this one point then the scripture says and that is the witness of the holy spirit he that loveth is born of

God and he that loveth not knoweth not God for God is love now the spirit witnesseth to this that where there is spiritual love in the heart there is a child of God but now what sort of witness does your spirit bear to this does your spirit bear witness that you have that love in your heart to God and that faith in Jesus Christ in his precious name and precious blood and precious gospel does your spirit say in the silent witness within yes yes I do I do feel that if faith is this in the nature and feeling of it nothing in my hands

I bring simply to thy cross I cling naked come to thee for dress helpless look to thee for grace black I to the fountain fly wash me savior or I die does your spirit bear witness that that faith is in your heart now if it's there your spirit will bear witness it is there will be a kind of silent witness within saying yes yes that's how I feel that's how I honestly feel God knows that I do look to Jesus Christ I do cling to him I do believe that he is a son of God and I do believe that his precious blood cleanses from all sin and I do beg of him to cleanse me from mine take this word my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness now would your spirit say yes to that that is true that is true my hope is built exactly on Jesus blood and righteousness and nothing else now that's the witness of your spirit you see if it bears witness to it and if the

[30 : 48] Holy Spirit bears witness in the scripture that he that believe it is born of God and he that loveth is born of God then that's the witness of the spirit with your spirit and your spirit witnesses with that blessed spirit but I know there is something more than that that enters into it I know that the Holy Spirit does bring to bear his witness in the scriptures on our hearts in a way of power and influence that does convey to us a scriptural assurance that we are the children of God the spirit brings to bear upon our heart his witness in the scriptures and makes it personal to us and when that witness is accompanied and it usually is accompanied with a sense of the love of God in Jesus

Christ and the pardon of sin through his redeeming blood then we cry Abba Father the language springs up from the feelings we cry Abba Father that's very very beautiful very and if my setting these things before you this morning does no more than draw out your hearts after them and reinvigorate you in prayer that the Lord by his blessed spirit would give you that spirit given witness that you're a child of God well then you haven't heard to no purpose this morning but I'm afraid it is you know as the Lord

Jesus said on one occasion there are some of you that believe not and he knows he knows how many hearts this morning are dead to this and how many are alive to it how many hearts respond and how many hearts ignore for Jesus knew who they were that believed on him and he knows who they are now and he knows who they are in this congregation this morning for Jesus knew who they were that believed on him well time is nearly over this morning there is one God and Father of all this blessed family and I've only time to mention one more consideration and that is this in the family of grace there is a mutual family interest in Jesus

Christ and in God by Jesus Christ a mutual family interest there is one God and Father of all and he is their Father there is one Lord Jesus Christ and all spiritual blessings that can enrich our souls in time and still more in eternity are in Jesus Christ and they all belong to the family of grace and there is one blessed spirit of God to sanctify and instruct and to enrich our hearts with communicated blessings from Jesus one spirit and all the whole family to take of the blessings of the gospel one as much as another for there is one

God and Father of all God God and love day God Godinho God Video Hai Hai One A Kan Solic Madonna Let God ■■■ divine Po