

One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one father (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: 15 October 1967

Preacher: Delves, Stanley (1897-1978)

[0 : 0 0] continuing our meditation upon the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians I will read again this morning the fifth verse one Lord one faith one baptism the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians the fifth verse one Lord one faith one baptism it will be remembered that last Lord's Day morning I spoke upon the first of these expressions one Lord and sets before you how all who are in the unity of the spirit are brought to believe in that one Lord their hearts are brought into a humble loving submission to his authority and he is their Lord in everything that is spiritual one Lord

I will not go back upon that this morning but speak upon the next expression in the text one faith this is the fifth of the uniting principles of truth that the apostle shows bring together into a spiritual unity the whole of the people of God there is one faith they are all united in that but then we need to understand if we are rightly directed what is implied by this expression one faith and how all are brought into the unity of it for as there has never been but one faith and never will be so all who are one in Jesus Christ are one in that they receive they believe they love and they cleave to and they walk according to that one faith my friends there is only one faith we may say a faith as it is written of the one Lord that there are lords many but to us there is one Lord

Jesus Christ and we in him so it may be said there are faiths many many faiths but to us there is only one faith and we are united in that one faith there can be no union unless there is a union in faith now how are we to understand this and apply it now by faith and this one faith we must understand I feel two things there is some division of mind amongst those who interpret these scriptures as to what this one faith is some think it means the doctrine of the gospel some think it means the principle of faith in the heart that believes

I think it means both I don't see how the one faith can ever unite us unless we believe it and there can be no unity in believing if different people believe different things but where there is one faith and one believing principle in the heart that believes it there you get the unity of the one faith and moreover you may remember that in the scripture in the new testament especially sometimes expression faith means the truth and doctrine of the gospel and sometimes faith means the believing principle in the heart take these scriptures if they recur to my mind we read for instance of the faith that was once delivered to the saints delivered to the saints now there is no question but that means the truth of the gospel that was once delivered to the saints and then again we are exhorted to contend earnestly for the faith and there

I think it means I'm sure it does mean we are to contend for the truth that we believe then when the apostle says for instance I have kept the faith he meant that he had kept the truth faithfully in his heart and never departed from it and the Lord Jesus Christ commends in one of those solemn messages to the churches in the revelation that they had kept my faith now faith then and we will take this first means the one true doctrine of the gospel of Jesus Christ now there's only one faith there only one gospel there are of course as Paul refers to in that chapter to the

[6 : 37] Galatians there are other gospels that purport to be gospels and some of those Galatians were drawn away from the truth thereby they had turned to another gospel but Paul says there isn't another gospel really there's no alternative it isn't a matter as to whether you believe this gospel or that gospel the gospel that I preach or the gospel that someone else preaches as the gospel no he said there's only one gospel there's only one gospel there is one faith and all the elect of God are united in that one faith for it is expressly said to be the faith of

God's elect that is all God's elect are brought to believe in that one faith as sure as God has chosen anyone to salvation in the eternal purposes of his mind and will that person will come to believe in the one faith and receive it into the heart the whole of the elect of God are brought into the one faith but perhaps this needs a little more explaining one faith that is one gospel the truth and teaching and doctrine of the gospel constitutes the one faith now it is important to understand that this one faith refers especially to the

Lord Jesus Christ and it is called by the apostle James the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ and in one place in the Revelation the faith of Jesus now the one faith in my text refers especially to the Lord Jesus Christ I might enlarge a little upon this and show you what this faith with regard to the Lord Jesus Christ really means and implies first of all this is an essential part of the one faith that Jesus Christ is the Son of God in his divine nature that he is the

Son of Man in his human nature that Jesus Christ is the God Man that he is both natures divine and human in one wonderful and blessed person now that's the faith that God's elect have believed ever since the days of the apostles there's been no change with regard to that and that which here is meant by the one faith the apostle means when he says great is the mystery of godliness God was manifest in the flesh then again the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ means the faith with regard to his law fulfilling righteousness it has always been the faith of God's elect that the

Lord Jesus Christ fulfilled the law in all its spiritual demands and all its holy requirements of men that in his life there was a perfect obedience without any stain of sin without any shortcoming but absolutely all that God's holy law requires the Lord Jesus Christ in his life of obedience fulfilled so that Jesus Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believe it now that the law its best obedience owes to our incarnate God is an essential part of the faith everyone in every generation has believed in that and that there is no righteousness possible but the righteousness of Jesus

[12 : 07] Christ and that righteousness so perfect so honoring to God so entirely fulfilling his just law that that righteousness is unto all and upon all them that believe for there is no difference this really is a very essential part of the faith that the Lord Jesus Christ is righteousness to all who believe in him another essential part of the faith is that his death was an atonement for sin I felt when that beautiful hymn was being sung just now oh I did hope many of you could enter into it failingly and I hope it will be a blessing to your souls because I know that that hymn has been a blessing to many it's rich in gospel truth it's full of the gospel the death of Jesus

Christ at Calvary was an atonement for sin it was of sacrificial character he bore sin in his own body on the tree and there was that infinite merit in his suffering under sin that completely atoned for it and was accepted of God that is an essential part of the faith the atonement by Jesus Christ in his death for sin that he really did bear sin that it was charged upon him and he completely atoned for it so that it is as though there were no sin at all it was so fully so entirely put away sin now that is an essential part of the faith that the

Lord Jesus Christ put away sin by the sacrifice of himself whatever difference our mind and view there have been with regard to the extent of the atonement there have been differences some have felt it is universal we do not we feel that it is personal particular that being the doctrinal meaning of that word particular and particular baptist means that we are the baptists that hold and believe for particular redemption redemption as against universal redemption I'm not going into that distinction I only mention this we don't say that no one is in the unity of the faith that hasn't strictly held particular redemption but we do say this no one isn't in the no one is in the unity of the faith who doesn't hold redemption by the blood of

Jesus Christ if they're wrong they're they're out of it they're entirely out of it whatever else men believe if they do not believe with all their heart that the death of Jesus Christ was an atonement for sin they're not in the unity of the faith it would be much to be desired that there were no difference of view upon any aspect of the atonement to us it seems clear enough the scripture is explicit besides which we feel it is a grave contradiction to suppose that any could be lost if Jesus Christ atoned for their sin could there be souls in hell suffering for their sin when

Jesus Christ atoned for it at Calvary is not that a plain line to the very heart of the matter payment God cannot twice demand twice once at my bleeding short his hand and then again at mine could it be just think you forgot to condemn men for the sins that Jesus Christ atoned for does the scripture teach that I trow not that he died for sin and before

[17 : 59] I pass to other considerations I must add this if any of you are seeking peace with God in your souls if it's your desire your concern to know the forgiveness of sin in your experience of it let me assure you of this you will never find that peace with God and you will never enjoy that forgiveness of sin and you will never find what your soul needs apart from the atonement of Jesus Christ and I can say that in all sincerity from my own heart I never did I never knew what spiritual peace was until the gospel doctrine of the atonement through the blood of

Jesus Christ was made clear to my understanding and as it was made clear to my understanding my heart received it and as my heart received it I felt the blessing of it in my soul now is that thank you the faith of Jesus Christ let we pass to other things the faith of Jesus Christ is that he rose again from the dead or as Paul said if Christ be not risen our faith is vain and we are yet in our sins and they also that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished the resurrection of Jesus Christ is an essential part of the faith for how could it be assured that the gospel is a true gospel if

Jesus Christ never rose from the dead if anyone were to ask me to give one answer to one question and they were to say how do you know the gospel you preach is true I should have one answer for it because Jesus Christ rose from the dead and if they were to say and how do you know he rose from the dead I should say because that could not possibly have been fabricated and if anything is sure it is this that if Jesus Christ had not risen from the dead Christianity would have died with him there's no doubt about him he would have died with him the fact that Christianity the religion the faith of Jesus Christ lives to this day has been a power in the hearts of thousands and thousands of people has quickened them spiritually from death unto life is a proof that

I think no one if they impartially considered it could fail to see is a proof that Jesus Christ rose from the dead if anyone doesn't believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead bear to the faith that is an essential part of the faith the faith of Jesus Christ is that he rose as surely as he died that he came forth from that tomb as surely as his lifeless body was laid there oh how much depends on the resurrection of Jesus Christ the one thing of course his present life depends on it that beautiful word of his to his disciples depends on it because

I live ye shall live also all our hope of heaven depends on it that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and ascended into heaven that is the faith of Jesus Christ be assured of it the faith of Jesus Christ is that he is an ever living intercessor for all who believing in him come to God through his name this man because he ever liveth hath an unchangeable priesthood wherefore he is able to save them unto the uttermost that come unto God by him seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them that is the one faith all the people of

[23 : 29] God have believed it really believed it that Jesus died rose again ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of the majesty on high we cannot see him but we believe he is there and sometimes we can feel an influence upon our hearts which we feel sure comes from a living exalted saviour one faith and this one faith of Jesus Christ embraces also his second coming to the judgment of the last day the one faith embraces the eternal judgment that is a judgment for eternity for

God hath given unto all men an assurance of this that he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained whereof he hath given assurance in that he hath raised him from the dead and beyond that judgment is an eternal heaven or an eternal hell that's the faith plain and simply put to you this morning that's the faith and I put it in just another way with regard to the faith of Jesus Christ perhaps a little more personal the faith of Jesus Christ then is this that there is a full and a perfect salvation in and through his blessed name salvation from the worst of men for the worst of men the most sinful preaching there in the week in the warmth of my spirit

I gave expression to something that troubled me afterwards as to whether I'd spoken wisely or not but I was relieved of it you said what did you say I said this I said it in the warmth of my feelings I said I believe for the glory of Jesus Christ if there is one man the vilest of all other men on the face of the earth that man will be saved and I thought well I wasn't that was a right thing to say and it rather troubled me because sometimes what I've said in public comes back to me and causes me a good deal of concern as to whether I said that wisely and prudently and I was very troubled about that remark afterwards especially when I went to bed at night for I had said that in the Lord's name but I was relieved of that trouble by this simple thought

I said well I felt well if the apostle Paul had been here tonight and had heard me say that he would have said that's true and I'm that man I'm that man for he always considered that he was the chief of sinners the chief well whether he was or not he would have agreed he was the chief of sinners and the grace of God had saved him well now this is the faith of Jesus brethren that there is salvation in his dear name in his precious name neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name given under heaven amongst men whereby we must be saved all come to believe that that in themselves they're just utterly lost helplessly lost hopelessly lost eternally lost in themselves that they're in a mire that they can never get out of that they owe a debt to

God they can never pay that they're under a power of sin that they can never free themselves from and then that there is perfect salvation in Jesus Christ salvation from sin's power sin's filth sin's guilt sin's curse sin's hell there is salvation in Jesus now that's the faith to believe that and the very blessed thing it is to be taught to believe it even though you may not be all that clear and sure about your own salvation but that will come brethren that will come if you believe there is salvation in Jesus Christ presently you will be brought to believe that you're saved in it for what saith the scripture look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth for I am

[29 : 38] God and there is none else bear with me if I'm emphatic brethren from my heart warms to this theme that there is perfect full free suitable powerful God honouring soul saving salvation in Jesus Christ Christ it is the faith the faith that there is redemption through his blood put it poetically it's this what mighty son paid all my debt when I a bondman stood and has my soul but freedom set is Jesus precious blood ah he's a favoured favoured man who as very quaintly but very sweetly puts it has had the receipt for all his debt signed with the blood of

Jesus now that's the faith it is the faith that there is a complete justification through his merit that is indeed the very heart truth and doctrine of the gospel considered doctrinally that great reformer said Luther said that justification by faith is the principle of a standing or a fallen church that is that a church stands or falls as to whether it adheres or departs from the principle doctrine of justification in and through Jesus Christ and sanctification by the Holy Spirit in the heart that also is a part of the faith well now that is the one faith of my text if

I have understanding in this matter the one faith it is the faith of Jesus Christ he is its author it comes from him he is its object and he is its end looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith now for the few minutes left this morning I would point out to you something concerning that scripture the faith once delivered to the saints for this faith has been delivered to the saints of God well how and when first of all by the personal teaching of Jesus Christ himself as far as the disciples who gathered round him and listened to those gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth as far as they were able to receive it he did talk to them this faith not very fully because they were not able to receive it at that time and the

Holy Spirit had not come to enlighten their spiritual understandings as he did afterwards but still the Lord Jesus Christ delivered this faith to those apostles who he called to himself and instructed them as they were able to bear it in the principles of the gospel and the personal ministry of Jesus Christ laid the foundation of the gospel ministry forever afterwards but when after the ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven the Holy Spirit was given and so wonderfully enlightened the understandings of the apostles and others and so taught them these vital fundamentals of the faith that the faith was delivered then even more fully to the saints and since the apostles days there's been no more delivering of the faith because it was delivered to them once for all everything pertaining to the faith was delivered to the apostles but it has been preserved for us in the scriptures by a divine inspiration the writers of the

New Testament and especially of the gospels where the principles of the faith are so fully expanded by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the faith once delivered to the saints has been preserved to us all through the centuries of time and still we have it in the sacred word this faith was once delivered to the saints once for all and now as I close on this point this morning and I can see I should not get any farther than this point I want to say this that this faith the faith once delivered to the saints is unalterable how can it be altered it's unalterable in this sense that nothing must be added to it and nothing must be taken from it if anything is added to the faith that's not the faith as it was delivered to the saints if anything is taken from it it's not the faith that was once delivered to the saints we'll say well has anything of this ever been attempted then to add or to take away yes verily verily for what has been the great error of the church of Rome but to add the traditions of their fathers and the decisions of their councils and the infallible pronouncements of their popes to add back to the faith and so through the centuries there's been an accumulation of doctrines and decrees added to the faith and of course that was one great matter at the time of the reformation the reformers were for clearing the faith away from all this that had been added to it we must add nothing to the faith has anyone ever attempted to take away from the faith yes verily for what is all modernistic teaching that are taking away from the faith and doesn't this come within the scope of that almost final word of God in the revelation if any man shall add unto the words that are written in this book

[38 : 08] God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book and if any man shall take away from the words of the prophecy of this book God shall take away his name out of the book of life and out of the things that are written in this book book it is very wonderful book when you have come down to us today in the scriptures in all its purity when you think of the opposition that's been made to it the persecutions that have risen against it and against those that believed it and the undermining teachings of men that have sought to weaken and overthrow it it's wonderful that here today we have that same faith once delivered to the saints clear intact complete surely we must believe that the same God who delivered the faith of the saints has watched over it preserved it and oh how often he has blessed it brethren

I hope that the faith that we believe that we are united in believing that with one heart and one mind we have received to hold humbly I would trust and pray that the faith that is preached from this pulpit is nothing more nothing less nothing different from the faith that was once delivered to the saints if I preached anything to you but that one faith I should bring a curse upon my soul but if I preached to you that one faith in its entirety completeness that one faith of our Lord Jesus Christ and you feel you can receive it believe it cleave to it and if you feel that when that solemn hour comes when heart and flesh fail you can rest your soul on it as I felt I could rest mine on it when I felt I hadn't perhaps more than another minute or two to live what a blessing that will be to you oh what a blessing my friends there is one

Lord there is one faith and there is one baptism amen