

# God's afflicted, poor and trusting people (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Dawson, Herbert (1890-1969)

- [ 0 : 00 ] As the Lord should be pleased to help me, I shall call your attention to a subject you will find in the book of Zephaniah, chapter 3, and the 12th verse.
- I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.
- The book of Zephaniah, chapter 3, and the 12th verse.
- The speaker in the text is the God of all grace, speaking as the church's living head.
- In the context, there is set forth a description of the judgment of God that he pronounces upon Jerusalem, as it was in Zephaniah's day, when Israel was in a very sad and solemn backsliding state.
- [ 1 : 42 ] And God declares that the day is coming when he will pour out his judgment upon Jerusalem, but he will not forget his concern about his own dear people.
- I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.
- And now, I want you to understand, in approaching the subject, that Jerusalem is a type of the church of Christ.
- And there is a type of the church of Christ, because God, from the day that David, the psalmist, carried the ark to Jerusalem, God, ordained that his worship should be carried on in the land of promise from Jerusalem as the center.
- And you all know how the Israelite males of 20 years old and upwards had to journey up to Jerusalem on three appointed feast days during the year to honor God and to worship him in Jerusalem itself.
- [ 3 : 34 ] There were great gatherings there when things were well with Israel. And that sets forth Jerusalem as being a type of the church of Christ.
- But then, when the Israelites did go up to Jerusalem to worship three times a year, not all of them were Israelites indeed.
- Many of them went up because it was ordained they should go. And the blessing of God resting upon them in providential things depended upon them doing so.
- And therefore, they all gathered together. But the great thing I want you to think about, as grace is given, is that there is a people in the midst of a people.
- We look round the world at large, and we see what is called the professing church of Christ.
- [ 4 : 52 ] Made up of many denominations, people who have either been sprinkled, confirmed, or baptized, baptized, and they professed the name of Jesus.
- And they belong to the professing church of Christ. But God looks upon that church, the professing church, with his own holy eyes.

and he discerns that in the midst of that church, there is the true church. What we may call the possessing church.

And he declares their character in the text. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

You see, dear friends, we are not to take it for granted that all chapel goers and church goers are people taught of God.

[ 6 : 10 ] There is something that must be known and felt. There is that great word to come on the right side of. And happy is the people that is in such a case who do so.

Ye must be born again. When Jesus Christ was upon earth and he went about preaching his own gospel, you will remember reading.

Jesus knew who they were that did believe on him. There were great multitudes at times, but there were a few who by the grace of God, by the blessed Spirit's teaching, did believe on him and henceforth lived their lives following on to know him and his truth.

And Jesus, as he addressed the multitudes, knew who they were. And so, the great thing is that you and I must have made clear between God in our own hearts and consciences is that we belong to the church of Christ possessing.

And if we do, we shall belong to these people in the text. I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

[ 8 : 00 ] God. And as I thought on this subject, I thought of a word that is in the book of the Revelation and it is a very solemn word to consider where godly John saw an angel and he had to rise and measure the church of God and it is said he was to leave the outer core altogether only to measure the temple of God itself in the altar and them that worship therein.

And it was given me a reed like a rod and the angel stood saying rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and them that worship therein but the outer court which is without the temple leave out and measure it not for it is given unto the Gentiles.

and now the Puritans in their writings often refer to inner court and outer court worshippers and now these people in our text are inner court worshippers when they come up to worship God they want something for their souls they want reality in their worship they want to see Jesus and see in him all their salvation and all their desire but as the Lord shall help me I will look at the subject from one or two viewpoints of it and it is said that these people in the text are unafflicted people and yet many of them by the mercy of God live their lives and have good health all the while yet they are still an afflicted people and now we must find out what is the characteristic of the affliction which comes upon them and many of you by the grace of God are not strangers to what these afflictions are and all the afflictions that may be named are those which no earthly physician can touch to bring any help or healing it needs at all times

Jehovah rophi the Lord that healeth to give them any comfort any help any hope regarding their afflicted state and you and I are learning that as we journey on we are proving none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good we are learning a man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven and now I would look at what this word afflicted means some of the characteristics of the afflictions I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people you remember our hymn writer as a hymn upon this line of things and that might help you to think upon it poor and afflicted

Lord are thine among the great unfit to shine and though the world may think it strange they would not with the world exchange you weigh that matter up in your conscience before God you hope God has begun his good work in you of which you have been singing in the hymn before the sermon began glad you are to get a little encouragement to believe it is indeed begun but you get many many changes and there are times when you hardly know what you are or where you are in things divine you have to say what am I where am I strange myself and paths appear scarce can lift a thought on high or drop one heart feeling tear and every day when you try to pray you ask for grace that you might live a right and every day at the end of it you are conscious of how much you have failed to live the life that deep down in your heart you desire to live before

[ 14 : 16 ] God and man and you are never far away from the publican in your appearing before God God be merciful to me a sinner and you are being made aware of that more and more and yet every day you wait on God for more grace and wisdom to handle life's matters wisely and that you might live the life of the righteous and that you might be made a real Christian and show in your lips and life who you belong to that you do indeed belong to God and now how is it that you are concerned like that what is it in you that produces those conflicting emotions and varying feelings be sure of this they do not arise from what you are by nature what you are by nature is described in the word of

God you will be made more and more aware of it as you older grow and that is one of the afflictions that these afflicted and poor people have to suffer and to endure the carnal mind is enmity against God and is not subject to the law of God and neither indeed can be it is what God has made you by his grace it is a new heart a new nature a new spirit that he has put within you that causes you to feel this inner conflict you see it set forth by the apostle Paul the good that I would I do not and the evil that

I would not that I do and he says oh wretched man that I am who shall deliver me from the body of this death and he says I thank God there is deliverance and there is I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord that he is the good physician and remember this when you try to pray about what you are by nature and desire in more grace and help from God what though bad is your condition and your wounds you can't endure Christ the sinner's wise physician will effect a perfect cure thy touch are still its ancient power the hand of the

Lord is not shortened that it cannot save neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear and there is only one avenue of hope and it is set forth in the text I will also leave in the midst of thee and afflicted and poor people and they shall trust in the name of the Lord and now sometimes that trust is manifested like this though I am cast out of thy sight I will look again toward thy holy temple one name writer says my soul into thy arms I cast I trust I shall be saved at last the dear man was brought down to rock bottom and you see the same kind of teaching in the dealings of

God with Job when he said though he slay me as though Job should say I cannot see at the present time any encouragement from my poor soul to hope in God yet though he slay me I will trust in him Lord increase our faith ever to do likewise I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people and now regarding these afflictions they arise from soul trouble and the Puritans tell us soul trouble is the soul of trouble if you are indeed a sinner born again if you think of the life you live before

[ 20 : 04 ] God and man you will have many searchings of heart and the things that make you feel cast down and sometimes at the ends of the earth so that you can hardly tell what you are or where you are and can only say leave not my soul destitute it is to do with your soul if you could only feel assured things were right between your soul and God how happy you would be with that knowledge but as yet you do not possess it in the fullness of it and yet you have this feeling I cannot bear the piercing thought what if my name should be left out when thou for them shalt call and now if it is indeed a piercing thought for you to consider that matter from that viewpoint if your name should be left out proved not to be recorded in the

Lamb's book of life if it is a piercing thought what is it within you that feels the piercing nature of it it is what I have already alluded to it is that new heart new nature new spirit which is wrought upon like that does not arise from what you are by nature no what you are by nature declares we will not have this man to reign over us depart from us we desire not the knowledge of thee or thy ways and so all these afflictions center in soul trouble and this is the affliction which you know every man the plague of his own heart which they begin to feel first of all when he the spirit of truth is come he shall convince the world of righteousness and of judgment to come oh do ask the lord to give you a gracious conviction of sin it is the greatest need in our denomination and life as i have told you many times you see if god should let down upon us from heaven by his blessed spirit a gracious conviction of sin it would help us to humble ourselves before god desiring to have matters made right between him and our never dying soul and if anything was not as it should be between us and our fellow creatures a gracious conviction of sin would make us solemnly aware to have those matters made right before man but it is an affliction to have an increasing conviction of sin there is a conviction of sin that arises from a natural conscience being wrought upon but as soon as one in such a case begins to be religious he loses that conviction of sin and he goes on content with being religious having a name to live he does not know what it is to be afflicted by his conviction of sin because as you journey on through life you go deeper down into a knowledge how sad our state by nature is and yet if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness and so that is one affliction of these people in the text they are afflicted by the plague of the heart which shall know every man the plague of his own heart and the longer you live the more you know of it you must not forget it was

Paul the aged who said Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief he had grown in grace to that degree and this afflicted state had been known by him so long that when he appeared before God he had to put his mouth in the dust of self abasement and tell him all the truth of sinners Lord I am the chief you may be inclined I hope you are to question it and God will not rebuke you if you do if you declare also before God of whom I am chief it is just how these afflicted people in the text often feel no sinner needed mercy more that ever sought thy face and now it must be said also regarding this conviction of sin these people in the text are afflicted under the law you may not be able to say much about what preachers sometimes set forth as a law work and yet you may be the subject of it and you realize the affliction that arises from it by the law is the knowledge of sin who but the soul that's led to know how just how holy is the law will to the cross of

Christ repair and seek salvation only there afflicted under the law made aware if thou lord should mark iniquities o lord who shall stand and they have to humble themselves before god and declare if my soul is sent to hell thy righteous law approves it well but while that acknowledgement is made before god it is a very painful experience yea it is an affliction known by all the people in the text and afflicted and poor people and then I might say they're also afflicted with a fearful heart all they are afflicted with fears as they journey on through life and are glad at times to be quieted by some fear not being lodged in their heart from heaven to allay their fears but these fears do make them to be an afflicted people they have many fears lest the good work after all they have hoped and felt is not indeed begun especially if they cannot set forth anything clear cut and definite regarding the beginning of it they have many temptations from

Satan concerning it if they have not a clear cut definite beginning to it he tells us we are weak our hope is in vain the good that we seek we ne'er shall obtain but you may not be afflicted with that particular fear it may be you have a fear as to whether Jesus Christ died for you when he died in the stead of poor sinners like you and me on Calvary's cross oh that is a fear that clutches at the heart often of these afflicted and poor people and Satan is ready to suggest that there is no help in God no hope in God for them knowing what sinners they are how can they expect there should be any hope and so he harasses dejects and dismays the people in the text and they are afflicted with the fear as to whether they have a living interest in what was done on

[ 30 : 47 ] Calvary's cross but I like to look at it as our hymn writer does when he says did Jesus die and not for me am I forbade to seek my God is there not pardon full and free proclaimed through Jesus precious blood oh poor sinner afflicted as you are you will find the word of God is sure wait on the Lord be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart wait I say on the Lord and you read in Isaiah say to them that are of a fearful heart be strong fear not he will come and save you and in the chapter where our text is lower down it says in that day it shall be said to

Jerusalem fear thou not and to Zion let not thine hands be slack blessed are all they that wait for him they shall not be ashamed that wait for me another affliction these people are the subjects of is to realize their utter inability to do good their helplessness in things divine it is it is a very painful affliction and you realize it more and more as you journey on through life you have this feeling I would do good but evil is present with me that is just what you want to do do good and you know what it is to do good you have a standard set up in your heart your conscience and you would like to live according to that standard set up but every day at the end of it you have to humble yourself before

God and confess how far far short you have come in living the life you have deep down in your heart a God given desire that you should live and it is to you an affliction as Paul said I would do good but evil is present with me and then again these people in the text are afflicted by sometimes having to walk in darkness and have no light a very painful path it is to go along to call to remembrance bygone experiences when you could say as Job does when the candle shone round about your head and by his light you walk through darksome paths but now you are in the dark all together as regards matters between your soul and

God you were like the church in the Psalms where she says we cannot see our signs zeal extinguished to a spark life is very low all my evidence is dark and good works I've none to show oh that is an affliction known and felt by the people in the text and very painful it is if you have to walk therein for quite a while trust trust in the name of the

Lord and stay upon his God because in this afflicted state of darkness of mind in your soul's feelings you will find weeping may endure for the night but joy cometh in the morning unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness though dark be my way since he is my guide tis mine to obey and his to provide another affliction I would just hint at and that is our everyday cares the duties and difficulties of everyday life as you have to live every day in the midst of them you might not think that is an affliction and yet you being who you are a sinner born again you find that everyday at the end of it you have so often failed in all that you were concerned to be and to do during the day and you have left undone many things you purpose to do and those you have done you have to confess how much you have failed in doing them as you desired to do it then there is what the apostle

[ 37 : 53 ] Paul called a thorn in the flesh and that may be in your everyday life and what did Paul say he asked God to take it away but God said no no I cannot do that what I designed to do is that you shall learn my grace is sufficient for thee my strength is made perfect in weakness but a thorn in the flesh is one of the afflictions of these afflicted and poor people and it causes them to say many times a day Lord help me O Lord I am oppressed undertake for me these things come into our lives and we cannot eradicate them but

God has declared his grace is all sufficient and his strength is made perfect in weakness much might be said about these afflictions I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people let us look at that word poor it is the afflictions which have made them to be poor people so that they can never rise above eat trade and

They have to confess to God they have no religion at all, only as he in his great mercy works it in their lips and lives and helps them by his grace to work it out as they journey on through life.

Oh how often they have to say, leave not my soul destitute, they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

And it is declared, I read it to you, he will regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer.

[ 43 : 53 ] And as I come toward the Amen, let us look at this, they shall trust in the name of the Lord. And I want you to think of this, and you can think of it, as grace is given as you journey on through life.

Whatever your case as a poor sinner may be, whatever your circumstances are, however complicated as you journey on through life, you will always find the Lord bears a name that will encourage you regarding your case or whatever your circumstances may be.

He is Jehovah Rophi, the Lord which healeth. You know also, he is Jehovah Jireh, the Lord will provide.

He is also Jehovah Shama, which means the Lord send peace. And he can, and he will give you peace in the most difficult circumstances, so that you can be still and know that he is God, and that all your times are in his hand and all events at his command.

They shall trust in the name of the Lord. Most of all, his name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

[ 45 : 41 ] And what is it? To trust in him. The name of the Lord. Jesus Christ. The same. Yesterday and today and forever.

Oh, it is to trust in his finished work. To think of the life he lived and the death he died, and that when he died he vanquished death by dying.

To catch as it were, I say this with great reverence, to catch as it were the echo of what he said on Calvary's cross, it is finished.

It is finished, cried the Lord, in his dying minute. Holy Ghost, repeat the word, full salvations in it.

They shall trust in the name of the Lord. They shall ever declare, My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

[ 46 : 51 ] I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name. And oh, it means to trust in his precious, sin-atoning blood.

To take courage in God, seeing Jesus' blood through earth and skies, mercy eternal, mercy cries.

And it means to trust in him, as Jehovah Sidkenu, the Lord our righteousness. Yes, and it means to trust in his providential care.

I said his name is Jehovah Jireh. The Lord will provide. And even if you scrape the bottom of the barrel and find only a handful of meal to do for today, you can scrape it again tomorrow and you will find another handful there.

For the word of the Lord is casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.

[ 48 : 09 ] I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.

And there is this viewpoint of trusting in the name of the Lord. To remember in the life that Jesus lived, in all our afflictions, he was afflicted.

And there is no affliction that you can be the subject of. But what if you are helped to trust in the name of the Lord and seek his divine aid and his help regarding it, you will find he is a savior of quick understanding.

this physician understandeth all disorders of the soul and no payment he demandeth when he makes the wounded whole.

Think of the life that Jesus lived as verily man. In all our afflictions he was afflicted, I have said. Think how he was afflicted by man.

[ 49 : 33 ] Marvel not if the world hate you. But know this, it hated me before it hated you.

He was afflicted by hell itself. All the machinery of hell was set in motion against Jesus Christ as verily man when he lived his wonderful life upon the earth.

he was tempted forty days and nights in the wilderness when Jesus conquered Satan and it says he left him for a season which means there were other seasons when he was tempted of which the word of God gives us no details but do not be overcast down because you are sometimes so tempted and tried but remember what though Satan's strong temptations vex and tease you day by day and your sinful inclinations often fill you with dismay thou shalt conquer through the Lamb's redeeming blood they should trust in the name of the Lord they trust in his precious blood the blood of Jesus Christ

God's Son cleanseth us from all sin and remember too Jesus Christ was afflicted by the world marvel not if the world hate you I have quoted but know this it hated me before it hated you and there he was afflicted by the hidings of his father's face what an affliction it was when the weight of the whole church of Christ's guilt came upon him the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all and he said my God my God why hast thou forsaken me and he was afflicted by the law of God that is to say the law of God exacted from him as verily man every jot and tittle of what was due that poor sinners might be made meat for the inheritance of the saints in light and the gospel be preached which declares

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone which believeth oh that you and I might be found amongst these afflicted and poor people they may be they will be despised by the so called religious world at large yet professing to belong to the church of Christ but God looks upon those in the midst whom he is leading into his truth in whom the good work is begun and being carried on and the day is to come when the church of Christ will be complete and these afflicted and poor people will be afflicted and poor no more but they will be rich to all the intents of bliss and dwell forever with the

[ 53 : 47 ] Lord with them numbered may we be now and in eternity Amen