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News of the Fellowship

We enjoyed a blessed time of fellowship at our church fellowship meal held at the Glyn Clydach Hotel on Saturday 29th November. We were encouraged by the largest number since we began some years ago. It was good to have friends with us from Margam Road Evangelical Church. Rev. Dafydd Morris spoke on food from the Bible, seeing in it an illustration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He drew attention to the process whereby grain becomes bread and highlighted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent gracious food that we are able to intake. This year's meal, God willing, will be held on the corresponding Saturday (28th November).

On the Lord's Day 14th December, Pastor preached at Wattisham in Suffolk. In his absence we were ably served by the Rev. Robert Cordle of Harrold and Carlton in Bedfordshire. Mr Cordle also serves on the Bible League Trust. The Bible League was founded on 3rd May 1892, just after the death of C. H. Spurgeon to encourage believing and reverent Bible study, and to resist attacks made upon the inspiration, inerrancy and sufficiency of God's Word. On that Lord's Day afternoon a full Chapel of parents and friends enjoyed an open Sunday School Carol service with the children sharing some of the things they had learned over the year. A tea was served afterwards in the school room. We are mindful of the sacrificial labours of those who serve the Lord in this way. We pray that many children might come to the Lord.

On Thursday evening 18th December a group of volunteers from the Church led a Carol service in the nursing home next door. We sang well known hymns and Mr Pfeiffer preached from Luke 2:10, "fear not". In our natural state in this world we have much to fear. We fear sin, men, Satan, the thought of dying and hell; but in Christ this fear is wonderfully dispelled. It is good to see a lady attending the church as a result of our contact with the home. We should continue to pray for the staff and the residents. After the brief service we visited Mr & Mrs Graham Edwards, Mr & Mrs Lyn Hopkins and Mr & Mrs Des Williams, singing further hymns.

On the following Saturday our annual Sunday School Christmas party was held with the usual games and food.

We had a lovely time at our after church fellowship on the Lord's Day (21st). Once again the "two Dons" sang for us. It is good to sing well known hymns and to practice lesser known ones.

We continue to pray that the 3,000 calendars distributed in the locality will be blessed to many. This year we posted a number of new areas. New estates seem to be springing up. Many hands in this venture make light work. God by His Spirit can take the word and apply it to the heart.

We were thankful that the Rev. Dafydd Morris could step in on Thursday 30th (prayer meeting) for our Pastor who was suffering from a sore throat.

On the first Lord's Day of 2009 the Pastor preached in the morning from 2 Thessalonians 2:3 stressing that a period of "falling away" will precede the coming of the Anti-Christ. We look for and pray for revival but also must prepare for trying times. No country seems to illustrate this verse better than our own country.

On the first prayer meeting of the year Mr Pfeiffer took John 21 and the Lord's words to Peter on the shore of Galilee. He drew attention to 3 Cs: Christ has cognisance, controls the future and He commands the future.

The chapel building was full for the visit of the Rev. Richard Clarke of Beacon Park Baptist, Plymouth for our Good Friday evening service, with extra seats needing to be put out. Mr Clarke has been used, under God, to found the fellowship in that area of Plymouth. He was formerly a member of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London where Dr Peter Masters is Pastor. A number of younger folk have been converted there. He spoke of the Lord Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane.

We look forward to the publication of the new hymn book "Christian Worship" in the summer. We pray that this book will help to ensure reverential worship for the future generation in the light of the disappearance of Christian Hymns (no longer printed).

We continue to remember those struggling with illness including Mr Jim Cumming, Mrs Avril Edwards, Mr Lyn Hopkins, Mrs Jane Hughes and Mr & Mrs Rowlands

Diary

Lord's Days:

June

7th	–	Pastor	–	Communion - p.m
14th	–	Pastor		
21st	–	Rev. Colin Jones	–	Communion -a.m
28th	–	Pastor		

July

5th	–	Pastor	–	Communion - p.m
12th	–	Pastor		
19th	–	Pastor	–	Communion - a.m
26th	–	Pastor		

August

2nd	–	Rev. R. B. Higham	–	Communion - p.m
9th	–	Rev. M. Harris (Cheltenham)		
16th	–	Rev. A. McNabb (Stafford)		
23rd	–	Pastor	–	Communion - a.m
30th	–	Pastor		

Dates to note:

Friday 5th June, Barbeque, Manse Lawn, All welcome

Friday 12th June, 7.30pm, Bible League Preaching Service, Rev. J. P. Thackway, Holywell

Friday 28th August, Church Fellowship Trip

Pastor's engagements:

Friday 19th June, Preaching, Orange St., London

Lord's Day 21st June, Preaching, Crosshands

Holidays, Friday 31st July - Monday 17th August

Expository Thoughts on Mark 9:38-50

J.C. Ryle

We see in these verses, the mind of Christ on the great subject of TOLERATION in religion. The apostle John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw a man using your name to cast out demons, but we told him to stop because he isn't one of our group."

The man was doing a good work without doubt. He was warring on the same side as the apostles, beyond question. But this did not satisfy John. He did not work in the company of the apostles. He did not fight in line with them. And therefore John had opposed him. But let us hear now what the great Head of the church decides! "Don't stop him!" Jesus said. "No one who performs miracles in my name will soon be able to speak evil of me. Anyone who is not against us is for us."

Here is a golden rule indeed, and one that human nature severely needs, and has too often forgotten. Men of all branches of Christ's Church are apt to think that no good can be done in the world, unless it is done by their own party and denomination. They are so narrow-minded, that they cannot conceive the possibility of working on any other pattern but that which they follow. They make an idol of their own peculiar ecclesiastical machinery, and can see no merit in any other. They are like him who cried when Eldad and Medad prophesied in the camp, "Moses, my master, make them stop!" (Num. 11:28.)

To this intolerant spirit we owe some of the blackest pages of Church history. Christians have repeatedly persecuted Christians for no better reason than that which is here given by John. They have practically proclaimed to their brethren, "you shall either follow us, or not work for Christ at all."

Let us be on our guard against this feeling. It is only too near the surface of all our hearts. Let us study to realize that liberal, tolerant spirit which Jesus here recommends, and be thankful for good works wheresoever and by whoever done. Let us beware of the slightest inclination to stop and check others, merely because they do not choose to adopt our plans, or work by our side. We may think our fellow Christians mistaken in some points. We may fancy that more would be done for Christ, if they would join us, and if all worked in the same way. We may see many evils arising from religious dissensions and divisions. But all this must not prevent us rejoicing if the works of the devil are destroyed and souls are saved.

Is our neighbor warring against Satan? Is he really trying to labor for Christ? This is the grand question. Better a thousand times that the work should be done by other hands than not done at all. Happy is he who knows something of the spirit of Moses, when he said, "I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them all!" and of Paul, when he says, "If Christ is preached, I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice." (Num. 11:29; Phil. 1:18.)

We see, for another thing, in these verses, the need of giving up anything that stands between us and the salvation of our souls. The "hand" and the "foot" are to be cut off, and the "eye" to be plucked out, if they are occasions of falling. The things that are dear to us as eye, foot, or hand, are to be cast off and given up if they injure our souls, whatever pain the sacrifice may cost us.

This is a rule that sounds stern and harsh at first sight. But our loving Master did not give the rule without cause. Compliance with it is absolutely necessary, since neglect of it is the sure way to hell.

Our bodily senses are the channels through which many of our most formidable temptations approach us. Our bodily members are ready instruments of evil, but slow to that which is good. The eye, the hand, and the foot are good servants, when under right direction. But they need daily watching, lest they lead us into sin.

Let us resolve by God's grace to make a practical use of our Lord's solemn injunction in this place. Let us regard it as the advice of a wise physician, the counsel of a tender father, the warning of a faithful friend. However men may ridicule us for our strictness and preciseness, let us habitually "crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts." Let us deny ourselves any enjoyment, rather than incur peril of sinning against God. Let us walk in Job's steps--he says, "I made a covenant with my eyes." (Job 31:1.) Let us remember Paul--he says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast away." (1 Cor. 9:27.)

We see, in the last place, in these verses, the reality, awfulness, and eternity of future punishment. Three times the Lord Jesus speaks of "hell." Three times He mentions the "worm that never dies." Three times He says that "the fire is not quenched."

These are dreadful expressions. They call for reflection rather than exposition. They should be pondered, considered, and remembered by all professing Christians. It matters little whether we regard them as figurative and emblematic. If they are so, one thing at least is very clear. The worm and the fire are emblems of real things. There is a real hell, and that hell is eternal.

There is no mercy in keeping back from men the subject of hell. Fearful and tremendous as it is, it ought to be pressed on all, as one of the great truths of

Christianity. Our loving Savior speaks frequently of it. The apostle John, in the book of Revelation, often describes it. The servants of God in these days must not be ashamed of confessing their belief in it. Were there no boundless mercy in Christ for all that believe in Him, we might well shrink from the dreadful topic. Were there no precious blood of Christ able to cleanse away all sin, we might well keep silence about the wrath to come. But there is mercy for all who ask in Christ's name. There is a fountain open for all sin. Let us then boldly and unhesitatingly maintain that there is a hell, and beseech men to flee from it, before it be too late. "Knowing the terrors of the Lord," the worm, and the fire, let us "persuade men." (2 Cor. 5:11.) It is not possible to say too much about Christ. But it is quite possible to say too little about hell.

Let the concluding words of our Lord ring in our ears, as we leave the passage--"Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another." Let us make sure that we have in our hearts the saving grace of the Holy Spirit, sanctifying, purifying, preserving from corruption, our whole inward man. Let us watch the grace given to us with daily watchfulness, and pray to be kept from carelessness and sin, lest we be overtaken in faults, bring misery on our consciences, and discredit on our profession. Above all let us live in peace one with another, not seeking great things, or striving for the pre-eminence, but clothed with humility, and loving all who love Christ in sincerity. These seem simple things. But in attending to them is great reward.

Step, Bench, Sparrow and Stile

More than half a century ago, a very small girl stood on a step outside a French Window. She was miserable.

“Frog” was lost! Yes, “Frog,” the tiny, green, glass ornament that she loved to carry in her left fist, was missing. She had looked everywhere, in house and garden - but, no “Frog”!

What was to be done?

Suddenly, she remembered God.

Oh, of course! HE was so great, so good. HE would help.

Seven words were enough: “Please, God, help me to find ‘Frog’”.

He did. The little legs walked down three steps and turned right. The wondering child found herself crouching down, and her fingers closed over - yes, it was “Frog”!

About a year later, that little lass went to Bible Class. In the meantime, she had again been miserable, in fact she was very miserable. This time, it wasn’t “Frog” that was lost.

“I’m all nasty inside” she might have tried to explain, “I’m all horrid”!

And, she did want, so much, to belong to the Good Shepherd.

So now, sitting on a bench at that Bible Class, her back ached and her legs ached, but what did that matter? She gazed at the Leader’s sweet face and thought that Jesus must have looked like that.

But she did more than gaze, she listened. How, could her sin be forgiven, how could she become one of the Good Shepherd’s flock?

As she sat on that bench, she learnt the answers. Oh wonderful Saviour, wonderful Shepherd, who gave His life for the sheep! He found her and she was His forever!

The years passed. The Way of the Cross was no easy way. One summer Saturday, the now grown up lass cycled out into the country. Wheeling the bicycle up a very steep hill, she nearly collided with a hen sparrow.

Having reached to top of the hill, she paused, leaned the bicycle on a stile and pulled out a small Bible from her pocket.

“Lord, I don’t know how to face going back...please speak to me”. She opened the Bible and looked at the page.

“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows”.

With a thankful sigh, the cyclist put her Bible back into her pocket. “I can go back on that”.

She did.

Step, bench, sparrow and stile - all milestones in my spiritual life.

What about you?

A RELIGIOUS QUERY ANSWERED
by J. C. VOS.

QUESTION: If a person's sins – past, present and future sins – are all forgiven when he is justified, then why should a Christian daily confess sin and pray for forgiveness, throughout his life?

ANSWER: This problem has puzzled many Christians. The key to its solution lies in the distinction between justification and adoption. Justification and adoption, although simultaneous and inseparable, are nevertheless two distinct acts of God, and they involve two distinct relationships between the believer and God.

In justification, God is our Judge; in adoption, God is our Father. Justification makes us citizens of God's Kingdom; adoption makes us members of God's family. Justification is a judicial act, which concerns the legal penalty of sin and the legal requirement of absolute righteousness. Adoption is a matter of personal relationship, which concerns our position as children in God's family, and our enjoyment of the light of his countenance. Justification, on the ground of the blood and righteousness of Christ, settles for all eternity the question of the Christian's standing in relation to the law of God. In justification God declares, once and forever, that the penalty of the law has been satisfied, and that by reason of the imputed righteousness of Christ, the Christian is positively and absolutely righteous in God's sight. This is done once for all; it never need nor can be repeated. To all eternity, there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Justification is a permanent, final transaction.

Adoption, on the other hand, concerns the relation of the Christian to God as his heavenly Father. The penalty of the law has been satisfied, and the righteousness demanded by the law has been imputed. All

that is finished business. But by reason of his continuing sinful nature the Christian still daily sins against God in word, thought and deed. These daily sins cannot bring the Christian into condemnation. They cannot take away his permanent justification. They cannot have the slightest effect on his eternal safety. But they can and do displease God, the Christian's heavenly Father. They are violations of the holiness of the family of God.

If these daily sins are not promptly repented of and confessed, they will have serious consequences in the believer's life. True, they will not take away his justification or his eternal salvation. But they will have serious consequences in the present life. They will harden the believer's own conscience, grieve the Holy Spirit, and bring God's chastening upon the Christian in the form of suffering of some kind. They will also destroy the believer's present usefulness in Christian service. And they will cast a deep gloom upon his soul, as the light of God's countenance is withdrawn. Read Psalm 32 and see how miserable David felt during the interval between his great sin and his confession of that sin. But if David had died during the interval, he would instantly have gone to heaven, for he was a justified man. The chastening which God visits upon his sinning children has absolutely nothing to do with the judicial punishment of sin. As far as the judicial penalty of sin is concerned, the believer has already had the sentence of death executed upon him in the person of his representative, the Lord Jesus Christ, on the cross of Calvary. God's chastening of his children is not punishment but discipline. It proceeds not from his righteous wrath, but from his fatherly love and compassion. Its purpose is not to satisfy the righteous demands of the law, but to bring erring children back to a spiritual state.

The Christian's daily repentance and confession of sin concerns exclusively this relation to God as Father. It has nothing to do with the judicial guilt and penalty of sin, which is settled forever by justification. Rather, it is necessary in order that right relations may exist within the family of God. When the believer truly repents and confesses, as David did, the light of God's countenance will be restored to his soul. In short, the believer should daily repent and confess his sins, not because of any danger of eternal damnation, but because he has offended his heavenly Father, and needs to have his consciousness of the Father's favour restored.

Of the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath.

**From Henry Scudder's
"The Christian's Daily Walk"**

On the Sabbath, or Lord's day, you must remember to keep it holy, according to the commandment, Exod. xx. 8—11. xxxv. 2, 3. For this cause consider,

(1.) The divine institution of the Lord's day, or Christian Sabbath.

First, Put a difference between this and the other six days, even as you put a difference between the bread and wine in the sacrament, and that which is for common use. And that because it is set apart for holy use, by divine institution. For, as the seventh day, from the beginning of the creation, until the day of Christ's blessed resurrection, so our Lord's day, which is the day of the resurrection, is by divine institution moral. The commandment to keep a holy rest upon the seventh day, after the six days of work (which is the substance of the fourth commandment) remained the same: and this Adam (no doubt by the instinct of uncorrupted nature, which desireth a time

for God's honour and solemn worship) he knowing that God finished the creation in six days, and rested on the seventh, would have observed; yet it was requisite that the particular day should be by institution, for natural reason could not certainly tell him which day. The Lord of the Sabbath therefore limited it to the seventh from the creation, until Christ's resurrection, and then removed it to the day we keep, which is the first.

Now it appears, that it was the will of our Lord and Saviour Christ, that we should, since his resurrection, keep, for our Sabbath, that first day of the week; forasmuch as he arose on that day, and appeared divers times on this our Lord's day to his disciples before his ascension: and did on this day, being the day of Pentecost, fill his disciples with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, they being assembled together; all which giveth a pre-eminence to this day, and a probability to the point.

But inasmuch as the apostles, who followed Christ, and delivered nothing but what they received from Christ, did observe this day as a sabbath, what can this argue but a divine institution of this day? The apostle Paul might have chosen any other day for the people to assemble to hear the word, and receive the sacrament: but they assembled to receive the sacrament, and to hear the word, upon the first day of the week, which is our Lord's day. Now the approved practice of the apostles, and of the church with them, recorded in scripture, carrieth with it the force of a precept.

Moreover, the Spirit of God honoureth this day with the title of the Lord's day, as he doth the communion with the title of the Supper of the Lord. What doth this argue but as they both have reference to Christ, so they are both appointed by Christ? The Spirit of Christ knew the mind of Christ, who thus named this day.

(2.) Directions for-the religious observance of the Lord's day.

Secondly, Being convinced of the holiness of this day (the better to keep it holy when it cometh) you must,

1. On the week day before the sabbath, or Lord's day, remember it, to the end that none of your worldly business be left undone, or put off till then; especially upon Saturday, you must prepare for it. Then you must put an end to the works of your calling; and do whatsoever may be well done beforehand, to prevent bodily labour even in your necessary actions, that, when the day cometh, you may have less occasion of worldly thoughts, less encumbrance and distractions; and may be more free, both in body and mind, for spiritual exercises.

2. You yourself, and, as much as in you lieth, all under your authority, must rest upon this day, the space of the whole day of four-and-twenty hours, from all manner of works, except those which have true reference to the present day's works of piety, mercy, and true necessity, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasures, nor speaking your own words.

3. It is not enough that you observe this day as a rest, but you must keep a holy rest. Which that you may do, you must, on your awaking in the morning, make a difference between it and other days, not thinking on any worldly business more than will serve for a general providence, to preserve you from great hurt or loss. Both in your lying awake, and rising in the morning, make use of the former directions, showing you how to awake and rise with God. Rise early, if it will consist with your health, and not hinder your fitness for spiritual exercises through drowsiness afterward, that you may show forth God's loving-kindness in the morning. Double your devotions on the Lord's day, as the Jews did their morning

and evening sacrifice on the sabbath day. Prepare yourself for the public holy services by reading, by meditation, and by putting away all filthiness; that is, repenting of every sin, and casting away the superfluity of naughtiness; that is, let no sin be allowed or suffered to reign in you. Then pray for yourself, and for the minister, that God would give him a mouth to speak, and you a heart to hear, as you both ought to do. All this, before you shall assemble for public worship. Being thus prepared, bring your family with you to the church. Join with the minister and congregation. Set yourself as in the special presence of God, following the example of good Cornelius, with all reverence attending and consenting; saying Amen with understanding, faith, and affection, to the prayers uttered by the minister; believing and obeying, whatsoever is by him commanded you from God. Afterward, by meditation, and by conference; and if you have opportunity, by repetitions, call to mind, and wisely and firmly lay up in your heart what you have learned. The like care must be had before, at, and after, the evening exercise.

The Nature and Design of Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, &c.

1. If baptism be administered, stay, and attend to it, (1.) To honour that holy ordinance with the greater solemnity. (2.) And in charity to the persons to be baptised, joining with the congregation in hearty prayer for them, and in a joyful receiving them into the communion of the visible church. (3.) Also in respect of yourself. For hereby you may call to mind your own baptism, in which you did put on Christ, which also doth lively represent the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, together with your crucifying the affections and lusts, being dead and buried with him unto sin, and rising with him to newness of

life, and to hope of glory; understanding clearly that the blood and Spirit of Christ, signified by water, doth cleanse you from the guilt and dominion of sin to your justification and sanctification. Remembering, moreover, that, by way of sealing, your baptism did in particular exhibit and apply to you that believe, Christ with all the benefits of the covenant of grace ratified in his blood: minding you also of this, that it doth not only seal God's promises of forgiveness, grace, and salvation to you; but that also it sealeth and bindeth you to the performance of your promise, and vow of faith and obedience, which is the branch of the covenant to be performed, according as was professed, on your part.

Recourse to your baptism is an excellent strengthener of your weak faith, and an occasion of renewing of your vow, you having broken it: and oi resisting temptations, considering that they are against your promise and vow in baptism.

Directions for the right attendance on the Lord's supper.

2. When there is a communion, receive it as oft as, without interrupting the order of the church, you may. But be careful to receive it worthily.

It is not enough that you be born within the covenant, and that you have been baptized; but you must have knowledge of the nature of the sacrament of the Lord's supper; both that it is of divine institution, and that it is a sign and seal of the righteousness of faith, signifying to you by the breaking and giving of the bread, and by pouring out and delivering the wine, the meritorious sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom the covenant of grace is established ; presenting also, and sealing unto you by the elements of bread and wine, the very body and blood of Christ, with all the benefits of the new covenant, of

which you receive indeed livery and seizin in the act of receiving by faith, whereby you also grow into a nearer union with Christ your head, and communion with all his members your brethren.

Besides, there must be a special preparation by examining yourself, and renewing your peace with God before you receive, according to the directions before given. Also make your peace, at least be at peace, and in charity with your neighbour, by a hearty acknowledging your fault so far as is fit, and making recompense, if you have done him wrong; and by forgiving, and forbearing revenge, if he hath done you wrong.

In the act of administering and receiving, join in confession and prayers, and attend to the actions of the minister when he breaketh the bread, poureth out the wine, and by blessing setteth it apart for holy use; by faith behold Christ, in representation, wounded, bleeding, and crucified before your eyes for you; looking upon him whom your sins condemned and pierced to the death, rather than his accusers, and those which nailed him to the cross; who, though malicious, were but instruments of that punishment which God, with other tokens of his wrath, did execute upon him (though in himself a Lamb without spot) justly for your sin, he being your surety.

This looking upon him whom you have pierced, should partly dissolve you into a holy grief for sin : but chiefly (considering that by this his passion he hath made full satisfaction for you, and also seeing what blessings God and Christ himself, by the hand of his minister, giving Christ's body and blood sacramentally, do signify and seal unto you,) it should raise your heart to a holy admiration of the love of God and of Christ, and it should excite you, in the very act of taking the bread and wine, to a

reverend and thankful receiving of this his body and blood by faith, discerning the Lord's body ; gathering assurance hereby that now all enmity between God and you is done away, if you are believers indeed; and that you by this, as by spiritual food for life, shall grow up in him, with the rest of his mystical body, unto everlasting life.

1. After that you have received (until you be to join in public praise and prayers) affect your heart with joy and thankfulness in the assurance of the pardon of all your sins, and of salvation by Christ; and that more than if you, being a bankrupt, should receive an acquittance sealed of the release of all your debts, and with it a will and testament wherein you should have a legacy of no less than a kingdom, sealed with such a seal as giveth clear proof of the fidelity, ability, and death of the testator; or than if, having been a traitor, you shall receive a free and full pardon from the king, sealed with his own seal, together with an assurance that he hath adopted you to be his child, to be married to his son, the heir of the crown. This is your case, when by faith you receive the bread and wine, the body and blood of the Lord. Think thus, therefore, with joy and rejoicing in God: Oh ! how happy am I in Christ my Saviour ! God, who hath given him to death for me, and also given him to me, how shall he not with him freely give me all things? Even whatsoever may pertain to life, godliness, and glory? Who shall lay any thing to my charge? Who, or what can separate me from the love of Christ? &c.

2. Resolve withal upon a constant 'and an unfeigned endeavour to perform all duties becoming one thus acquitted, thus redeemed, pardoned, and advanced; and this in token of thankfulness; even to keep the covenant required to be performed on your part; undoubtedly expecting whatever God hath covenanted and sealed on his part.

3. Join in public praise and prayer heartily, and in a liberal contribution to the poor, if there be a collection.

4. After the sacrament, if you feel your faith strengthened, and your soul comforted, nourish it with all thankfulness.

If not, yet, if your conscience can witness that you endeavoured to prepare as you ought, and to receive as you ought, be not discouraged, but wait for strength and comfort in due time. We do not always feel the benefit of bodily food presently, but stirring of humours and sense of disease is sometimes rather occasioned; yet in the end being well digested, it strengtheneth; so it is often with spiritual food, corruption may stir, and temptations may arise, more upon the receiving than before; especially since Satan, if it be but to vex a tender-hearted Christian, will hereupon take occasion to tempt with more violence: but if you resist these, and stand resolved to obey, and to rely upon God's mercy in Christ, this is rather a sign of receiving worthily; so long as your desires and resolutions are strengthened, and you thereby are made more carefully to stand upon your watch. Endeavour in this case to digest this spiritual food by farther meditation, improving that strength you have, praying for more strength, remembering the commandment, which biddeth you to be strong; and you shall be strengthened.

5. If you find yourself worse indeed, or do feel God's heavy hand in a special manner upon you, following upon your receiving, and your conscience can witness truly that you came not prepared, or that you did wilfully and carelessly fill in such or such a particular in receiving, it is evident you did receive unworthily. In which case you must heartily bewail your sin, confess it to God; ask, and believe that he will pardon it, through Christ Jesus, upon your sincere faith and repentance, and

take heed that you offend not in that kind another time.

(3.) Upon the Lord's day you must likewise be ready to visit and relieve the distressed.

Take some time this day to look into your past life, and chiefly to your walking with God the last week, as being freshest in memory, and be sure to let no old scores of sin remain between God and you.

Last of all, on every opportunity, take good time to consider God's works; what they are in themselves, what they are against the wicked, what they are to the church, and to yourself and to yours. And, in particular, take occasion from the day itself, to think fruitfully of the creation, of your redemption, sanctification, and of your eternal rest and glory to come. For God, in his holy wisdom, hath set such a divine mark upon this our Lord's day, that at once it doth mind us of the greatest works of God, which either conduce to his glory, or his church's good. As, of the creation of the world in six days, he rested the seventh, which specially is attributed to the Father. And of man's redemption by Christ, of whose resurrection this day is a remembrance, which is specially attributed to the Son. Also of our sanctification by the Spirit, for that the observance of the sabbath is a sign and means of holiness, which work is specially attributed to the Holy Ghost. Lastly, of your and the church's glorification, which shall be the joint work of the blessed Trinity, when we shall cease from all our works', and shall rest, and be glorious with the same glory which our head Christ hath with the Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen. Do all these with delight; raising up yourself hereby to a greater measure of holiness and heavenly mindedness.

(4.) Motives to keep holy the Lord's day.

Do all this the rather, because there is not a clearer sign to distinguish you from one that is profane, than this, of conscientiously keeping holy the Lord's day. Neither is there any ordinary means of gaining strength and growth of grace in the inward man like this, of due observing the sabbath. For this is God's great mart or fair-day for the soul, on which you may buy of Christ wine, milk, bread, marrow and fatness, gold, white raiment, eye salve,—even all things which are necessary, and which will satisfy, and cause the soul to live. It is the special day of proclaiming and sealing of pardons to penitent sinners. It is God's special day of publishing and sealing your patent of eternal life. It is a blessed day, sanctified for all these blessed purposes.

Now, lest this so strict observance of the Lord's day in spending the whole day in holy meditation, holy exercises, and works of mercy, excepting only necessary repasts, should be thought, as it is by some, to be merely Jewish, or only the private opinion of some zealots, more nice than wise,—know, that as the fourth commandment is of moral obligation, there is the same reason for the strict observance of it, as any other divine precept, as against idolatry, murder, fornication, &c. And the taking away of the morality of the fourth commandment, and unloosing the conscience from the immediate bonds of God's command to observe a day for his solemn worship, doth overthrow true religion, and the power of godliness, and opens a wide gap to atheism, profaneness, and all licentiousness; as daily experience proves in those persons and places, by whom, and where, the Lord's day is not holly and duly observed.

The epilogue: Desiring "...the crumbs..."

Encouraging those gathered at a recent prayer meeting, our Pastor (Neil Pfeiffer) drew attention to the words uttered by a woman from Canaan, "...Lord, help me." (Matthew 15:25) Initially this appears an unrequited prayer, made as it was in the face of both the seeming abject indifference of our Lord, and the adverse rebuttal of His disciples.

Despite this formidable affront, she was altogether undeterred. And why? Because she recognised Jesus Christ was the only hope for her bedevilled daughter! How was it that this heathen Gentile so recognised the Lord, and had come to Jesus with her need? There is but one answer, the drawing power of the God of all Grace (John 6:44).

How wonderful this God given gift of revelation, this spiritual insight, is! Once impressed upon the heart and mind, there is absolutely nothing that is able to disannul the impact or dissuade from its truth. But notice, even when her most pitiful and heart rending plea was made, it was met by a remark which, at least on the face of it, seemed a most devastating insult.

Yet, as we read on, it is evident that our Lord's reference to "dogs", (Matthew 15:26), was not intended to offend, but calculated to draw forth the vitality of her undaunted and undiminished God given faith. Surely this is proved by her response, "...Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." (Verse 27)

With this amazing reply, she respectfully points out that the masters '*pet dogs*', (so informs the original word), are most privileged. At "...their master's table", do they not partake of the very finest? This reminds us of Lazarus the beggar, who "desired" merely the "crumbs" from the feasting of the rich man. (Luke 16:21) Most assuredly then, these crumbs are the *very best* of crumbs! Now it is at this very point that our Lord, quite remarkably, adulates His eager suppliant and grants her petition.

Thank God for this demonstration of His infinite Grace. This woman, not being of Israel, was altogether unworthy. This bespeaks the unworthiness that is the plight of every poor hell deserving sinner! But oh, wonder of wonders, Divine Grace does not depend upon worthiness, for the Grace of God is that divine favour that may be imparted to, and conferred upon, the most disreputable, undeserving and unrighteous soul.

Now, with all due reverence in mind, is it not plain that a mere 'crumb' of Grace that falls from our Heavenly Master is of inestimable worth. As we ponder this, we must recognise this great truth, namely that *the very least provision of God is sufficient to meet the greatest need!* And what is the greatest need? Well, note with care the immediacy of the context. The woman of Canaan was deeply concerned not for herself, but for one so near and dear to her heart, her daughter, who was enslaved and "vexed" by the powers of darkness and gross evil.

At this present time there are so many, (are there not?), so near and dear to *our* hearts, “fast bound in sin and natures night”. What then is the imperative? Surely it is a must that the prayer, which this mother of Canaan prayed, should become our prayer too! Beloved in Christ Jesus, in this our day there is great need! Again, (as we were reminded recently), surely this cry is for “such a time as this”! So then, we should be contented with nothing greater, yes I say, *‘nothing greater’*, than that the Divine ‘crumbs’ fall from the Masters table! Oh blessed crumbs!

Forgive Lord this meagre aspiration,
Perhaps greater I should Thee implore,
But only a crumb was sufficient for one
Who receiving needed no more!

O Lord, in asking little, I only ask as she,
As that mother in Canaan so long ago;
So I pray as she prayed, “Lord, help me”!
For with her I would covet no more.

Sufficient Lord, one gracious morsel,
To fall from Thy bounteous store;
Lord, for only one crumb would I travail,
And receiving would need no more!

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