

AN ADDRESS

delivered by

J. S. G.,

on

LORD'S DAY EVENING,

1st., December, 1929,

in

LYMINGTON HALL,

West End Lane,
West Hampstead, N.W..

--o)0(o--

Scriptures Read:-

Exodus, Ch. 15, Ver. 23 - 27.

Romans, Ch. 6, Ver. 1 - 23.

--o)0(o--

◀

Any person that reads the Bible at all carefully can at once notice that there is a great change when you come to chapter six. In the first chapters you have unfolded in a marvellous manner, the Grace of God. The next subject that is taken up in chapters six, seven and eight (these three, they go together) is really what we might call, the "equipment" of every individual christian, so that he can be for God upon earth. A person that is brought to believe in the gospel, he is not only - through grace - occupied with the prospect in front of him, but he has received present equipment so that he can live in this world for the Lord. Now of course, I have at once to own that, alas!, if we take the conduct, the lives of christians - well - there is everything to humble us. But we can never go by that which we see; and no matter what we see, it does not alter the truth of God as it is unfolded in His word. I might perhaps state that the condition of things is largely brought about because this part of the epistle to the Romans is not understood. You might say:- "Well, you say it is not understood". Well, I have travelled a little about the world and I have come into contact with what you might call every kind of christian and know something of different christians; and the same thing is true. The sixth, seventh and eighth chapters of Romans are a puzzle to most. I remember once returning from America and I was in Staffordshire and I started to give some addresses on the Epistle to the Romans. I went through to the 11th. verse of the fifth chapter. I then announced that the next time I would take the second half of the fifth chapter. I noticed a little smile amongst some and so I asked a person afterwards:- "what were you smiling at"? "Because you announced that you were going to give an address on the second half of the 5th. of Romans". "Well", I said, "why smile"? "Well, you don't know, but we have had three different ones give addresses on the 5th. of Romans, and each one went from the 11th. verse of the fifth chapter of Romans to the eighth chapter". Why? - just because this portion is so little understood. And, you know, I may say the quarrelling over it amongst christians has been something shameful. I don't mean particular ones; it is very easy to quarrel if there is not grace. Of course, nothing of the kind should be seen amongst God's people. Well, dear friends, I will try to tell you something so that it will illustrate this part of the epistle to the Romans. There was a man over in America, he was a noted gaol-bird, and he was serving a term of imprisonment for twenty years. And while he was in gaol - just simply to pass the time - he started to read the Bible. (Through the mercy of God, there was a Bible in the cell) He read the Bible and God applied the word to him. He was brought to believe on the Lord Jesus and he sought grace in that prison to live to the Lord Jesus. And he behaved himself so well that the time came that he was allowed to go out as a ticket-of-leave man. When he knew he was to go out, he went down on his knees and vowed and promised the Lord Jesus he would live to Him

He thought he was a new creation and because he was a new creation he was going to live for Christ. And out of gaol he went. Well of course, he had nothing to do - nowhere to go - no shelter for his head; and so first of all he was puzzled as to what to do. Then he thought "I will make enquiry for a christian"; and he made enquiries, and he was directed to a christian man. He told his tale to this christian man who said:- "I am very glad to hear it - very pleased - and I hope you will be greatly blessed". "Well, I want you to give me work". Oh! give you work! I would lose all my business if I employed you". He went away discouraged. Do you ever get discouraged? Well, the Devil is not far away from you when you get discouraged. The moment you get discouraged, Satan will be at your elbow. There is no one he likes better than a discouraged christian! This man went out into the street, and there he met one of his old pals. He said:- "Come with me; I will give you a dinner". And then it meant something to drink. And put, dear friends, in a few words, he was arrested again for being drunk and disorderly. You may say "the man was not converted". O, yes he was - but he had not learned the secret of living for Christ. You may say:- "I would not do such a thing". Oh! wouldn't you? You will never do for God until you have been taken up out of the gutter. You have done ten times worse! Two or three days he had in gaol, and again he vowed earnestly "no, he would never touch it again". "This time it would be all right" He went again to another christian. The same result; and the same thing happened again. What does he do this time? "Lord!, I shall go straight out and get drunk if you don't keep me". "It is no good for me to tell You I will live for You - because I shall not". "Lord, You must keep and support me; if not, Lord, I shall do as before" He went out and enquired (and this shews how wonderfully God works) again he asks for a christian. He went to this christian and told him his story, and the christian looked at him:- "Just come with me. Now look!, you will have to stand here" "and as the gold comes in you will have to count it and enter it" "in this book and put it in the safe there". The man looked at him - "are you going to trust me with all that gold"? "Well, if you are converted I can trust you; if not, you are no good to me" The man began his work of counting the gold. Ah! dear friends, why didn't the man get the job before? He had a lesson to learn. God was teaching him a lesson - just the same as Job had to learn it. This time He used unconverted "christians" who ought to be ashamed of themselves. Well this man became one of the greatest blessings in America. And shall I tell you why? He shewed that Christ was a present Saviour; that was the secret. He is not a Saviour that saves you from hell in the future, but One that saves NOW - right on the spot - and that is what that man shewed. That is the subject of these chapters. They shew how the Lord sets a person up in present salvation so that he can live in this present scene for Christ.

Now look, dear friends, if you notice there is a great change in this way. It is:- you are dead with Christ; that is the difference. You see, right up to the end of chapter five, it is "Christ has died". Christ died for us. "Now how shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein"? Now it is WE that are dead. Now the first thing is:- "what is the christian dead to"? The first thing that is taken up is "sin"; the second thing is "law", and they bring us to the end of chapter seven. Now sin is a bad thing and law is a good thing. The christian is dead to both. If law is such a good thing, and sin is such a bad thing, which is which? Now we must look and see how that works out. Now the question is raised in the first verse:- "What shall we say then? Shall we" (christians) "continue in sin that ~~gr~~ grace may abound"? Now you see that has been unfolded in the 5th. chapter. The more sin abounded, the more grace abounded. And consequently people have said:- "Oh, that means people can go on living how they like". That is just what they said about Paul. And do you know Paul's answer? He said:- "Their damnation was just" for saying so. Paul ~~did~~ did nothing of the kind. Now this question is gone into a little further and it is raised - "should the christian continue in sin that grace may abound"? "God forbid"! That would never do! "How shall we" (literally) "who have died to sin live any longer therein"? Now the christian is dead to sin in this epistle. Are you dead to sin? "No, I am not". Then which is right? - you, or the Bible? If you are not dead to sin, has God made a mistake? "Oh" you say, "I am not dead" What does this say then? How am I dead to sin? Let us answer the question. Are you connected with Christ? Is there a link between Christ and you? Yes! Is Christ dead to sin? Yes! Then you are! You are dead because your Representative is is. You are not dead in yourself. I have heard this talk from this particular chapter. I remember some foolish man saying to an unconverted man:- "Oh, I am dead"! The man looked at him:- "you are not dead". You would be foolish to tell any person you were. I will tell you what:- Christ has died, and because He has died, you RECKON that you are dead. Now do you see the difference? You "reckon" that you are dead because He has died. What is Christ's position with regard to sin? On the Cross He had to say to sin. Has He anything more to say to it? No! He is dead to it entirely; and so the christian is. What hinders souls is "self-occupation", then we read our Bibles and measure it by ourselves. You will never understand the Bible until you read it with Christ before you - instead of yourself. Christ is dead; and because He is dead, we are dead with Him

Now let us notice, dear friends, the plainness of the word. "How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein". Why? to say that I can live in sin that grace may abound is to deny the whole of Christianity. How do you and I come into blessing? Only through the death of Christ. How then can I say I can live in sin? I admit I do sin, but to say that I can live in sin so that grace may abound would be the worst kind of wickedness that could be. Let us look a little further. The scripture never tells us that a person could die to sin, but it tells him it is dead to ~~sin~~ him because Christ is dead to it. Christ's position ~~settles~~ settles his position. If you follow these few words, Christ's position settles my position. Has Christ died to sin? Then my position is with Christ up there in the presence of God. He is my Representative up there. Christ is going to come again and when He comes, my position will be with Him. Christ has settled the whole question ~~for~~ us. "How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein"? Now you see, having made a statement, he now refers to baptism. "What is the meaning of your baptism"? Were you baptised to a life upon earth? No! "As many of us were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death" Baptised to the Lord Jesus Christ in Glory? No; you are baptised into His death. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death". "Baptism into death" - just notice how this is put. We are "buried to death"? It does not say anything about it; and therefore "buried" should not be there. "Burial" - you are buried because you ARE dead. No; "baptised" into Jesus Christ - and Christ has died. Well, my dear friends, really - people say the most foolish things - in connection with Divine things - that is possible. No, there is no reasoning. I have heard men reason:- "I must reckon myself dead" - just as if a dead man can reckon! Why? if he is a dead man, he does not "reckon" himself dead; and if christians were actually dead, well, they would not have to "reckon" so. They are dead in their Representative and they should "reckon" they are dead "I reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God" in Christ Jesus. Now just notice this before we pass on. In baptism, the force is - every person is buried to Christ's death and are to have a part with a living Christ upon the earth. "Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life" There should be a new kind of life. Why? Because, through Divine grace, he is linked with Christ who has died to sin and lives again. "For if we have been planted together" - (what is "planted"? - grown up - like two young saplings, they grow up together; that is the force of the word). Now the christian is "planted", "identified" with Christ - identified in reality in death on the Cross and in the waters of baptism. If he is "planted" or "grown up together" well then, he will be "in the likeness of His resurrection". You are not in the likeness of His resurrection tonight. But what is going to take place? - we know not how soon. If Christ was to shout tonight, how many christians would there be in the grave? NONE! They would all be out "in the likeness of His resurrection" - "in the likeness of His resurrection".

Now next is knowing there is a something that christians ought to know, and something they can know: and they know it, not from their experience. Oh no, dear friends, how do they know it? From God's word:- "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him -" "Our old man" is a bad man that you carry about in your breast. There is a man that you carry about with you and he is a bad lot. He is thoroughly bad, cannot do anything that is good; can only do what is bad, and he is in you and in me. He is in every christian, and so he is called the "old man", because God has brought in the "new man": and the "old man" has got his place in every christian. But what does the christian know? He knows that it is terminated in the death of Christ. He knows he has been crucified - the "old man" has been crucified; that is, the "old man" in me has been crucified on the Cross. He was crucified there - for what purpose? So that we should no longer serve sin as a master - no longer serve and obey that terrible master - but that his power may be broken. It is rather a difficult verse, so I will go over it again. Christians, they KNOW that their "old man" is in them, but that "old man" has been crucified - or terminated - with Christ. Why did "crucify" or "terminate" that kind of man? So that the christian should no longer serve sin - so that sin should be destroyed. If you notice, it says here, "the body of sin", that is:- sin, in all its completeness. God had the "old man" crucified with Christ on the Cross so that every bit of sin in its totality - in its completeness - should be destroyed and that we should no longer be under its power. You know, dear friends, what self is. Self, you know, is the property of the mind and he is to serve that master. Supposing self dies; well, he passes from under that master. That is right; death is the only way by which he can pass - unless he can be purchased and set free, redeemed. Well, dear friends, at the Cross God had the "old man" crucified ~~at~~ with Christ so that sin in its completeness should be destroyed so that the christian should be no longer under that tyrant of a master. That was God's divine intention. "For he that is dead is justified -" free from - every sin. The idea of it is really this. You cannot connect sin with a dead man. There is only one way to escape from sin, and that is by death and the one that is dead has passed from under the domain of sin. Supposing there is a man and he is a ~~murderer~~ ~~man~~ murderer, and that man is hanged on the gallows; what could you do? Could you go up and charge that man with sin? You could not charge him with sin, there is no movement in that man. He was a murderer when he was alive, but you cannot charge that man with sin. You could say that the man is guilty, but ~~that~~ that is not what this verse speaks of. It does not speak of the guilt of a person but sin the great principal which rules over every individual. The christian has got the privilege of "reckoning" himself ~~dead~~ dead, and that is the only way by which he can escape from it.

Now if we are dead with Christ, well, we shall also live with Him - no question about it. "If we are" - well - "we shall be" "But", you say, "supposing we are not"? Ah! there is no christian but what is. "Knowing" (I well remember what a wonderful comfort this verse was to me many years ago: carefully notice that verse) - "Knowing"- We had "knowing our old man was crucified"; now we have another:- "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more" Christ dies "no more". "death hath no more dominion over Him". Can death affect that Blessed One? Never! It has "no more dominion over Him" "For in that He liveth, He liveth unto God" Look at Christ!, dear friends; He lives in the Glory of God.

Now this next verse I am going to leave with you and ask you to read it for yourselves. "Likewise" (notice that ~~the~~ "likewise") "Likewise reckon + " (now mark, it does not say "believe", it is) "reckon". There is a great deal of difference between "reckon" and "believe". How many chairs in this room? You "reckon" how many. How many is twice two? Four; you "reckon" it. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God" in Christ Jesus. Now perhaps I ought to say just a little in connection with this passage. I want you to bear this in mind if you are going to understand it at home. The preposition translated "into" is the same as the preposition translated "unto" So you can read it "unto" or "into". The force of it is quite simple. Some learned men would tell us it means "into"; others would say:- "No it must be 'unto' ". Learned men always contradict one another - that is how it is with learned men. Now it is simple for simple persons. Let us return to the passage and see what the meaning is. "As many as were baptised UNTO Moses; UNTO Moses" - Well, my dear friends, "into Moses" the thing is a puzzle. ~~Israel~~ Israel could not be baptised "into"; it is rightly translated "unto". "Now just the same as you are baptised UNTO Moses, we are baptised UNTO Christ". The preposition is very simple. You may not always reach the point, but that is the point here - you are baptised UNTO Christ. Every person that is ever baptised is baptised UNTO Christ, UNTO - UNTO Him; that is the meaning of baptism + "UNTO". Then in reading remember that is the same preposition, and then, dear friends, some of the expressions will be a great deal clearer to you "UNTO Christ" - "UNTO death" - "UNTO Moses". One little word more about this "reckoning". You see, you believe God at the end of chapter four. I wonder if there is a person here that does not believe God. Is there one here that does not believe God? Do you believe God, dear friend? Do you believe God has delivered His Son for your offences and raised Him again for your justification? Do you believe it? - do you believe God? Ah well, that is where believing comes in. If it is a question of believing it is believing something about Christ and not about myself. God never calls on me to believe something about myself - but that I am a bad lot and nothing else. Everything else we are called upon to believe is Christ and about Christ. Can I believe God when He says that Christ was "delivered for" my "offences"? - "and raised again for my justification"? I have to "reckon" that I am "dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus". Now, dear friends, that works out in a very simple way.

Now why is it that a person is outside the hundred-and-one things that are taking place around? If you know the power of that, it is because Christ has died. Christ has died, then I have no place either. That is "reckoning". It is - as it were - a guide for your life. Well, you may go tomorrow night to the theatre. Is it such an awful wicked place to go in? I have never been in one; but that is not the reason why I don't go. I can tell you why I don't go. Christ has died; and Christ having died, I have no place there. It does not matter whether it is what people call "good" or not. I have no place there; I believe in the One that has died out of it. I have no place in it because He has died out of it. I have a place up yonder - and that is where I am going.

-----o)O(o-----.