

Companionship of the One who saved us

Part 1

Speaker	George David Tears
Duration	00:36:32
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/gt001/companionship-of-the-one-who-saved-us

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[00:00:00] Those who were present this afternoon at the Bible reading will remember that we had before us a simple yet very fundamental truth, the truth of justification.

And for those who were not present, let me just say this, I remember hearing our dear brother, who is now with the Lord, George Davison, saying on one occasion, the repetition of that which is fundamental is very necessary so long as it doesn't become recitation. Now, what our brother meant, I could see. You know, there are times when we become so familiar [00:01:02] with things that we simply recite them. May we, each one of us, be preserved from that. We need a repetition constantly of that which is fundamental, but not in the form of simply recitation. It has to be practical soul experience, something that is lived out in our lives day by day, in our experience with God and with Christ. And there is no more happy portion for the true believer on the Lord Jesus Christ than to remind his soul that God has justified him. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, [00:02:03] who is he that condemneth. Happy is the man who stands constantly in the light of that wonderful truth, that the devil himself cannot lay anything to the charge of him who simply believes in Jesus. That God might be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

Dear young Christian, lay to heart those wonderful expressions found in the epistle to the Romans, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Much more, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from the wrath through him.

[00:03:04] Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then the last verse that we considered in that chapter, verse 11, not only so, but we also join God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the reconciliation.

The reconciliation. Happy, happy is the man, happy is the woman who lives in the enjoyment of these things. Immeasurable blessing, far beyond my power to comprehend, far beyond your power to comprehend.

But bear there, that each in our measure we might enjoy them. We drink at a fountain of living water.

[00:04:11] There only is the fountain whence living water flows, which like a glorious river still gladdens as it flows. Samuel Rutherford knew something about it. He said, Oh Christ, he is the fountain, the

deep sweet well of love. The streams on earth I've tasted, more deep I'll drink above. There to an ocean fullness his mercy doth expand, and glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land. Beloved hearer, beloved fellow Christian, [00:05:02] that's what God has secured for them that love him. I think something of the understanding of those words, I hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. Speaking of a subject like justification, or redemption, or reconciliation, we might say to ourselves, supremely important, yes let's have all our meetings around these things.

[00:06:02] I was reminded you know of a dear servant of the Lord, Robert Nelson, a man who lived in Ashington, perhaps not remembered by many, but dear Robert told me this story himself. I think the servant of the Lord was a man called R.K. Wilson, but he was traveling in North Northumberland, and he came across a man sweeping the road, and he thought well it would be an opportunity to say to this man a word about the Savior. And so he said to him, it's a grand thing to be saved. And the man stopped and looked at him, he said I can tell you something better than that. He said if you can tell me something better than that, then I want to know it. [00:07:01] This is the companionship of the man who saved you. There you are. Well that's why I've read the scriptures tonight. There is something sweeter, there is something deeper, there is something that satisfies the heart. More than doctrine, more than truth, it is the person of the Lord Jesus.

Sometimes we ask ourselves what's the matter with the meetings? What's the matter with the gospel meetings? What's the matter with the ministry meetings? Well I can't give you the answer to that, but I can tell you this, if the gospel meeting centers around Jesus, if the ministry meeting centers around Jesus, then there won't be much of a matter with it. If you touch your heart, it'll lead you to where he is, it'll lead you to ask some questions, [00:08:03] and that's what we have before us tonight. Just a simple short word as the Lord may enable me about the attractiveness of the person of Christ. I'm going to put it under four headings. Affection. Attraction. Appreciation. Association. Affection.

You know, early in the pages of scripture, we see something of what God's love is like. I think of Rebecca, you know, when she heard about Isaac. [00:09:08] Her parents and her brothers and sisters wanted her to stay, and the servant was so insistent. He said, we'll ask her, we'll ask her. We'll ask her. Will thou go with this man? You know, the lovely answer, the simple, sincere answer of a heart that was captivated, I will go. Every bond had been broken, new bonds had been formed. That chapter closes, Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and he loved her. It's a great love story of scripture. It is but a tiny figure of what has happened with you and with me as we've heard the story of the Savior's love. Our hearts have been attached to him, [00:10:07] and we've said, I will go out of this world to where he is.

What is it that wins the heart? Affection. Truth is vitally important. I am not undermining by one iota what was before us this afternoon, but I'm bringing something that supersedes it, the love of Christ. I think of the dear apostle in that wonderful epistle where he reaches the highest heights. He says, I bow my knees that you might be able to comprehend and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, its height, its depth, its breadth, its length.

Oh, wondrous love of Jesus. Let him kiss me with the kisses of his lips. My friends, [00:11:18] this is no idle language. This is no romantic story. This is one of God's illustrations of the wonderful love that dwells in his heart. You know, when Solomon was moved to write this song, we read in the fourth chapter of 1 Kings that he wrote 1005, but he says, this is the song of songs. This is the one above all else. This is the one where he speaks of a person who captured his affection.

What is thy beloved more than any other beloved? He's a chief among 10,000. He's altogether lovely.

[00:12:10] Is that what Jesus says to you, my dear young hearer, my dear young fellow believer? May God so speak through his word that you may say, let me feel the kisses of his lips. Why? Because thy love is better than wine. It's better than anything that earth can give. It's the choicest fruit of heaven, the love of Christ. You know, one of the stories that the Savior told, wherein he sought to illustrate the love of God to men, is perhaps the best known story in the Bible, Luke 15.

What does it say? When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, had compassion, rang, [00:13:07] had compassion, rang, fell on his neck, and kissed him.

I was speaking this afternoon, as some of us can again remember, dear J.D. Mawson. The last time I heard him preach the gospel was in the hall at Lantern on Whitsuntide, and there an old man, he stood telling the story of the Savior's love. He was speaking on Luke 15. He said, my friends, if you only knew what it is to feel the kiss, the kiss of God, he loves you. You see, a kiss is an expression of love, my friends. It has been corrupted in this world, but I speak of it in all its purity, [00:14:02] in all its holiness, what it is meant to prefigure, the wonderful love of Jesus.

Tell you, my friends, it was a very real thing between David and Jonathan. Can you remember that night, when away there, alone, they embraced each other, and they wept, and they kissed each other? David never forgot that night. He said of it later, his love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. Is that what the love of Jesus is like to you? Surpassing all other loves. I know we have to acknowledge, as J and D did in that lovely hymn that we sang at the outset of the meeting, no infant's changing pleasure is like my wandering mind. [00:15:09] I know that we have to acknowledge the dark clouds that come in, and the distance that comes in, sometimes. But when past, eternal lover, toward me is the air thou art bright.

His is an unchanging love, higher than the heights above, deeper than the deepest sea. You can't get over it. You can't get under it. You can't get out of it. Oh, wonderful love of Jesus.

Affection, what kind of love is it? As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.

He knew what he was talking about. [00:16:03] Thou lovest me before the foundation of the world. The Father loveth the Son, showeth him all things that he himself doeth. The Father loveth the Son, and has committed all things into his hand. Wonderful love that exists between the Father and the Son.

You know, I thank God for a reasonably good memory. Now, while I forget certain things, there are many things that by the grace of God I remember. As a young man, I listened to dear Dr. Sutherland, speaking at Blanton, at the Witsentide meetings, many years ago. He spoke on that verse, as the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you.

[00:17:04] So have I loved you, continue ye in my love. He said, I see it like a triangle, the apex of my triangle, as the Father hath loved me.

Then he said, I go down one leg, so have I loved you. Then across the bottom, he said, I connect it up by saying, continue ye in my love. Love of the same intensity, love of the same quality, that's the kind of love that God would have you and I have toward one another. Our beloved, some of the

breakdown amongst the dear saints of God can be attributed [00:18:06] to that simple thing, lack of affection, one for another. Love covers a multitude of sins.

Love gets over a lot of problems, my friends. I say to you, my dear young fellow Christians, what about 1 Corinthians 13? How long is it since you read that chapter? How long is it since you put every verse into practice in your own life and found the secret of Christian living? Found the secret of getting on with the brethren? Found the secret of getting on with the Lord? He says, and now abideth these three, faith, hope, and love, but the greatest of these is love.

[00:19:05] Brother Harry mentioned in his opening prayer today that many of us can remember days when love seemed to abound more than it does today. Something like the Ephesian condition, thou hast left thy first love. Well, it's a constant challenge, my friends. It's no different now than it was 50 years ago. For those who are prepared to be exercised in the things of God, there's room for a revival of affection amongst the people of God, toward Christ and toward his beloved people. I detest to hear anyone speak adversely about love. I detest to hear anyone speak I detest to hear anyone speak adversely about the people of God, [00:20:03] because they are the object of his affection. Touch one of them and you touch him. Speak ill of one of them and you speak ill of Christ. Do you hold them as he does? As a father hath loved me, so have I loved you. Continue ye in my love.

You know, the dear woman in Luke chapter 7 knew something of affection. She didn't say very much. You knew all that transpired in the house of Simon the Pharisee. And if ever there was a display of affection for Christ, it was there. All her sins, so great, so many, she poured them out at the Savior's feet, bowing there in deep contrition and repentance. And what do we read? How often I have, and I say [00:21:07] this to do you, dear young students of scripture, you note the times that tears and kisses are mingled. It's a time of deep, deep emotion. It's a real thing.

She washed her feet, his feet with her tears. She dried them with the hairs of her head. She took that box of ointment and she wiped his feet with the ointment. Appreciation of Jesus. Affection. Oh, when I thought of it the other evening, thinking about our meeting here tonight, I thought there is a soul in heaven who once kissed my Savior's feet as a mark of her deep affection. [00:22:04] As a day coming, my friends, when like the hymn writer, I'll do the same. When captives in the chains of love, we'll embrace our Savior's feet. The man who loved us, gave himself for us. Affection, attraction. You know, when the Savior was here, we read in John chapter one of that experience, when John the Baptist, looking upon Jesus, and I suggest to you, my fellow Christian, it was an affectionate contemplation of the Son of God.

He'd already looked upon him and said, behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. [00:23:06] But the next day he sees him again. He sees him in a fresh light. He says, behold the Lamb of God. And there was those two disciples that had been following John Baptist. They heard John speak and they left John and followed Jesus. You see where it fits in, in the song of songs, draw me and we will run after thee. It has an infection. If you have a real love for Christ, you'll draw others along the same line. And that's what happened with John. He wasn't a bit disappointed that day. I guess his heart was gladdened when he saw them leave him and follow Jesus. He said, that's exactly what I wanted them to do. But then you see, questions come into the conversation. [00:24:03] The Lord Jesus, he wants reality, my friends. He will have reality. He said, what seek ye? He said, Master, where dwellest thou? He said, come and see.

And they went with him and they abode with him that day. You see the steps, my friends, of

attraction, attachment, if you like. There you are. Their hearts were captivated by the love of Jesus. One of them, I suppose, was John. And John, his ministry goes right on to the end. John is the man who speaks of himself as that disciple whom Jesus loved. [00:25:01] Affection, attraction. Affection, let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine. Attraction, draw me, we will run after thee. The king has brought me into his chambers. Where dwellest thou? We will be glad and we will be glad. We will be glad and rejoice in thee. We will remember thy love more than wine, the upright love thee. I'm going to suggest again, perhaps to the dear younger ones here tonight, we will remember thy love more than wine. This is the first step.

[00:26:01] Is there a heart that really loves the Savior here tonight and you haven't responded to his request?

You remember what he said? This do for a remembrance of me. We will remember thy love more than wine. Is there some earthly joy, some earthly association keeping you back from taking your place at the Lord's table? Dear brother, dear sister, is it worth it? The man who died for you, the man who lives for you, the man who secured redemption, [00:27:02] the man who secured justification, he asks for your love and he's given you a way whereby you might express it to him. This do for a remembrance of me.

You say, but nobody's asked me. I tell you, my hearer, the only one that can ask you has asked you. What hinders? What prevents you? It's not a step to be taken lightly, but it's the answer but it's the answer of true affection for Jesus. Well, we go on because time goes on. Appreciation. These two are closely coupled together. That's why I read verse 12 of chapter one, while the king sitteth at his table my spikenard sendeth forth the fragrance thereof.

[00:28:22] That's why I read John chapter 12, the opening verses. Then Jesus, six days after the Passover, came to Bethany and there they made for him a supper.

I think the setting is very clearly indicated, my friends. To me it indicates the Lord's table. There they made for him a supper.

And look at them. Lazarus was there whom he raised from the dead.

[00:29:09] You know the kind of people that gather around the Lord's table to remember him are people that have been raised from the dead spiritually. You can't come and sit at the Lord's table if you don't know the Lord as your savior. If you haven't got a living link with Christ, the whole thing's a false setup. Martha was there. Martha served. Martha, the person who got things wrong once. She was now right. She had her priorities wrong for a little while, but the Lord graciously put them right. Martha was there. She served. You know there are sometimes little adjustments have to be made in our Christian lives. [00:30:06] The Lord graciously does that in all that we might have part with him. Let me read the words with you because memory doesn't serve me too good on that. They made him a supper. Martha served. Lazarus was there. He was one of them that sat at table with him. Then took Mary. Mary was there. A pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus who wiped his feet with her hair and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Whatever else might be said, my friends, about this scene, [00:31:02] it was a scene that portrays appreciation of Jesus.

While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the fragrance thereof. Sometimes you

wonder what part the sisters play on the Lord's Day morning. They play a very important part.

If their hearts are right with Christ, if they are contributing in silence their deep appreciation of the Saviour, effectively they open their alabaster, they open that box of ointment and they anoint the feet of the Saviour. Don't think that because you're a sister you do not contribute something as you remember the Lord. [00:32:02] He can rightly assess what you would contribute to the Lord. He can rightly assess what you would contribute to the Lord. Don't think that because you're a sister you do not contribute something as you remember the Lord. He can rightly assess what you would contribute, my dear sister. Dear brother, I speak to those who perhaps haven't yet taken part in the giving of thanks, or even in the giving out of a hymn. There's nothing legal about this. It's got to be spontaneous. It's got to be from your heart.

But what I do want to say, dear young brother, I'll never forget the first hymn that I gave out in a morning meeting. It came to me just as though I never had sung it before, and yet I knew every word of it. [00:33:05] But it was real that morning. Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour Thou, with joy we worship Thee. We know Thou hast redeemed us by dying on the tree. It came like that to me, and I gave it out in fear and trembling. Remember my father saying, Amen. What a help.

Dear young brother, when the Spirit of God moves your heart to give out to Him, don't sit silent. Give it out. It's your contribution while the King sitteth at his table. You say, but when I stand up to give thanks, my legs shake and I cannot find the words. He understands. He rightly can assess those contributions of affection, of appreciation.

[00:34:12] Let nothing prevent you from opening your lips to give thanks to Jesus. Just a brief moment now on association.

You know, the greatest, the highest, the fullest blessing that we shall ever know is to be with Christ in glory. But the foretaste of it can be known now. He brought me into His banqueting house and His banner over me was love. I want to leave this simple impression tonight, dear beloved fellow Christians. We are enveloped in divine affection, [00:35:02] in divine affection, pure, deep, holy, eternal love. He brought me into His banqueting house and His banner over me was love. She says, I sat down under His shadow with great delight and His fruit was sweet to my taste. It's association with Christ.

John 17. Father, I will that they also whom thou has given me be with me where I am.

One, that they may behold my glory, for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.

Moreover, thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me. I cannot go into the detail. [00:36:06] I leave it with you in heartfelt sincerity, praying that the Lord will bless the portions of His own precious word that we have read together tonight to each one of our souls and make Him increasingly precious to us while we wait for His coming, for His namesake.