

In Him was yea

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[0 : 00] Will you again turn with me to our reading in the second epistle of Paul to the Corinthians and the first chapter. Let us again read the 19th and the 20th verses.

For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

For all the promises of God are in him yea and in him amen unto the glory of God by us. Particularly that closing clause of verse 19, but in him was yea.

Paul writes in the opening part of this epistle, as a man who is on the defensive, he feels that he has been unjustly accused, and he is defending himself against the aspersions that his critics were casting upon.

And yet the trouble seems such a trivial one. Its cause was that Paul had changed a plan that he had formed and announced regarding a forthcoming visit to the Corinthians.

[1 : 22] And his critics had seized upon that and were making the very most of it. Defaming the apostle as an unreliable man who didn't always stand to his word.

They used the argument against him that he made promises but didn't always keep them.

Now the critics of the Lord's people can sometimes draw their arguments from scripture. A good deal of piosity where there is sometimes very little grace.

And Paul's critics were of that character. They were saying that he wasn't like the master whom he professed. The master who said let your yea be yea and your nay nay.

Paul wasn't reliable. He wasn't always true to his word. Now as I said a moment ago this seems all very trivial.

[2 : 38] Terribly trivial. So trivial as to be unworthy of the apostle's attention. You might think that this was something that he could well afford to ignore and overpass altogether.

But Paul takes a different view. And he's not writing in pettishness but with a sense of responsibility to the master whom he serves. He conceives of his office as you know as that of an ambassador of Jesus Christ.

And that being so it was not just his own reputation that was at stake but the reputation of his master. So he goes to the trouble of explaining to these critics why it was that he did not keep to his word on that occasion.

His plans had changed by certain things and it would seem chiefly by a serious illness that he had taken which interfered with his whole program.

And if he was now delaying coming to them it was for their sakes. He didn't want to come with a rod to chastise them to rebuke them. He sent this letter with this kindly or that's what it is explanation and he hopes that it will have the desired effect and that when he does come to Corinth as he declares again he intends to do he may come with meekness and be of benefit to them and be of blessing to him.

[4 : 21] Thank you. So he goes to the length in repudiating the accusations of his critics of calling heaven itself to witness that he was perfectly sincere in all that he had done and all that he had said.

He protests that he had not so learned Christ as to be as unreliable as his critics were suggesting. He would be an unworthy servant of the master who set that standard for his disciples.

Let your yea be yea and your nay nay. Just as the master stood to his word whatever the cost might be so must the servant. Let this suffice by way of introduction to our theme for this evening.

It reveals that Paul as I say was not concerned so much about self vindication.

His principal concern was his master's character. He was reliable. He exemplified in his own conduct this spirit that he desired to see in them when he said that your yea be yea and your nay

nay.

[5 : 58] For says Paul in him was not yea and nay but in him was yea and all the promises of God are in him yea and amen to the glory of God.

In him was yea. Let's consider that statement for a little tonight. And I want to suggest to you first of all that here we have the word of a dutiful son.

The word of a dutiful son. This word yea or yes is a pleasant word to hear when it signifies agreement with a cherished proposal.

Frances Ridley Havergall in one of her verses addresses the almighty in these words for thee my heart has never a trustless nay. Her whole being was a responsive yea to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

What she's saying there is that she has surrendered completely to God. She has taken him at his word. She believes that his word is his bond and she trusts to it.

[7 : 15] For thee my heart has never a trustless name. And that is the attitude of the changed heart, the heart of the Christian. Sin is man's repudiation of God's just claims upon him.

It is man's denial of God's claimed rights. It is man's disparagement of divine authority. Has God indeed the right to our obedience?

He has on many grounds. First of all as creator. He has paternal rights to us in the respect that we originated in him and in his creative word.

God So in that capacity God himself appeals to heaven against the fickleness of his people.

I have nourished his and brought up children and they have rebelled against me. all along God has a right to his children's obedience.

[8 : 38] And since the Christian's father is a king, the king of kings, the lord of lords, every disobedience is an act of treason against the highest authority, treason against God.

Now are we any better than these people who were not only reflecting upon the reliability of Paul, but reflecting upon the reliability of the Christ whose ambassador he was?

Do we see our own faces amongst that mob that gathered around Jesus and that repudiated his claims as the father's last messenger to sinful man before the crucifixion?

Do we hear our own voices raised among the angry voices that echoed through Jerusalem? We will not have this man to reign over us. Do we find that we are included and do we feel that we are included in the multitudes that are described in the second psalm which has a clear picture of man's rebellion is given?

the multitude who are saying let us break asunder their bands and cast their cords from us? Are we like those people aiming at overturning the government of God?

[10 : 23] God? It's a futile endeavor of course. What can the worms of the dust do against the almighty? What can the humble subject do against the omnipotent sovereign?

God has united with infinite power a profound pity.

He's not afraid of man's rebellion. That's brought out in the second psalm. he that sits in heaven shall laugh. Not derisively but pityingly at the folly of the weak creature who seeks to overthrow the almighty.

He could sweep men out of his presence as autumn leaves are swept away by a gale if that were his will. But infinite power is united with infinite pity.

I have no pleasure says the Lord in the death of the wicked and because he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked he has devised ways of saving the rebels from the death that they deserve.

[11 : 49] What was it? This means that he devised for the salvation of men who were repudiating his claim. was it just giving them more time to repent?

Well he did that. But if he hadn't done any more than that man's repentance would not have been forthcoming because it is the way of sinners to work worse and worse seducing and being deceiving and being deceived.

Every imagination of the thoughts of man's heart is only evil continually. How then does he reveal his loving kindness to man and his desire for his salvation?

Is it just by letting him continue in prosperity notwithstanding his demerit? Well he gave his people prosperity too. But what happened was that the prosperity that he granted them did not lead them to repentance.

What we read in the poetic language of the Bible writer is when Jeshurun waxed fat or became prosperous he kicked, he rebelled against God more than ever.

[13:16] the psalmist reflecting upon the goodness of God to his people says to any nation never he such favor did afford and yet that very nation so outstanding in the favor of God was the very nation that led in the sin of crucifying Christ when he appeared.

From the beginning of sin from the time of the beginning of sin this chorus of rejection has been arising from men.

Men persistently and wantonly and unanimously have said nay to the just demands that God is making upon them. Clearly man's salvation could not come through his own efforts.

It must come through the vicarious obedience of the Son of God himself of whom Paul says in him was gay.

There was no rejection of the Father's will on his part but an acceptance of filial and humble acceptance although he was the co-equal of the Father and deity.

[14:35] when the question went forth from the throne of eternal majesty regarding a sinful world and sinful men who will go for us and whom shall we send?

from Christ came the reply here am I send me and he never looked back.

He was not like the son in his own parable who said to his father I go sir when the father requested him to go that day and work in his vineyard but afterwards went not whatever it might cost him.

He was to render obedience to the father's will and what it cost him can never be reckoned by us.

Paul puts it like this though he was rich and he doesn't tell us how rich because he cannot.

The riches were unsearchable but though he was rich yet for our sakes he became poor that we through his poverty might be rich while men were despising and rejecting him he went about doing good when the garden of Gethsemane and in anticipation of the sufferings of the cross and the hiding of the father's face while he suffered in the place instead of sinners.

[16:14] his sweat was as great drops of blood falling to the ground.

His will was still the will of God if it be possible that this cup pass from me. Nevertheless not my will but thine be done.

In him was gay. That bitter cup love drank it up and that is why it is empty now for me if my faith is in him.

It was the gay of an obedient son. Again let us think of it as the word of a sufficient savior. The word of a perfect savior.

Christ's gay in the matter of salvation was spoken not only to God but on God's behalf to men. Our own Thomas Chalmers puts it finely where he says that Christ was the everlasting gay that the soul of man needs for rest.

[17:50] The everlasting gay that man's soul needs for rest. He had come to reveal the father and he has spoken the word of the father to men and as you know the testimony of a reliable witness the word of a good man is of the very highest account.

What shall we say then to this incomparable witness who came into the world declaring that God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved. Surely he is worthy of our trust. In him was gay and in us there ought to be a yay to the offer of the gospel. He claims I am the way the truth.

Not only I am true but I am the very truth the embodiment the personification of truth. the one with whom it is impossible to lie or to deceive. No man cometh unto the father but by me but every man however vile he is may come to the father by me for him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.

God's threats as well as his promises are reliable and stable. God said before sin was committed in the day that thou eatest thereof that is to say of the forbidden fruit thou shalt surely die nay said the serpent but ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil but God yea stood and Christ came into the world to receive the wages of sin which have been declared from the beginning as death in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die moreover Christ returns his yea to the faithfulness of God the question may sometimes arise even in the heart of the believer does

[20:38] God really love us there are times when it is easy to believe that he does when we prosper in all where to we set our hands but there are other times when it's not so easy to believe in the love of God and we cry out with the patriarch job show me wherefore thou contendest with me but my dear friend if at any time there should be a question in your mind as to the love of God take that question to Calvary as Paul and he does here and teaches us to do ask your question there of the suffering one on the cross does God love me may I trust in his love and from the cross there

comes the answer

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life and he certifies the wisdom of God the kindness of God's providence God's control over circumstances there was a time when even godly Asaph the psalmist cried out is there wisdom in the most high again if that question arises in your mind because of the providential circumstances which surround you at the present time carry that question to Calvary as well ask it in the presence of the cross and that is and that is where Jesus taught his disciples to carry the on

Emmaus road how Cleopas and his companion were making for Emmaus talking sadly and in great bewilderment of what had been happening in Jerusalem in these recent days and this was the third day the day concerning which they had certain hopes the day on which they were hearing rumours that the sepulcher was found empty and all that but they didn't know what to make of it is their knowledge in the most high have things gone all wrong and then somebody joined them somebody whom they did not recognise to begin with and invited himself into their discussion and then took over the theme himself and expounded it for them the theme of contrary providences as they seemed and brought them to the Bible brought them right through scripture up to Calvary itself up to that empty grave that very morning oh fools and slow of heart to believe all the prophets have written beginning at

Moses and all the prophets he expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself there was faithfulness in the most high there was knowledge in the most high God was working out his plans through the wickedness of men and that third day was a day of triumph after all ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory the captain of our salvation was made perfect in that capacity he didn't need to be made perfect in any other capacity but as the captain of his people salvation he had to be made perfect through sufferings there was a joy set before him and he knew it and he saw it and for the joy that was set before him he endured the cross and despised the shame and sat down at the right hand of God it may be that by giving you a similar experience in these days my dear friend he is also giving you or is going to give you an insight into his purpose to assure you that the light affliction and although he is talking about your affliction as a light and you don't feel it to be light he is not talking lightly he is making a comparison our light affliction which is but for a moment worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory again

Christ as the perfect saviour certifies the fact of divine forgiveness if thou shouldest mark iniquity says the psalmist who could stand but he turns aside from that gloomy supposition that God might not forgive sin that God might indeed mark iniquity and hold man to his terrible record as a sinner to this gospel assurance but with thee there is forgiveness that thou mayest be feared now how does he know that well because God has said so God had been saying so from the very beginning and he had been saying it right through the ages until Jesus came this Jesus in whom was yea yea and he said it most clearly of all when his son hung upon the cross my dear friends what a relief it is to be done with uncertainties and fair adventures and to rest upon the eternal yea as

[26 : 50] Chalmers described it that man needs for his comfort this is something that is not reached in any of the other faiths that are followed throughout the world if they do offer salvation at all and many of them do the offer of salvation is clogged by so many conditions as to leave the ultimate salvation a matter of doubt even of grave doubt the Christian religion amongst all the religions in the world is the only one with a definite yea and it stands for the believer in every age verily verily I say unto you said Christ he that believeth on the son hath life could anything be more definite than that he that believeth on the son hath life he that believeth not the son shall not see life but the wrath of

God abideth on him so that you tonight believe in the Lord Jesus Christ however much you may deplore the weakness of your faith and its tendency to falter you can say with the psalmist with the same certainty and upon the same authority thou wilt me show the path of life of joy there is full store before thy face at thy right hand of pleasures evermore and you can say with Paul as he faces a violent death the death of a martyr I know whom I believe and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day I have fought a good fight I have finished my course I have kept the faith henceforth that is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which God the righteous judge shall give me in that day and not to me only but also unto all end but love his appearing and that last clause surely brings us in whatever the quality of our faith if it is a

sincere faith in the

Lord Jesus Christ none perish that him trust once more I want us to look at this yea embodied in Jesus as the word of a reliable guide he says yea not for adventure or I think so he knows the people noticed that from the beginning of his ministry Christ spoke with authority and not as the scribes the scribes were always quoting other authorities authorities outside themselves and sometimes they had to put one authority against another and there was confusion there's nothing about that in the relations between

Christ and his believing people he speak as one having authority he needed no authority outside himself I am the way and the truth and the life no man cometh unto the father but by me following him men shall not walk in darkness they shall not stumble in uncertainty with regard to their ultimate salvation they have the light of life there will still be much that will puzzle the disciple and it will continue to be dark to him but the path of the justice is a shining light that shineth more and more unto perfect day and what is dark to us is not dark to him he saw clearly beyond death and he told confidently and clearly what he saw other religions have got their own doctrines of immortality but they don't carry a great deal of conviction after all they are only guesses not confident assertions but the doctrine of immortality as taught by Jesus

Christ is certified by his own resurrection he became as Paul puts it the first fruits of them that slept and in him is the yea of positive truth some years ago I was approached by a ministerial friend who spent the most of his ministry south of the border and a good ministry it was but he came to Scotland in semi retirement and settled in a small congregation not too far from Edinburgh and because he didn't have an evening service on certain Sabbath evenings he used to drop into our church of an evening and I got to know him very well and to appreciate him more and more the longer our acquaintance grew his wife died very suddenly she was sitting beside him in his calm talking brightly one moment and then there was silence when he spoke to her there was no reply he saw that something had gone wrong and he pulled into the curb and spoke to her and feared the worst drove her as quickly as he could to a nearby hospital she was dead on being admitted he came to see me the following week and he said

[33 : 21] I'm going to ask you to do a very great kindness I said what is that he said you know on the Friday before my wife died so suddenly I had prepared a sermon from John 14 and of course I wasn't preaching last Sunday but I'm going to be preaching first Sunday and I want to preach that sermon more than ever I want to preach that sermon and it was to be on the text I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there ye may be also and he said I want to preach that sermon and I think I'll be able to preach it more impressively after what has happened to me and to all than I could have done without that incident and what I'm asking you to do is if you are free to come to my church that Sabbath just to sit there in my line of vision to keep an eye on me and to see if I falter or fail and if

I do please take over I assured him that I would do as he desired but I was equally certain there would be no faltering or failing from the spirit in which he was speaking he preached with a certainty with an assurance that I feel must have appealed to every thinking person in that congregation that day their sympathies were with him in any case but he spoke as if he had a look in by the open gate of heaven and as if he had come back to tell them that what the saviour said was true in the father's house there are many mansions and he said I was particularly arrested he said by what the saviour said in that connection if it were not so I would have told you he and he would have told you he doesn't always tell us the best because the best cannot be fully told but he tells us the worst and he sets it against the background of the glory that is yet to be if it were not so

I would have told you there you have it just what Chalmers spoke about the everlasting yea that the soul of man needs for rest Christ is that everlasting yea he is the obedient son he is the perfect saviour and he is the reliable guide now my dear friends how do we stand related to Jesus Christ obviously this attitude on his part to us expects a similar attitude on our part to him he is God yea to us he said yea to God on our behalf when he undertook to be our saviour and he expects us to say yea to him when again he offers himself in the fullness of his saving power in the gospel which bears his name briefly he expects our trust the everlasting yea that the soul of man needs for perfect rest so said Chalmers how did he make that play well dr.

William Alicissander tells us of an incident in Chalmers' ministry in Glasgow where together they visited a very poor house there where a woman was dying in dire poverty and still in ignorance of her need of a saviour Chalmers sat beside her w.l.

alexander simply listened she was trying hard to understand what he meant by trusting jesus christ and when he asked her if she really understood what he meant she said no but she gave him the impression that she was trying very hard to do so well he said he dropped into a form of speech with which he was more familiar he said it just means this listen to him listen to him and a gleam of intelligence came into her face ah she said is that all listen to him yes listen to him he said and you're not better and alexander tells us that they both came away with the feeling that she had even in the closing moments of life listen to Jesus trusted to him accepted him as God's everlasting yag that the soul of man needs for rest and where she found the saviour there you and I will find the saviour that we need too because the needs of man of all classes of all creeds of all degrees of intelligence are the same the need of a reliable saviour who offers himself to us in the gospel so may I leave chalmers' word with you lip into him trust him the lord redeems his servant so none perish let him trust let us pray lord our god we give thanks unto thee for the simplicity and the certainty of the gospel of thy grace and pray that we may receive it in the spirit of little children tonight and not question anything regarding it not doubt anything that thou hast said with regard to things that we cannot as yet understand but trust thee for thy grace and go on believing go on seeking go on inquiring into the mystery of divine love and believing that Christ that in [40 : 26] Christ all the promises of God are both gay and amen to thy glory for thy name's sake amen