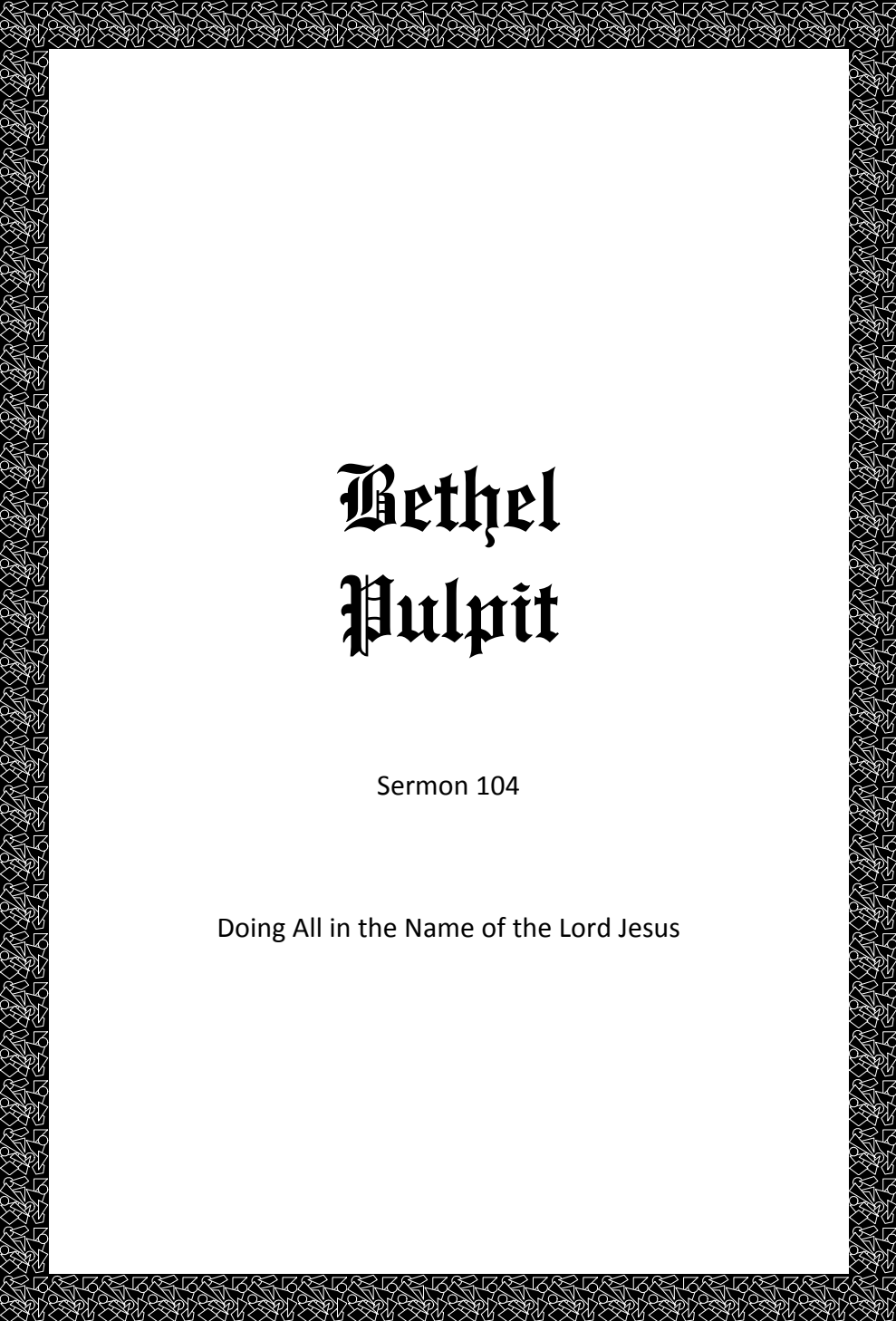




Bethel Pulpit

Sermon 104

Doing All in the Name of the Lord Jesus

**Sermon preached at Bethel Chapel, Luton,
by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom,
on Lord's day morning, 12th December, 1993**

Text: *“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him” (Colossians 3. 17).*

Some of us tremble before a word like this. We feel it condemns us through and through. The Lord says, “Whatsoever ye do ... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” And we painfully have to feel, sin is mixed with all I do. This word touches the whole of practical godliness, what John Bunyan said was the hardest part of real religion. Really there are three words very similar, three words on this point, “whatsoever ye do,” three words that set a standard. “Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God” (Rom. 10. 31). And then, “Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men” (Col. 3. 23). And then this: “Whatsoever ye do ... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” I must say that these three words have rested on my spirit for a long time now and it has been difficult to know which of the three words words to read out to you, because there is such a similarity between them.

O but what a word is this! It touches the whole of our behaviour. It touches the whole of our conduct. It touches the way we behave, the things we do, the things we do not do, where we go, where we do not go. It touches everything in the church of God, in the house of God, everything in our lives, our families, our circumstances, our relationships with others. It is comprehensive, all-embracing. “Whatsoever ye do.” And there is not anything which is excluded.

“Whatsoever ye do ... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” You may say right at the outset, What does it really mean, to do all, to do everything, in the name of the Lord Jesus? One of the old Scottish covenanters had a very helpful, simple and beautiful comment on what he felt it means to seek to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. He said, How can you do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus? He said, There are three things. First of all, in everything seeking to walk in obedience to His Word. Then secondly, in everything seeking help from

the Lord Jesus. Then thirdly, in everything seeking the honour and glory of God. Now of course, in every little action we do, in every detail of our life, it is impossible for us to think before we do it these one, two, three things, isn't it? That is impossible. But beloved friends, the principle should be there, and the principle should be deeply burnt into our hearts. But there will be times when there are special things, when there are important things, and then more formally, seeking to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, there should be those three things. Here is something in our life. We need to walk in obedience to the Word of God, our only standard, our only rule of faith and conduct. Then realising our weakness and sinfulness and helplessness, to cry to the Lord Jesus for His divine, almighty help. Why, some of us seem to have to live with that word on our lips and in our hearts: "Lord, help me," even when we are asleep or half awake. And then in it all to seek the glory of God.

"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." I do not remember ever having had to bring a subject before you which has so many different aspects to it. Think of the vastness of it, "whatsoever ye do." We shall see how we are led by the Spirit of God, but I may find I have to linger on this for the whole of the day. "Whatsoever ye do." Now may it be the Lord's word to us as a congregation.

"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." It seems to rest on me this morning to begin with *the church of God*. "Whatsoever ye do" *in the church of God*, "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." Now let us begin with *preaching*. What is preaching if it is not done in the name of the Lord Jesus? Why, the Lord Jesus is the glory of the gospel ministry, the foundation of the gospel ministry. Without it there would not be any gospel to preach. O to preach in the name of the Lord Jesus, to be given grace to exalt Him! Like the old preachers used to say, to lift Him up on the gospel pole. But not just that; to preach the Lord Jesus in the spirit of the Lord Jesus. We painfully know what J. C. Philpot meant when he said, "A man speaks wonderful words about the Lord Jesus with a heart as hard as iron." "Whatsoever ye do ... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." May it be the preaching of the cross which is to them which are saved the power of God. And may it be in the spirit of the Lord Jesus. May it be for Jesus' sake. May it be to the honour and glory of His name. May it be that "on His head were many crowns."

Now, “Whatsoever ye do ... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” I am thinking this morning especially of the church of God. And then *hearing*. Whether we preach or whether we hear, “do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” There is that very well-known, oft-quoted word, “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst.” You remember the old preachers often used to add a little bit: “and that to bless.” It does not come in Scripture like that, but it is very true. “Where two or three are gathered together.” It is often quoted. It is a wonderful word when there are just the twos or threes. But it is not a word we can presume on, whether there are two there or whether there are two hundred there. The Lord Jesus says, “gathered together” – not just coming – “gathered together in My name.” I affectionately ask you as my congregation this morning, are we gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus, or have we just come? It is a wonderful thing to be gathered together. “Unto Him” – our heavenly Shiloh – “shall the gathering of the people be.”

Ah, but the Lord Jesus says, “in My name.” That is the qualification. “Where two or three are” – not just come, or not even just gathered together – “where two or three are gathered together *in My name*, there am I.” It does not just say, There I will be. He is there already. “There am I.” Tell me, as you search your hearts, how many of you have come this morning in the name of the Lord Jesus, in obedience to His commandment, “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together”? That is meaningless to some people, but the Word of God still stands. And seeking His gracious help, and desiring the honour and the glory of His name, “in the name of the Lord Jesus.” “Where two or three are gathered together *in My name*” – that worthy name, that name above every name – “there am I in the midst.” Is that what you want, Jesus in the midst, in the midst of the gospel, in the midst of the congregation, in the midst of your hearts, “Christ in you, the hope of glory”? “Whatsoever ye do.” When you come to chapel on the Lord’s day, when you come to chapel in the week.

“Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do *all* in the name of the Lord Jesus. Now *all*: it touches the arriving, it touches the leaving. O but “in the name of the Lord Jesus.” How many of you have come and you like to hear the name of the Lord Jesus mentioned? How many of you have come, and the Lord Jesus is your only hope, your only plea, your only

foundation? It touches everything, and it touches our *worship*. “Go worship at Immanuel’s feet.” There is not any other place where you can worship. It is the solemn, sacred worship of God. We meet for Zion’s solemnities. May there be the holy awe, may there be the sacred reverence upon our spirit.

“Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” And then *prayer*. Well, you all know this (don’t you?) that apart from the name of the Lord Jesus, there could not be any prayer. The name of the Lord Jesus is the only way of access to a holy God. The name of Jesus is our only hope as we seek to pray. And so if your religion is real, the name of the Lord Jesus will be endeared to you.

“Then let the name of Jesus be
To us supremely dear;
Our only, all-prevailing plea,
For all our hope is there.”

Prayer, in the name of the Lord Jesus. Prayer in the church. How much prayer has there been in secret in your hearts for the Lord’s blessing, for the Lord’s help for the services today? When we talk about the church, we are not so much thinking about a building or even the assembling of the Lord’s people. In your homes on the Lord’s day morning, what about that spirit of prayer? What about the lack of that spirit of prayer? What about the Saturday evening? The godly Puritans used Saturday to prepare for the Sabbath. They were not only more careful in keeping the Sabbath day than we are; they were certainly a lot more careful about keeping Saturday evening than we are.

“Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all.” Now prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus. Our *prayer meetings*. When we meet on the Monday evenings for prayer, may it be this: “do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” There have been some lovely prayer meetings recently (haven’t there?) when you felt the Lord was there, you felt the brethren were enabled to pray, when you felt they flowed together, you felt their hearts were one. I would say this: I have been so pleased to see so many of you coming to the prayer meetings recently. I think we have had considerably more come recently than we have had for a long time, and we are pleased to see you there, and we would encourage all of you to come. Some people say it is wrong to make new year’s resolutions. It is not

unscriptural to make any kind of resolution. Psalm 119 is full of resolutions. Perhaps a new year resolution could be with some of you to come to the prayer meetings. You say, But what will people say when I come in? Well, if it is the start of the new year, lots of people do new things, different things. It is nice when you children and young people who find it difficult at other times can come out during your holidays. “The saints in prayer appear as one.”

“Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” *Christian conversation*. I do not want to say much on this point, but I have been thinking about something that William Gadsby said. He said he knew a most godly, gracious man who had a wonderful experience of the Lord’s dealings. One day this man had quite a lot of people listening to him, and very sweetly and sacredly he was rehearsing to them how the Lord had dealt with his soul, and they were listening to him with delight. Suddenly he stopped, abruptly he stopped. They wondered what he was going to say. He said, “Friends, I dare not go on. I feel pride springing up in my heart.” Gadsby’s point was we can even do the most sacred things, such as rehearsing the dealings of the Lord with our soul, and our spirit is wrong. It is not being done to His honour and glory. There is pride and self and the flesh in it.

“Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Now *believer’s baptism* and *an open profession of the Lord’s name*. “Whatsoever ye do ... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” It is a poor profession if it is not in the name of the Lord Jesus, if it is not for Jesus’ sake, if it is not sweetly constrained by His love. “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.” But never forget, it is the Lord’s commandment to those who believe on His name to the salvation of their souls. He says, “If ye love Me, keep My commandments.” And “whatsoever ye do ... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Really it is to be able to testify how the name of Jesus has been made attractive to your soul, to be able to say, “How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!” To tell how we were brought to feel our need of the Lord Jesus; to tell how the Lord Jesus in some measure has met that need, graciously met that need, how His name, His blood is our only hope, our only foundation for eternity. “Whatsoever ye do ... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Then this will put a solemnity on your spirit and an awe on your spirit and a reverence on your spirit. There will not be any

lightness and there will not be any excitement. You see, so often I think about an open profession, and believer's baptism as the beginning. Many people tend to think of it as the end. In many ways it is the beginning, and there is a solemnity rests upon it. I have sometimes thought of it something like this. When those crowds of people used to go and see the renowned Captain Webb swim across the river beneath the Niagara Falls, there were the crowds there as he plunged in, but before he came out safely the other side, there was the conflict, the difficulty, the hardness, the impossibility, before there were the cheers on the other side. Now, "whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" – completely, entirely dependent on Him, nothing in self, everything in Christ, so weak and so helpless and so unworthy.

"Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." And then coming to *the Lord's supper*. It is a beautiful ordinance. "This do in remembrance of Me."

"Do this,' He cried, 'till time shall end,
In memory of your dying Friend!
Meet at My table, and record
The love of your departed Lord.'"

It is such a humbling ordinance as we think of what the dear Lord Jesus suffered in agonies and blood in Gethsemane and at Calvary. It is such a strengthening ordinance to poor, little faith, and as we have to venture out into the world. And it is such a sanctifying ordinance. It makes us hate sin and love righteousness. O to do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, for His sake, sweetly constrained by His love, desiring a soft heart, longing that He might have all the honour and the glory. A solemn word that (isn't it?) about eating the bread and taking the cup unworthily, not discerning the Lord's body. "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." That has made many a child of God tremble, when we are prostrate with a sense of our sin and unworthiness. Now let us be clear, it does not mean *being worthy*. No sinner will ever *be worthy*. But it means coming *worthily*. When the apostle wrote that, some of the Corinthians were even being drunk at the Lord's table. That was not coming worthily. Some were bringing their provisions and making it into a carnal feast and eating as much as they could. That was not coming

worthily. You see the point. It is not describing the person, but the way and the attitude in which he comes. But do watch your spirit in this.

“Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” And then the solemn responsibilities and accountabilities of *church members*. What a standard the Lord Jesus as the great Head of the church lays down in holy Scripture for church membership! The setting a gracious example, walking worthy, and the many decisions and the solemn things and the responsibilities. When I welcome a person into the church, this church (and you have heard me on so many occasions), I welcome them into the privileges and the responsibilities. There are privileges. “Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” There are responsibilities. “Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” May there ever be that desire here in our church and congregation that in all things the Lord Jesus might have the pre-eminence.

“Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,” seeking the Lord’s will in all things. “What saith my lord unto his servant?” “Behold, Thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my Lord the King shall appoint.” I would just say this: “The King’s business requireth haste.” Our deacons and myself over the years now, for many years, have almost taken this as a motto text in the church of God: “The King’s business requireth haste.” It has to come before everything else, before our private arrangements, our private desires, our own things. O may the things of God ever be first with us, as sweetly constrained by the love of Christ, “bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” “The King’s business requireth haste.” And He is our God and King, and our Lord and Master, and He is King in Zion, and He does rule with that loving sceptre of mercy.

“Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Of course, in the church of God there are many things to be done, many things to be thought, many things to be decided. What is the standard, the criterion? “Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Self nothing, self abased, Christ everything, walking in obedience to His revealed will, crying to Him for divine help and guidance, seeking the honour and the glory of His name. “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” We must never be left to do some things in the name of the Lord Jesus and other things just as our carnal

hearts would like or as we ourselves want. Again and again I draw your attention to Samson. In *most* things he sought the honour and glory of God. In *most* things he sought the Lord's help. In *most* things he walked according to the Lord's will. And then there were these blind spots, or these open doors in the defences of the city. Perhaps Samson more than anyone else in Scripture set a pattern of zeal and devotion – in most things – but then in so many, doing things his own way.

“O watch against trusting to your native strength;
Behold Peter boasting, but o’ercome at length;
Your strength will forsake you, and leave you to fall,
Unless the Lord make you to trust Him for all.”

“Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” When Peter said, “Although all shall be offended, yet will not I,” he was not doing it in the name of the Lord Jesus; he was doing it in his own carnal strength, and he proved his own carnal strength was weakness, even though he was an eminent apostle.

“Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” In all *our relationships* one with another, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.” Really the chapter I read (Colossians 3 and 4. 1-6) sets out more clearly the relationships of God’s people one to another in the name of Jesus far better than I can. “Put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication” – put them off. “Lie not one to another.” “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved.” Now do you ever put things off? That is the mortification of the flesh. Do you ever put these things off which are God-dishonouring? If you had an old, dirty, torn garment, you would put it off. There are things in spirit just like that. They are not very nice, not very pleasant. We need to put them off. Then he goes on, “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” If you show *kindness one to another*, and many of you do, many of you abound in it, if you show kindness one to another, help one another, love one another, “do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” I remember reading some time ago, I cannot remember where and who, but it was about some very wealthy lady who in the last century worked in the slums and among the poor in London. In one way hers was a self-sacrificing life. Though she was such a lady, she devoted all her life to the poor in the slums. But she was so condescending to them, she made it so clear they were just ordinary people and she was a lady, that if she gave them a penny they were made to feel what a favour it was that such a great woman was willing to give a penny to someone who did not deserve anything. She did not walk out this word: “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” It did not bring much credit to the gospel, though the poor people and those in great need were very grateful for what they received, they found it very humiliating, the spirit in which the help was given. That is not the spirit of Christ, is it?

“Whatsoever ye do ... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Then sometimes it is necessary to give *a little reproof or a little correction*. The Lord has commanded that this should be so, that there are times when we should correct one another, when we should reprove one another. “Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.” Toplady says,

“Though justly of wrongs we complain,
Or faithfully sinners reprove,
Yet still we do all things in vain,
Unless we do all things in love.”

“Whatsoever ye do.” That reproof. Aren’t Priscilla and Aquila a most beautiful example of it with Apollos? Here was this young man, such a popular man, such a wonderful preacher. He was an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures. But in his preaching there was a flaw. That godly couple took him aside in secret, privately, and pointed out to him that he was making a mistake, and they did it in the name of the Lord Jesus. He received it in the name of the Lord Jesus. Now none of us like to be told we are wrong, do we? None of us like to be reproved, do we?

But that eloquent man, that popular man, was reproved by Priscilla and Aquila, and he lovingly took it. They acted in the name of the Lord Jesus. He acted in the name of the Lord Jesus. You read on in the next chapter, the blessing in the church of God. What a blessing that man Apollos was when he went and watered the souls of the people and “helped them much which had believed through grace.” There was not any little flaw in his preaching then, was there? “Whatsoever ye do ... do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” – in the church of God, in the spirit of the Lord Jesus, in meekness, in humility, in tenderness, in love, in sincerity, with singleness of heart, to the honour and glory of God. “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

(If the Lord will, the evening sermon on the same text will be published next month.)