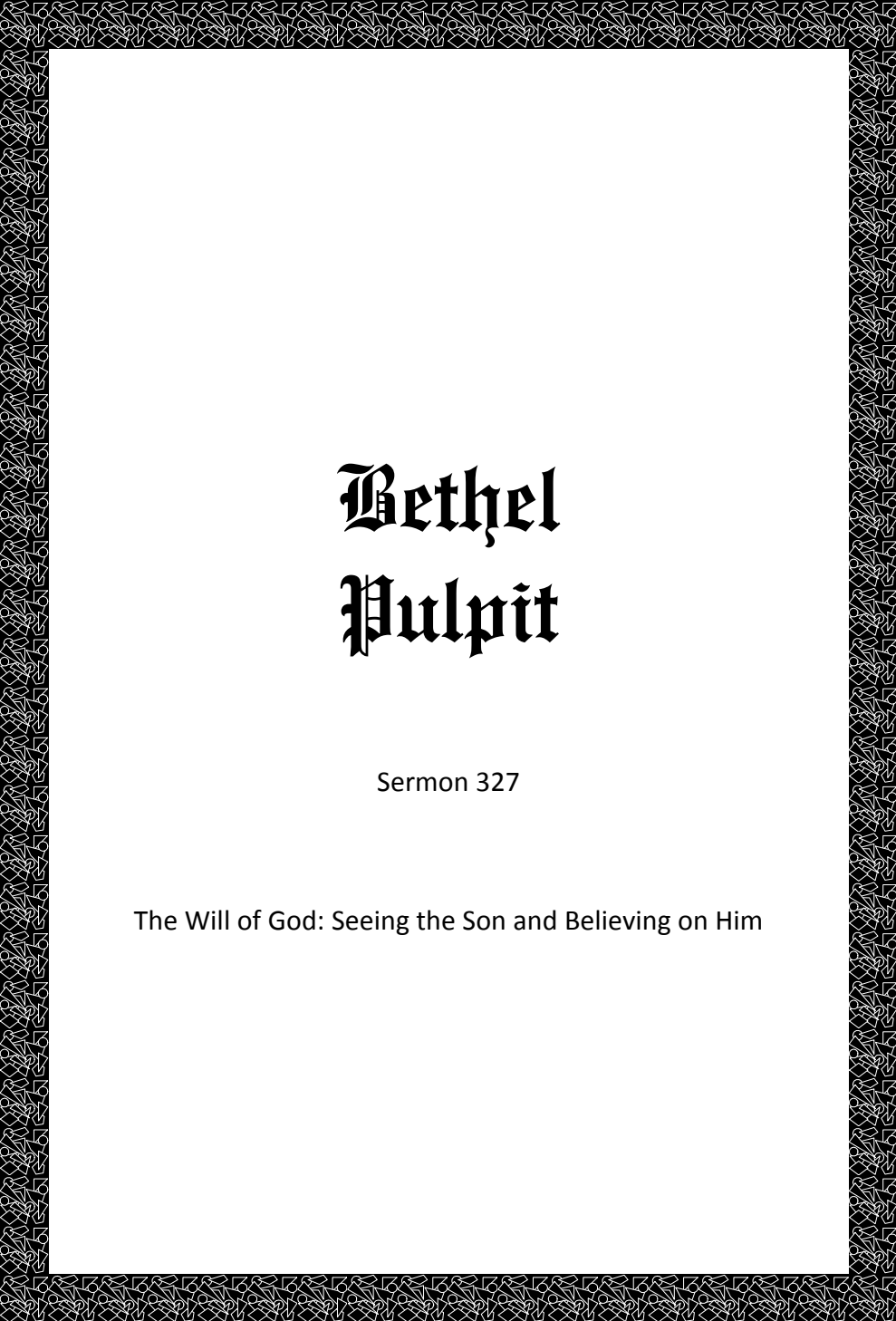




# Bethel Pulpit

Sermon 327

The Will of God: Seeing the Son and Believing on Him

**Sermon preached at Bethel Chapel, Luton,  
by Mr. B. A. Ramsbottom,  
on Lord's day morning, 23rd September, 2012**

**Text:** *“And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day” (John 6. 40).*

We are told in God's holy Word that when the Saviour came into this world He said, “Lo, I come ... to do Thy will, O God.” And here He says, “I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me.” And then He tells us what His Father's will was. What a wonderful thing it is! There is the whole of the gospel in it! His Father's will was that a multitude that no man could number should be saved with an everlasting salvation, all of them sinners, all of them lost and ruined, all of them worthy of eternal destruction, but in the riches of His grace, God's purpose was that this great multitude should be saved. And this was His eternal will and good pleasure, and His beloved Son came to fulfil it, to perform it, and it must stand; it cannot be disappointed.

The greatest of men purpose things; they come to nothing. You think of what Napoleon purposed: to conquer Europe; it came to nothing. Think of what Hitler purposed, and where did it all end? You can go right down the ages, the mightiest of men, and their will has been thwarted, overturned by God, but God's will must stand. “My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure.” And our mercy is that it is His purpose that a way of salvation should be provided for unworthy sinners and that they should be saved eternally. What a mercy if you and I are amongst them! O beloved friends, I do hope these things mean something to us. I hope they mean everything to us. It is a sad thing if we come and go, and go and come, and just listen – perhaps attentively, perhaps respectfully, perhaps with interest – but if our hearts are never touched. There was a time with each one of us when these things meant nothing to us. O what a difference when we first began to feel our need!

“And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” Many times in the Word of God our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ speaks of a people being given to Him – those that the Father chose,

those that He loved with an everlasting love, those that He ordained to salvation and eternal life – and He gave them into the hands of His beloved Son before the world was created, in the covenant of grace, and He gave them to His Son to be their Saviour. The Son of God in love and mercy and compassion received them, though knowing that this would cost Him agony and blood at Calvary; it would cost Him His life. For,

“This was compassion like a God,  
That when the Saviour knew  
The price of pardon was His blood,  
He pity ne’er withdrew.”

The Lord Jesus so often spoke of those that the Father had given Him. He does earlier on in this chapter. He says, “All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” Several times in that wonderful, high-priestly prayer, John chapter 17, the Lord Jesus prayed for those the Father had given Him, and He ended like this: “Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory.”

“This is the Father’s will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing.” So here you have that glorious truth, the everlasting safety and security of all the blood-bought people of God. They were given to the Saviour, and He did everything necessary for them. He brought in a righteousness because they had none of their own. He shed His precious blood that they might be forgiven. He opened a way to heaven. In the fulness of time, as the great Shepherd He seeks them; He finds them. But this is the point: not one is lost – the safety of the people of God. Some of us look back to our very early days spiritually and what a precious truth it was when we felt our weakness and helplessness, and Satan and the world so strong, and we were professing the Lord’s name, and wondered how many years we might have to live, and how many years we might have to be in a profession of the Lord’s name? But this: not one is lost.

“He’ll lead them on fair Zion’s road,  
Though weary, weak, and faint;  
For O! they ne’er shall lose their God,  
Or God e’er lose a saint.”

Didn't we love to sing that in those days! Satan has never gained one and the Lord has never lost one. He cannot lose the objects of His love; He cannot lose the purchase of His blood; He cannot lose those who have been quickened by His Spirit into life. And this looks forward to the last great day when the eternal Son of God will hand back to His beloved Father that people who were given to Him before all worlds. He will say, "Behold I and the children which God hath given Me," and not one is lost.

"This is the Father's will," and so it must be accomplished. "This is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing." At first, that sounds strange to us: *nothing*. You would think the Lord would say, I should lose *none*. Why is it that the Lord Jesus says, "I should lose *nothing*"? Well, the point is He will lose neither their souls nor their bodies. That is what He means by saying, "lose nothing," and that is why He explains it: He will raise it up again at the last day. We believe in the glorious resurrection, and the bodies of the Lord's people are precious to Him as well as their souls. That is why we abhor the practice of cremation. The idea of cremation is that that is the end, and even with some who profess to be Christians, that is the end of the body. But when we lay the body of a child of God in the grave, that soul is already enjoying eternal bliss and blessedness with God in union with Him for ever in heaven, but that body still stands in everlasting union with Jesus. Beloved friends, let us be clear about what we believe. So Dr. Watts, personifying a child of God in the grave says,

"God my Redeemer lives  
And often from the skies  
Looks down, and watches o'er my dust,  
Till He shall bid it rise."

We believe there is a glorious resurrection of the body, to be eternally united with the soul, "and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

"And this is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Well, some of you are saying, That is the verse *before* the text. Well, it is and it sets out the eternal bliss and blessedness of the people of God, every one of them unworthy, but "saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." But here there is a point, and it is a great point with

living souls. It is a great point with those who feel their need: that these are glorious truths, and we know they belong to all God's chosen, all God's redeemed, but who are they? Who are these favoured people? Their names are in the book of life, but I cannot ascend to heaven and read the book of life. It is the Father's will, but we cannot read the Father's will. But who are these people? And if there was not a verse 40 as well as verse 39, well, we might go home this morning admiring this truth, and yet wondering and fearing and doubting, perhaps hoping. Now you see the Lord Jesus repeats it, but He comes right down to every sinner saved by grace. Who are they? Those who see the Son, the Son of God, and believe on Him. These are the given ones. These are the redeemed ones. These are the ones the Father has loved eternally. These are the ones it is His will that not one of them shall be lost: those that see the Son and believe on Him.

What a word is this: "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son." Every one lost, ruined, guilty; every one, however unworthy. You say, Manasseh? You say, Mary Magdalene? You say, The chief of sinners? "*Every one* which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

What a beautiful expression this is: "Every one which seeth the Son." If our religion is real, through the work of the Holy Spirit we shall see the Lord Jesus. We shall see Him by faith. We shall see Him as the Son of God. And seeing Him and knowing our need of Him and drawn by the Spirit of God, we shall believe on Him. And it is this:

"They rest their whole salvation here,  
Nor shall they suffer shame."

Well then, this is the glorious gospel of the grace of God in all its beautiful simplicity. Really, the previous verse is high doctrine, but then the Saviour brings it right down to seeking souls, those who feel their need, those who are guilty, those who long for forgiveness, salvation, those who long for heaven. "This is the will of Him that sent Me." It is the Father's will that "every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him." It is seeing Him by faith, seeing Him in His Word, seeing Him in the

glorious gospel of His grace, seeing Him in all His beauty, in all His suitability. It is not speaking of some kind of visionary things.

“Not with our mortal eyes  
Have we beheld the Lord;  
Yet we rejoice to hear His name,  
And love Him in His Word.”

Now don't you see Him at times in His Word, and don't you see Him at times in the gospel, and don't you see Him in His blessed suitability? Do you see Him as the Son of God? Do you see Him bleeding, dying at Calvary? Do you see Him rising from the dead? Do you see Him as an almighty Saviour? Did you get a glimpse of Him in that opening hymn (876)? Did you see Him?

“See the Lord of glory dying!  
See Him gasping! Hear Him crying!  
See His burdened bosom heave!”

Did you see Him, or did you get a little glimpse of Him? O but did you look *to* Him? For “as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

“This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him.” Now this will not be the only thing that you will see. You will be given eyes to see, because it is the will of the Father that you should see the Son, but you will see yourself, and that will be a very different sight from seeing the Son. You will see the Son in His glory and beauty and blessedness; you will see yourself in your need, your lost, ruined condition, your sin. And you will see eternity before you; and you will see the judgment day; and you will see the day of your death; and you will see the blessedness of those for whom it is the Father's will that they shall never perish but have eternal life; and you will see the vanity of this world which lieth in wickedness. O do you ever come to chapel praying (I know this in its context was an ungodly man) – but in a gracious sense, do you ever come saying, “Let me see the King's face”? I can see the face of those around and the face of the preacher, but O, “Let me see the King's face.” “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.”

Why? “To behold the beauty of the Lord.” Well, surely there are some of you here this morning who see the Son. You see yourself.

“Thine’s alas! a lost condition;  
Works cannot work thee remission,  
Nor thy goodness do thee good.”

You see yourself and you see your need, but do you see the Son, the Son of God? Do you see Him in the great work of redemption? Do you see His precious blood that atones for sin? Do you see His wonderful mercy to unworthy sinners? Do you see His precious promises? “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” O do you see the Son?

“This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him.” That is it. You see yourself, and now through grace you are brought to see the Son, and you see a suitability in Him. But there is something else, and this is the will of God. As you see yourself and as you see the Son by precious faith, there is something drawing you towards Him, something pulling you towards Him. Those desires, those prayers. “No man can come to Me” – we have it a few verses later – “except the Father which hath sent Me draw him.” And you feel those drawings. What is it?

“I must have Christ as All in all,  
Or sink in ruin, guilt, and thrall.”

And it is that going after Him, to believe upon Him to the everlasting salvation of your soul.

And what is that believing on Him? It is not just knowing that He is the Son of God. The devil knows that. We find the devils admitted that when He was here on earth. O but it is this:

“They rest their whole salvation here,  
Nor shall they suffer shame.”

It is that resting on Him and hanging on Him. You have no other foundation. You have no other plea. You have no other resting place. That believing on Him, that faith which lays hold of the Lamb.

“Every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him.” Well, in this chapter our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is speaking especially of

Himself as *the Bread of life*. “I am” – the great and glorious I AM – “I am the Bread of life.” Which simply means this: as naturally we cannot live without bread, so if our religion is real, we cannot live without Christ; and as naturally day by day we hunger and we cannot be satisfied without food, so a living soul has those inward hungerings and longings and desires, and they can only be satisfied by Christ. Now that is the believing. “I am the Bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.” Which simply means this: that the Son of God satisfies, eternally satisfies, abundantly satisfies all those who through grace, by faith, see Him and believe on Him.

“They rest their whole salvation here,  
Nor shall they suffer shame.”

When I was young, there used to be some of those little captions – you do not seem to see so much of them today – but there would perhaps be a text or the name of Jesus, and it would have little statements all beginning with the letters J-E-S-U-S, and one used to be, Jesus Exactly Suits Us Sinners. I think the next one was, Jesus Entirely Satisfies Us Sinners. Well, that is just it! Every one that seeth the Son in all His wonderful fulness of grace, love and mercy, as you see nothing but emptiness in yourself, but there is that going after Him. Those sin-bitten Israelites were dying of the poison, and Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. It was a strange remedy – a brazen serpent – but it was the only remedy, it was God’s appointed remedy, and it availed. Really it represented Christ made sin for His people. It had the appearance, but there was no venom there; there was no poison there. That deep, solemn word: “He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

“Jesus, thus for sinners smitten,  
Wounded, bruised, serpent-bitten,  
To His cross directs their faith.”

That is seeing the Son and that is believing on Him. It was a look of despairing souls but it was a look of hope; it was a look of dependence. It was not just looking *at* the brazen serpent; it was looking *to* the brazen serpent. As many as looked lived.

“Every one which seeth the Son,” however feebly, however dimly. I have often said it, without being fanciful: the children of Israel were a great multitude, very spread out. There must have been some who were so close they could see every engraving on the serpent of brass, but what about those on the verge of the camp? They could hardly see anything at all. Just in the distance they could catch a glimpse of something, and I do not suppose their sight was very good with this dreadful disease that had laid hold of them. As many as looked lived. The old godly divines, the Puritans, said that strong faith has more comfort and more happiness, but little faith will take a sinner just as much to heaven. As many as looked lived.

“That every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.” For as Jesus said, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” So if you see the Son, however feeble your sight, you will go after Him. You will. Because something will draw you and something also will push you, something will force you. Thinking about this, seeing the Son, sometimes we say, “I see from far Thy beauteous light.” Perhaps you are there this morning.

“I see from far Thy beauteous light,  
And inly sigh for Thy repose.”

Let me give you a New Testament example of this: the woman who pressed through the crowd. Well, she saw the Son, but she had seen something else. She had seen her wretched condition, her issue of blood and her weakness, and she was growing no better, but rather worse, but she had seen the Son, and what was the effect of it? She pressed through the crowd. How she got there, humanly speaking, we do not know. Spiritually we know. She could not turn back. Her case drove her on. “I must have Christ.” But there was an unseen power that drew her and that pulled her on, and if you are after Christ, if you see Him, if you want Him, if you need Him, you must have Him, but you will find something that will pull you through the crowd. “Leprous soul, press through the crowd,” says our hymnwriter. She could not be satisfied till she had touched His

garment. And that is what believing is: to come where He is, to touch the hem of His garment, even if you have to stoop right down. And we are told it was faith that did it. “Daughter ... thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.” She received the blessing.

“This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one” – not just the woman who pressed through the crowd – “every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life.” That is heaven at last, but also it includes every blessing here on earth: forgiveness, justification, adoption, righteousness, love, forgiveness, an interest in the precious blood – everything; strength equal to the day, the supply of every need – everything. “May have everlasting life” – God’s free gift, without money, without price. “And this is the Father’s will.”

“Eternal life, at His request” – that is Christ –  
“To every saint is given.”

This is it:

“Safety on earth, and, after death,  
The plenitude of heaven.”

“And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

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When the chosen tribes debated  
’Gainst their God, as hardly treated,  
And complained their hopes were spilt,  
God, for murmuring to requite them,  
Fiery serpents sent to bite them;  
Lively type of deadly guilt!

Stung by these, they soon repented;  
And their God as soon relented;  
Moses prayed; He answer gave:  
“Serpents are the beasts that strike them;  
Make of brass a serpent like them;  
That’s the way I choose to save.”

Vain was bandage, oil, or plaster;  
Rankling venom killed the faster;  
Till the serpent Moses took,  
Reared it high, that all might view it;  
Bid the bitten look up to it;  
Life attended every look.

Jesus, thus for sinners smitten,  
Wounded, bruised, serpent-bitten,  
To His cross directs their faith.  
Why should I, then, poison cherish?  
Why despair of cure, and perish?  
Look, my soul, though stung to death.

Thine's alas! a lost condition;  
Works cannot work thee remission,  
Nor thy goodness do thee good.  
Death's within thee, all about thee;  
But the remedy's without thee;  
See it in thy Saviours blood.

See the Lord of glory dying!  
See Him gasping! Hear Him crying!  
See His burdened bosom heave!  
Look, ye sinners, ye that hung Him;  
Look how deep your sins have stung Him;  
Dying sinners, look and live.

Joseph Hart