

DIVINE ANOINTING

A SERMON

Preached on Sunday Morning, November 2nd, 1862

By Mister JAMES WELLS

At the Surrey Tabernacle, Borough Road

Volume 4 Number 202

“And even as it has taught you, you shall abide in him.” 1 John 2:27

What, then, is this anointing? Is it the Holy Spirit? I answer, no, it is not the person of the Holy Spirit, but it is the work of the Holy Spirit. But even this does not fully explain what this anointing really is. John here evidently alludes to the 30th chapter of the book of Exodus. You will find there, that after certain sacrifices had been offered in the consecration of Aaron and his sons, there then was then an anointing ointment, made of myrrh, cinnamon, and calamus, cassia, and olive oil; these are five things of which that pigment was made for the anointing of the priests and Levites after the sacrifices were offered for their consecration. This holy ointment, therefore, evidently means the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is one of the forms in which the Lord is pleased to set before us the gospel, that while there is the sacrificial department, the anointing, permitting department, there is also the paradisaical state of things, which follows the sacrificial department; so that, while the sacrifices set forth the sacrificial work of Christ, this holy ointment was to set forth the happy consequences of that work of Christ, that tranquil, peaceful, savory, sweet, and pleasant state of things brought about by the work of Jesus Christ. And you will see that the state of things, indicated by this holy ointment, contrasts with several things. First, it contrasts with our state by nature. In our state by nature, we are unsavory to holiness and to justice, and to God; we are, in a word, infinitely and eternally repulsive to God. But by this sacrificial work of Jesus, we are brought into that holy and righteous, and living, and savory state, that the Lord Jesus here smells, as he said in the case of Noah, the Lord smelled a sweet savor, a savor of rest; and here we are become such by faith in Christ, a sweet savor of Christ unto God, as to be accepted of him. Also, you will perceive that this holy ointment contrasts with the fiery law of God. The commandments are, in consequence of sin, fiery commandments, that they could set even the rugged mountain of Sinai on fire. And when a fiery commandment enters into the sinner's conscience, it burns up all his supposed holiness, and righteousness, and strength, and he feels he has, as it were a fire in his bones, that he has a fiery law to meet, and he sees nothing for him as a sinner but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. And that this fiery law not only set Sinai on fire, and will thus set a sinner's conscience on fire, but will also set the globe on fire at the last great day, and will burn up the earth, and the works thereof, and will kindle, in a future world, in the souls of the lost a hell of never abating despair. Now this holy ointment, then, stands in contrast to this. The sacrifice comes in, puts an end to all this fire; the fire is ended; there is no more wrath, there is no

more curse, but this holy anointing, the savory state of things is brought in. You will see therefore, how that new Jerusalem, with its peaceful tree of life, its peaceful flowing river, and its peaceful state altogether, how it contrasts with the law of God in those fiery penalties which sin has entailed. So that, if you look closely into this matter, you will find that the anointing oil simply means the testimony of Jesus Christ. And if you run through the items of the verse in which our text as part, you will find, by substituting the word *truth*, or the word *gospel*, or *testimony of Christ*, that it will answer. Now, for instance, “the anointing which you have received of him abides in you.” Christ, in its savor, sweetness, and preciousness. “And you need not that any man teach you;” but as the same “anointing,” the same testimony, the same gospel, “teaches you all things. And now comes John’s own interpretation, “and is truth.” So, there is the interpretation, you see. So that this holy anointing oil is one of the forms in which the Lord sets forth the glorious gospel of peace, the gospel of plentifulness. “How fair and how pleasant are you, Oh love, for delights!” “And is truth and is no lie; and even as it”, this anointing, this testimony, “has taught you, you shall abide in him.” You will also perceive that the same thing is contained in the 133rd Psalm; there you have unity, spiritual and vital unity, love to God, and love to the brethren, which is in a great measure, the very essence of the theme of John in this epistle. And so, by the sacrificial perfection of Christ, and by this savory knowledge of Christ, by the truth, it is good hereby and unpleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity. The same thing is meant in the Psalm which I must not now stop to quote, but at once proceed to that language of our text, “and even as it has taught you, you shall abide in him.”

I notice, then, first, *what it has taught*; and secondly, *the summary here given*. It is all summed up in the last clause, “you shall abide in him.”

First, then, *what it has taught*. And this brings us, of course, to an essential matter; for either we are taught of God, or we are not; and if we are not taught of God, we are not children of God; for there stands the promise, “all your children shall be taught of the Lord.” There are four things indicated in the preceding clauses of this verse as to what is taught; and may the Lord help me to describe what it is to be a real partaker of this divine teaching; for if we are partakers of this divine teaching, and are taught of God as here indicated, then the last clause certainly belongs unto us, and if that belongs unto us, everything belongs unto us. “You shall abide in him.” First, then, what it has taught. First, the sacrificial perfection of Christ; second, the all-sufficiency of the gospel; third, the progression of the gospel, “the same anointing teaches you all things;” fourth, the certainty of the gospel, “and is true, and no lie,” says the apostle. First, then, the sacrificial perfection of Christ. Let us take another scripture to explain this. Now the apostle Paul says, “thanks be unto God, that always causes us to triumph in Christ.” So that the anointing here then, is nothing else but the gospel and by which we receive unto our souls that which Christ has done. Some have thought that the apostle, in that paragraph in the 2nd of second Corinthians, triumphing in Christ, where he goes on to speak of the Savior which we shall presently have to notice, some have thought that he there refers to the ancient Roman triumph on the occasion of their rejoicing when they had obtained their murderous victories. Well, I do not know whether the apostle does there allude to that or not; but I myself can find enough in the Scriptures to explain what he there means. Let us trace it out; “thanks be unto God, that always causes us to triumph in Christ.” Do you not think that in such words there is some allusion to something in the Old Testament? Shall we not go to the Old Testament, and see if we can find something that will explain to us what this triumph of Christ is? Shall we not go first to the 9th chapter of Leviticus? Shall we not find Aaron

there stretching out his hand towards the people, and blessing them? Shall we not find him coming down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offering? Shall we not recognize the force of these characteristics of these offerings? The sin offering to take away my sin; so, Christ is a sin offering to take away sin. The burnt offering to bear the curse, the wrath, due to me; so, Christ is the burnt offering. And the peace offering; so, Christ is made peace by his precious blood. And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation. Whether Moses there personates the law I will not say; but I will merely throw out the suggestion as I go along, that Moses and Aaron came out, and blessed all the people. Here perhaps, is union of law and gospel, for the law is certainly established and magnified by what Christ has done. And the fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifices, which when the people saw they shouted and fell on their faces. Here you have the triumphing in Christ. And so, for a poor sinner to stand trembling and say, now then, while the fire of divine wrath fall upon me, is there sin offerings anywhere? Is there a burnt offering anywhere? Is there peace offering anywhere? And when they saw the fire descended upon the offering, and they escaped, the people shouted and fell on their faces. And just so now, when a poor sinner says to himself, here am I, a sinner and I know what my destiny must be without a sin offering for me; I know what my destiny must be without a burnt offering for me; I know what my destiny must be without a peace offering for me. By-and-by "whosoever believes in him has everlasting life." You see Jesus, the sin offering, the burnt offering, the peace offering, and you rejoice in the entire exemption from sin, from wrath, and from trouble; the sin offering exempts entirely from sin, the burnt offering exempts entirely from wrath, and the peace offering exempts entirely from trouble; so that you shall sorrow no more at all. Here, then, "The anointing," my text says, at least, the preceding clauses, "which you have received of him abides in you." Now notice, then, the typical anointing was external, upon the person externally; but here it says, "The anointing which you have received abides in you." now, take it the way I have stated; take the little key in connection with the text, it is the truth, and read it in that way; the testimony which you have received of Christ, as the sin offering, burnt offering, and peace offering, abides in you. Is not that the truth? Where not many of us, years ago, favored to receive the testimony, and has it not abode with us? Has not Jesus Christ, as the sin offering, the burnt offering, and peace offering, been our hope from that day to this? Is it not our life from that day to this? Has it not been our everything from that day to this? Here, then is the anointing. So that, if you know anything of this divine anointing it consists in receiving into the soul, in its lively, savory, Christ enduring power, what Christ has done, causing us thus to triumph in Christ. Take another instance. When Solomon had dedicated the temple, there were sacrifices there pointing out the same thing; and when the fire descended the people escape, and the fire consume, they are accepted, for that is the idea, the sacrifices on their behalf; the people greatly rejoice, And they explained, perhaps in a way I cannot, and shall not attempt even to imitate; but still there seems to me to be great emphasis there when they saw this fire descended, and saw how there were the sacrifice accepted for them, and they explained with one heart and one voice, "The Lord," that is, Jehovah, "Jehovah is good, and his mercy endures forever." So that they recognized typically the eternity of the mercy of God that is, by Christ. Have you done this, my hearer? Have you in your understanding, in your faith, in your hope, and in your soul, recognized by the sacrifice of Christ, and eternity of mercy? "The Lord, he is good," implies we are everything that is bad; he is everything that is good; "his mercy endures forever." "Thanks," then, says the apostle, "be unto God, that always causes us to triumph in Christ." Take another instance. Here is a poor sinner hesitating between the two Gospels; that we are ready almost to smile at the people of old for being so simple so silly, as to think of worshiping Baal; but I can tell you there were 450 prophets, and

they made Baals religion appear more feasible than you may think they did, very feasible, and took the people away, and the people halted between two opinions, did not know which way to go. And are there not some now, are there not Gospels in our day that it requires an eagle eye to see that they are false gospels? Are there not Gospels in our day that would, if possible, deceive the very elect? Men make them appear feasible. But good old Elijah would have none of them. There he stood alone; he stood out at the hazard of his life for God's truth; and he said, "why halt you between two opinions? If Jehovah be the Interposer, worship him; if Baal, follow him." Let us decide the matter. And it was decided sacrificially; and when the people saw the fire come down from heaven upon the sacrifice and consume it; not only the sacrifice, but the wood, the stones, the dust, and the water, I would not be fanciful, but I can never divest my mind of the idea that the wood, the stones, the dust, and the water, have some reference to those burdens the Savior bare; and that all our sins, and burdens, and evils, were consumed when Christ suffered at Calvary's cross. There the fire fell upon him; there my hard heartedness was consumed there all my burdens were consumed, my mortality was consumed. The whole world, I and all by nature, have drunk in iniquity like water, but there it was all consumed, there was an end to it all. And when the people saw this, they explained "Jehovah, he is the Interposer; Jehovah, he is the Interposer!" I am giving the words now translating them; the reading in our own version is "the Lord, he is God; the Lord he is the God!" That is not a very unusual form of speech in the Bible; the definite article preceding the noun in that case. It does not say "the Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God!" But "the Lord, he the God; the Lord, he is the God!" As you may see by referring to I Kings 18, "the Lord, he is the God!" Translated, it is "Jehovah, he is the Interposer; Jehovah, he is the Interposer!" Repetition for confirmation. And thus, then, when we look at these sacrifices, we see what the meaning of the apostle is "thanks be to God, that causes us to triumph in Christ."

Now, when Aaron and his sons were sacrificially consecrated, then came the anointing, to denote the savory state of things, pleasing, delightful state of things brought about by these sacrifices. Here is something very pleasing, that, on the one hand, sin has brought about an unsavory state of things; that is a self-evident truth, that sin has brought about an unsavory state of things; it gives it ill savor to everything under the sun, more or less; but salvation has brought about the savory state of things, a pleasant state of things. I repeat the words once more of the 133rd Psalm, "how good and how pleasant", here, in and by this savory testimony of what Christ has done; "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" So then, "even as it has taught you." Has it taught us this lesson, then, this twofold contrastive lesson? First, the unsavory state of things that sin has brought about; on the other hand, the savory state of things which the sacrificial perfection of Christ alone could bring about; and that he has brought that state of things about; "this day shall you be in paradise." Paradise, Lord, paradise? Is there, after all that sin is done, such a place is paradise? Is there, after all that's transgression has done, such a place is paradise? Is there after all the manifestation of the fiery law, is there any other place than hell? Yes, there is, there is paradise. But how comes that to pass? It was given to me before the world was, and I had to reach that paradise through all your sins, through the fire of God's wrath; I had to meet your sins and troubles, meet that wrath and beat death, and beat Satan; beat the whole, conquer the whole, put an end to all ill savor. So that his name thus becomes ointment poured forth. "Even as it has taught you." Of course, the natural man does not care about this but the man that is taught of God does. And you will see that I am in perfect order here in view of the matter; I mean to receive this testimony of what Christ has done as an evidence of being anointed by the Spirit of God; of receiving the truth in the savor of it. The Savior said, "Everyone that has heard and learned

of the Father comes unto me.” Unto such then the question is put, “what you also go away?” “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” “Even as it,” this anointing, this testimony “has taught you.” Stop here for a moment and look at the certainty that we have been thus taught. If the Lord meant to kill you, he would not have shown you what Christ has done, he would not have shown you this in a savory way; and if it be given you by the Spirit of God, it is done in a savory way. There will in your soul be a living desire for more of these things; there will be in your soul more or less of endearment of the Savior. I think that to be the meaning of that clause.

But let us go on with the apostle’s words. He, bearing on this very subject says that “He causes us to triumph in Christ, and makes manifest by us the savor of his knowledge in every place.” Now, under the Old Testament dispensation, Aaron and his sons made manifest the savor of divine knowledge in one place, either the tabernacle or the temple; but the mission of the apostles was a cosmopolitan mission, it was to all the world; and therefore “He makes manifest the savor of his knowledge and every place. We having received a savory acquaintance with what Christ has done, wherever we go we preach the same to others. The consequence is, the Lord blesses his word; he is with us; sinners are made to feel they are sinners; they are brought to believe in Jesus, and receive him, and they become as salted with the same salt; they become graced with the same grace; they become anointed with the same holy oil; they receive the same gospel; they drink in the same truth; they understand the same order of things; they glory in the same salvation. But and again let us have a word more upon the savor. The apostle goes on to give us to understand that they were a sweet savor there hereby; having received this testimony of what Christ has done, they were a sweet savor of Christ unto God in them that are saved, and them that perish. To the one, they were a savor of life unto life; to the other, a savor of death unto death. Now, we will have a word upon this presently. This, perhaps, may be a little digressive, but I feel I must have a word upon it. Now, the apostle says, “We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ.” There were four things essential to make the apostles a sweet savor of Christ unto God in their ministration; and the same four things are essential now in every minister to make him a sweet savor of Christ unto God. And what were these four things? The first was, that they preach the gospel, the only gospel; that they testified this grace of God; that they preached among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. That is one thing that made them a sweet savor of Christ unto God, because they preached God’s gospel, Christ’s gospel. The second thing was because they preached it sincerely. “For we,” he says, “are not as many, that corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerely in the sight of God speak we in Christ.” They preach from their own soul’s experience. Christian, be careful how you give your testimony. Never mind how humble your experience may be, how few your joys, or how many mistakes you may make, in some respects, in your judgment; drink water nevertheless out of your own cistern; let them be your own; that your testimony be the testimony of your own soul’s experience in your own souls conviction, and then it will be real that your testimony be such as you can call the God of heaven to witness and approve, as the apostle there does. He says, in the sight of God we pray, our question is not what men think of our prayers, but that God will hear and answer us. When we preach, our question is not whether the people frown or smile, whether they think the minister out of order or in order; our question is, is it God’s gospel? Am I speaking as is right in his sight? If it be his will to take me into eternity when I close my sermon can I fall back, notwithstanding the infirmities that might mingle with my sermon, can I fall back upon motive, and say that in sincerity I have testified of the gospel of the grace of God? If we have not done this sincerely, then we savor of hypocrisy, and not of right reality. That is the second thing,

then, that made them a sweet savor of Christ unto God. First, because they preach God's gospel; second because they preached it sincerely. The third thing essential to make them a sweet savor to Christ unto God, was rightly dividing the word of truth; that is to say, rightly discriminating character. They would point out the man that is dead in sin, and declared to him, faithfully so, if he died in that state he must be lost; and thus, they would rightly discriminate character they would point out a sinner sensible of what he was as a sinner; little child, and such a one, may be, is looking unto Jesus, and desiring to find mercy. They would feed these lambs; they would bring the sincere milk of the word for those newborn babes; and recognizing in them a conviction of their state, recognizing in them simplicity and sincerity, and be unto such a savor of life unto life. We testify, little children, yet you are but little children, little in your faith and little in your knowledge and little in your understanding and little in your enjoyment and little in your prayers, it is a mere whisper out of the dust; yet, little children we can see that you are children; we can see the anointing, the testimony which you have received, abides in you; and if there be nothing else to prove that you are children, this proves that you are children. And so, we write unto you, little children, we have not passed you by, we will tell you that your sins are forgiven you; and we are telling you this, telling you of your interest and sacrificial achievement, and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, of your eternal security. You shall abide in him. The fourth thing essential to make them a sweet savor of Christ unto God was, that they defended the gospel. They not only preach the gospel, and preached it sincerely, and rightly discriminated characters; did not wrongly discriminate; they did not discriminate character upon mere moral principles, but upon higher principles, upon spiritual principles. Born of God, not were not born of God, was the watchword with them. Not only did they thus preach the gospel of God, and preach it sincerely, and rightly discriminate character but they defended the gospel of God. Their very soul souls abhorred that amalgamation that is so fashionable in our day. See the apostle's epistle to the Galatians. See those anathemas he there deals out against all heretical powers. Now, these are four things essential to make every minister and every Christian a sweet savor of Christ unto God. Now, is it so with us? Can you say that you can really bear testimony from your own experience that it is entirely of grace, from first to last? Secondly, can you do so sincerely? Are the evils and corruption of your heart such enemies to you to your soul, they bring you from time to time into bondage, injure you in everything that is sacred and spiritual, so that you have no reason whatsoever to boast, but, on the other hand, every reason to loathe yourself in your own sight, so that you give that testimony sincerely? Can you say this? And then, third, that you love discrimination of character, that you are often fearing that you do not bear the marks of a living soul; that this is a matter of anxiety with you; and that when the Lord so leads the minister, that you may hear, as to describe vividly wherewith in the people of God are made to differ from each other, that it has been pleasant to you to trace out, step-by-step, his description of your souls experiences, can you say you love this discriminating work? If so, then you are a sweet savor of Christ unto God; you are taught of God. And then, do you love the defending of the gospel as well? Here is where great many fail. We naturally defend and protect that which we love; and if our love to the gospel be real, we shall defend it, and stand by it. Some of you, perhaps, may not like some of those sermons that are rather sharp and cutting. Great fault was found, last Sunday morning, with my sermon; and those who found fault were perhaps right in so doing. I never recollect having preached a sermon that more satisfied my conscience than that sermon does.

But I must hasten through to the other clauses. "You need not that any man teach you." We do not need any man to make a prayer for us. God teaches us to pray. Well, but John the Baptist taught

his disciples to pray, say some. "Master, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples to pray." John never taught his disciples a form of prayer; he taught them after what manner to pray. They had been taught to pray after the manner of the elders, and John taught them better manners. Their prayers were after bad manners; they were un-gospel and unscriptural manners, and John taught them good manners in prayer. And so, the Savior says, well, you shall not be behind John's disciples; I will teach you after what manner to pray; and so, when you pray, pray after this manner. I wish you to pray after a proper manner. So that we need not any man to teach us to pray. God teaches us to pray. He brings us to know the sacrificial perfection of the dear Redeemer, and we come in that dear name. Whatever my sin or sorrow may be, if precious faith lay hold of Jesus name, the victory is mine. Down go all my fears, up raises my soul, and I am brought into the presence of God, and all the welcome of everlasting love; approved, received, and taken care of, and kept even as the apple of his eye. We need not any man to teach us how to pray; we need not any man to teach us another gospel. No; they may keep their 'cat of thirty nine tails' to themselves, or articles as they call them. We need not men to make a creed for us, we want no man to teach us; it is already done, it is already made. And hence the Lord speaks thus: "they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying: Know you Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, says the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." The apostle commenting upon this part speaks in this way: "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." My hearer, would you hear a gospel that runs counter to this? Here is the sacrificial perfection of Christ, in which sin is forever forgiven, forever forgotten, blotted out, and blotted out forever, and this God is your God forever and forever, your friend forever, your life forever, your light forever, your strength forever, your salvation forever. "You need not any man teach you." What a sweet position to be in; is it not? "The atoning which you have received of him abides in you;" you need not the gospels of men. Let me have a word here upon this holy oil. There was a threefold prohibition concerning this holy oil. One was, they were to put it upon no man's flesh. I like that. I do not want to hurt your tender feelings, some of you, as I could upon that score. Dear old free will and duty faith, what a lashing I could give them! But I will not do so now. They were to put it upon no man's flesh. You put the gospel upon the fleshly efforts of the creature, and say you have got a free will, and try to make that man a Christian after the flesh; that is putting it on the flesh, that is making a fleshly concern of it. And you duty faith men, with your Calvinistic heads and Arminian hearts, you belong in reality to the same tribe, you rest the salvation of the creature upon the creature's duty; that is putting it upon the flesh. The gospel is not to rest upon the flesh. What do you say to the flesh Paul? Say? Why, there is no good in it; it is corrupt and must at death come to corruption. He is not a Jew who is one after the flesh, but he who is one after the spirit, circumcised in spirit, and whose praise is not of men, but of God, nor put it upon the flesh. We will not have a fleshly conversion, nor a fleshly Christian, nor a fleshly doctrine; the old man dressed up and made to look as much as possible like the new man; but it is the old man still, dressed up as you may. We must have the new man; you must be a new creature; "You must be born again." The second prohibition was, they were not to put it upon a stranger, a man that is a stranger to soul conviction; and yet you are to give promises to him, are you? Offer the promises to him, and offer the gospel to him, and so delude the man that he is a Christian, when at the same time he is not, and can give no personal testimony of any change he is undergone? This is putting the gospel upon a stranger and making out this man that is a stranger to his own heart, the stranger to the majesty of God's law and the stranger to the sacrificial achievements of Christ; yet the gospel is put upon him. Yes, dear brother; yes, you will go to heaven. Only got your word for it, though,

and I should be very sorry to rest upon that, for “cursed is the man that trusts in man.” And as the third prohibition was that any person that should make any like it was to be cut off from among the people. The Lord have mercy upon the present day, then; for all! How many gospels there are that are made! All come to the Scriptures. Roman Catholics? Oh yes, oh yes, sir, we rest upon the Scriptures. And so, all the sects and parties that rest upon the Scriptures; and so, they compound and compound, and mix up, and a pretty mixture it is, all sorts of things. Well, this is the gospel, sir. It looks very much like it sir but I know it is not the gospel. Now, such were to be cut off. Now, these things are solemn in their meeting. “The anointing,” the testimony, “which you have received of him abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing,” the same testimony, “teaches you of all things.” The same gospel, notice that. We do not want to change; the same gospel, the same peaceful, paradisaical, pleasant, savory, healing, soothing, delightful gospel, teaches us of all things. I have not to go anywhere else; keep close to Jesus Christ. And I will venture my Christian and ministerial honor upon the assertion, when I say, keep close, grace enabling you, to Jesus Christ, and you will never want to get anything pertaining to your eternal welfare that is not found in him. “Learn of me,” says Christ. All we shall want to learn concerning the meaning of the Scriptures, concerning the meaning of all our feelings and circumstances, they are all learned in Christ Jesus the Lord. Now is it not so? Here is the field upon this part; “teach you all things.” Oh, how many troubles we have had, and perhaps we shall have! But the gospel will teach us the meaning of them, the why and the wherefore of them, and there is a need be, and it comes out at last that it is to humble us, and to prove us and that we might more fully appreciate the riches of the grace of God. Would the apostle ever have realized is so much but for the thorn in his flesh, when the Lord said, “My grace is sufficient for you; my strength is made perfect in weakness” So we may go to learning on by Christ Jesus the Lord.

I see I cannot get close to the subject this morning, though I cannot say when I may preach from it again.