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Pastor's Golden Wedding Day.

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GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS

Monday evening Prayer meeting 7th. Dec. 1964 at Clapham.

Hymns 420, 730. First Reading Psalm 103.

Address. :- This is a wonderful Psalm of exhortation to bless and praise God, and there are particular things mentioned in it which are vital to the salvation of our souls to which I might just refer for I do not intend to keep you with a long address this evening.

One point here is Forgiving. Verse 3 "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities". This great matter of forgiveness enters into the very life of the gospel, and is a blessed experience when it is known and felt in the purging of the conscience and the sweet peace that attends this particular blessing. It is very softening and humbling, too, when we realise what is involved in this, in the shedding of Christ's precious blood as an atonement for our sins, without which sacrifice there could be no forgiveness. It is a great mercy to feel a hope in this for a moment as we do when that sweet peace flows in and we can feel that there are no mountains between our soul and God; and this I hope I have felt. If not deceived I can look back very clearly to that memorable night particularly when I felt forgiveness, and a complete removing of the burden of my guilt so that in my soul, just then, it was like a cloudless sky.

Another point in the same verse is Healing, "Who healeth all thy diseases". This can refer both to body and soul. As I look back upon my illness and affliction in 1962 I am reminded of the Lord's favour to me in it and in granting healing mercies and in relation to this point both my dear wife and myself can testify to the Lord's goodness to us in our soul's experience through His mercy both in forgiving and healing.

A third point is Redeeming. Verse 4. "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies". He crowns us with them although this incorporates a path of trial and affliction more or less, yet even so the great and mighty work of Redemption shines throughout the Gospel; and to feel a hope in our souls that the Lord has delivered us from a deserved hell, has redeemed us from all iniquity and has prepared an heavenly inheritance for us is an amazing mercy. So we have cause in this aspect to acknowledge the Lord's mercies to us.

I realise that this is a particular occasion. In the Scriptures we are exhorted to remember all the way the Lord our God has led us. This, of course, can take us back to the days of childhood, youth and later years. Therefore, I may perhaps, (this being a Golden Jubilee Day), be forgiven if I just make one or two

personal references.

My mind goes back, it has done today quite a lot, to the 7th. Dec. 1914 when we were married united together at Hanover Chapel in Tunbridge Wells by our Pastor the late Mr. J.K. Popham of Galeed, Brighton. He married us there. That was a very happy to me both in natural and spiritual aspect. The Lord had provided me with a wife in His good providence, and on that particular day He favoured me in my soul. As I was going up to Tunbridge Wells, I believe I can say my heart was softened by what seemed like a tender whisper, as the Lord's voice saying, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." I remember the effect it had upon me. It was a happy day indeed, and, although they were struggling times with us in a business way, yet the good hand of our God went before us, our needs were provided for and what we felt was an answer to prayer in that and other particulars was granted us. We settled in our home at Brighton in the business there, and in the Lord's own good time we were favoured in our souls and were able to join in union with the church at Galeed. I joined in 1916, and my dear wife joined in 1927.

We look back upon both occasions, occasions on which I could entertain you for an hour or two if I were to enter into particulars relating to those memorable times, but all I can say now is that the Lord was better to us than all our sins deserve. On the Monday night I was invited to come before the Church, which I did, for my soul was alive with the love of God. I felt filled with it. My fears were taken away, and I walked in the light of His countenance for a time, so I felt it was the right time to walk in His ways.

When the time came, after eleven years of waiting, the Lord favoured my dear wife, blessed her soul, and it was a sweet time of liberty, a time to be remembered although sometimes it seemed that it would never come. After I had given my testimony to the Church, and at the time I was baptised, being favoured in my soul, I felt that I could have turned round and spoken to the congregation of the Lord's goodness and mercy.

In March 1929, I preached my first sermon at Galeed Chapel, after passing through an experience which I have not time to relate now with all that was involved in it, relating to the way the Lord appeared to me on the following memorable Sunday evening when I preached at Galeed. I had never spoken before a public congregation before, and there were there I should say from 400/500 people. When I went down into the pulpit the Lord brought an amazing quietness into my heart, and when I attempted to speak the subject, Philippians 3. 10. opened up to my view, and, what was

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like a miracle to me, and everybody else, I was helped to speak the full time, and although I was a physical wreck, before, after the sermon I felt well, like another man. Days to remember indeed.

In 1933 I had an invitation to the Pastorate here and commenced a period of probation in Jan. 1935. In the April of that year there was a church meeting at which Mr. Sawyer presided and you gave me a unanimous invitation. That is now practically 30 years ago and what can I say of my wife and myself in these matters? My dear wife has been a real support to me in every way in the heavy things through which we have passed as some of them have been. When I have felt low and cast down, here and there, with her naturally bright disposition, and in spiritual things too, she has been a strength and stay, through the Lord's mercy. I have nothing good to say of myself, but the forbearance of the Lord has been great to me, and I am happy to record the Lord's goodness in that I have been favoured with a loyal and kind people here which has been a wonderful mercy for me, considering what I am and the wickedness of my poor heart; but as a Pastor I am thankful to be favoured with a loyal people, and as I have travelled about the country, sometimes I have felt a softening of heart as I have thought of you, and especially when I have had to do with trying things in other places.

So the Lord has brought us hitherto, and what can I say but what I have read, "BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL, AND ALL THAT IS WITHIN ME, BLESS HIS HOLY NAME"

I do not feel I must keep you longer at this stage because this is a Prayer Meeting, and on this occasion you will understand that I cannot ask all of our brethren to speak, but I would like to ask our deacons to pray, and two brethren who are seldom able to be with us; one a relative, and the other, one who has been for a number of years in communion with us, but may soon have to leave us. Engaged in prayer:- Mr. West; Mr. Stevens. Mr. Collins.

Second Reading: 23rd. Psalm.

Mr. Relf . Mr Sayers.

Pastor (Mr. J. Delves) concluded.

I have to say, friends, that again, my wife and I have been the recipients of your kindness to us in a presentation of which we had no knowledge whatever until this morning; but on behalf of my wife and myself, I would desire to convey to you our appreciation of your kind thought in the gift of a very valuable chiming time-piece, also a really beautiful basket of flowers. The clock has an engraving on it as a testimonial to our Golden Jubilee, also the 30 years of my Pastorate among you.