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GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS

Prayer Meeting Address by Mr. J. Delves at "Ebenezer", Clapham on
Saturday, 16th. August, 1952 52/0
Hymns 755, 23 Reading: Psalm 51. 1 John 1

This Psalm is one remarkable instance of sanctifying grace and reveals the frame of mind the author was in under peculiarly distressing conditions. It has a very strong personal bearing. He was before God with his own case, and so shall we have to be if we have a real religion. His convictions were very deep, and his confessions real. He had been brought to real repentance for his base transgression, and had been brought to realise that he had sinned in the sight of God. His prayer is largely for cleansing. It is mentioned several times. "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin." It is an amazing mercy that God should ever so reveal Himself as sin-forgiving, and it is a great thing to feel the ease that confession brings to a sin-weighted conscience, and an amazing mercy to receive that cleansing power, and to feel the blessedness of sin forgiven. "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

But not only did the Psalmist pray for this cleansing. He prayed also for keeping grace. He prayed to be upheld in the future. "Uphold me with Thy free Spirit. Cast me not away from Thy presence and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." He had a deep consciousness of a need of the Holy Ghost, and it is a mercy to be brought to feel a need of the Spirit of God, to preserve and keep us from evil and to apply to the conscience the Balm of Gilead, the healing virtue of the blood of Christ. He prays for communion. "Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation." He evidently had been under the hidings of the Lord's face, under a withholding of what he had formerly enjoyed, and he seems to be deeply concerned to be restored to that communion and to the enjoyment of the Lord's felt presence. "Cast me not away from Thy presence. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation." It

is not so very much that we feel of the joy of salvation, but when a poor sinner does get a taste of forgiveness and a touch of the Lord's sweet love, then he knows what the joy of salvation is. It is indeed a wonderful mercy to feel a ground of hope that our sins were removed at Calvary, and to have flowing into the heart a little of the joy of forgiveness. When we get that we can offer the best sacrifice a poor sinner can offer, the sacrifice of a broken and a contrite heart. O may the Lord help us to look to Him and to feel a consciousness of His gracious presence. May He help us to draw near in full assurance of faith, with a heart cleansed by the blood of sprinkling, that we may obtain mercy now, and find grace to help in this time of need.