

Pastor's 25th Anniversary - Gospel commitments (Quality: Good)

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Date: 05 March 2005

Preacher: Wood, Clement (1920-2010)

[0 : 00] May the Lord help us to continue the worship of his holy name this evening by singing the first hymn on the hymn sheet for the evening service to hymn number one, which is 405 in the Gatsby's hymn book.

Tune Church Triumphant 868 Twixt Jesus and the chosen race subsists a bond of sovereign grace that hell with its infernal train shall ne'er dissolve nor rend in twain this sacred bond shall never break though earth should to her centre shine rest doubting sight assured of this for God has pledged his holiness.

the first hymn meanings as I will Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[3 : 25] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

The children feasting right sent thee, and what your children did, as if all the angelsjes
Kazim zum 1 Thank you.

[6 : 25] In the realm of authority revealed and it's thy thy Adrians tree.

The first epistle to Timothy, part of chapter 1, and the second epistle to Timothy, part of chapter 1.

The first epistle to Timothy, chapter 1, we read from verse 11 to verse 17.

Verse 11. According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust, and I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious.

But I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

[8 : 18] And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.

This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

Howbeit, for this cause, I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, the honor and glory forever and ever.

Amen. We turn now to the second epistle to Timothy, chapter 1, reading down as far as verse 14.

[10 : 00] Second epistle, Timothy, chapter 1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, my dearly beloved son, grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus, our Lord.

I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day, greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy.

when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois and in thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also.

Wherefore, I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour,

[12 : 44] Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, whereunto I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles, for which cause I offer I also suffer these things.

Nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, that good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in me.

The Lord bless his word and help us now in prayer. Almighty Lord God of heaven and of earth, in whom we live and move and have our being, it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed.

New every morning are thy compassions, great is thy faithfulness. And throughout life's journey, Lord, there are landmarks in the way, special days of thanksgiving and praise.

[14 : 43] And we come on this day united with our beloved friends here and their beloved pastor and our beloved friend to acknowledge the goodness of Almighty God in maintaining his lot these 25 years amidst this dear people.

Therefore we are gathered, Lord, to give praise to thy great and holy name for the appointment of heaven, heaven, for raising up thy servant, for the exercise between him and the dear people here, for the bringing together, and now for the walking together, and the ministry together, that love one to the other, that bearing of one another's burdens, that walking together in the unity of the spirit, and in the bond of peace, and for those seasons of blessing, for the preaching of the glorious gospel, in its faithfulness, in its love, and yet together in its searchings and its siftings, we thank thee for every evidence of thy blessing, the power of the spirit, in the conversion of sinners, in the encouragement of the seeker, in the confirming of the age saint, and in the restoration of the backslider, and we come now,

O God, to give glory to thy great and holy name, for this precious gift to this dear people here, and we pray now, that these blessings not only may continue, but that they may increase, that much may be done still, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that there may be those, the stranger, the outcast, the ready to perish, whom thou hast appointed unto life eternal, to be gathered in with these walls, to hear the sound of the gospel, O gracious God, we pray, may thy work appear, may thy word be abundantly blessed, to strengthen our beloved friend, Lord, we stand amazed at the strength given, the help afforded, not only in the maintaining his ministry, in the pastoring, that,

Lord, the many, many journeys up and down the land, in preaching the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, we thank thee for thy care over him, and for that blessing following that ministry, not only here, but elsewhere, and the love that is felt in Zion, toward our dear friend, we pray thy blessing too, and strength be given in his duties, in committee work, Lord, also very needful, very great need of help from heaven, that wisdom which is pure and peaceable, grant it to him, and bless him, bless him here with the dear people, and Lord, may there be a flowing together to the goodness of the Lord, and may thy blessing rest upon the ministry, may be blessed upon the instruction given to the young, may there be seasons of blessing at the communion service,

Lord, we sometimes wonder whether we give sufficient exercise and concern for this service, that it may not be rushed into, hastily attended to and forgotten, Lord, impress deeply upon our minds what we're doing, and we pray that thy blessing may be upon us, and the effect of it known in our hearts, that their hearts so hard may be softened, and that there may be a leading forth of thy spirit by our faith to Calvary, to view by faith the Lamb of God, the streams of blood and water from the river and side of Christ, and view our salvation, behold our pardon, and Lord, bless and praise thee, and thank thee for all thy mercies, mingled our needle with a broken heart, and contrite spirit with that spirit of true repentance for our sin.

[19 : 54] O that we may be favored as one dear man was able to say, though we can natural knowledge, he could say, I've seen yon lovely man.

We pray, dear Lord, thy blessing on all the dear friends gathered here, the light blessings to be upon them, thy dear servants, do, Lord, grant reviving in Zion, a building up, and Lord, do we pray thee break through the solemn silence that so often seems to abound in the churches, may there be a speaking one to the other, more Christian conversation, Lord, we pray that this may be so, we beseech thee.

No, Lord, we would come in thanksgiving then for all thy mercies, but conscious, deeply conscious, of our sinfulness.

Lord, we don't go better as we grow older, we feel more than ever, more than ever, our sinfulness, our need of constant cleansing, oh, wash me and make me whiter than snow, oh, for that closer walk, oh, for larger communion, oh, that the beauty of the Lord, our God, may be upon us, oh, put thy gracious hands on me, and make me all I ought to be.

So, our gracious God, we pray thy blessing to follow the ministry of our dear friends this afternoon, and help a poor man to continue, that I may not mar what has already been attended to, but that there may be that unity of the Spirit and that flowing of divine truth from the pulpit into the hearts of the hearers for the praise and glory of Jesus Christ.

[22 : 07] May the words of my mouth, meditation of our heart, be acceptable in thy sight, oh, Lord, our strength, our Redeemer, we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

Shall we continue with God's help by singing the second hymn on the hymn sheet, which is Gatsby's number 184, Junisor Chapel 816.

A fullness resides in Jesus, our head, and ever abides to answer our need. The Father's good pleasure is laid up in store, a plentiful treasure to give to the poor.

The second hymn. one famous is third one hymn, and ever end as this is going high within us and as a good way.

season Do have no Christ la C■ Puisque Dios sa Chó Oh Oh Oh

[24 : 50] Oh Oh Oh Our world who alive Still toy in this God Al great now for days Lifesely comekur
We are now sons of the matching

Life of µedas For everything All heaven is there, Thou with the people.

The thankful grace Will give us his love.

For him■■■, And joyousavenue, For now he can have Start Jesus along.

En daar was Ape, O pijngehoordheid.

[27 : 22] Is wafel Wie ein, Er kan Apeelief ps ■■■■■.

And when we are taking and making the light, of heaven we romper, and there is proof
that the Lord newel panels request you to concern about the Lord.

Lord, that all needed help, I venture this evening to draw your prayerful attention to two
portions.

First, you will find in the first epistle to Timothy, chapter 1 and verse 11. First epistle to
Timothy, chapter 1, verse 11.

The glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.

[28 : 59] The other is in the second epistle to Timothy, chapter 1 and a part of verse 12.

Second epistle to Timothy, chapter 1, verse 12, and the last part. For I know whom I have
believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him
against that day.

Reading the two scriptures then, the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was
committed to my trust.

I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have
committed unto him against that day.

waiting upon thee, Lord, in earnest prayer, exercise of soul, concern over this evening
service.

[30 : 10] My mind was directed to this word that appears in both verses and that is committed. And
in examining them, I was tossed.

But I remember a dear minister, it was Mr. Tyler of Dicker. I asked him once, I said, what
does a young minister do if he has two texts of mine?

He said, well, try and seek the guidance of one, but if, or at least, bring the other in.

This evening, I admit, taking an unusual step, I felt I could not part the two, but pray that
God will help me. I feel to need it.

His help to speak on this solemn, blessed day of thanksgiving and of praise. First, we will
speak, as enabled of these words, the blessed God, that is the glorious gospel of the
blessed God.

[31 : 19] All spiritual, providential blessings flow from heaven to poor, guilty, lost sinners. And poor
sinners, saved by grace, redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, desire to call upon all
that is within them to bless his great and holy name.

And to prove, sinful as they are, helpless as they are, unworthy as they are, that in Christ,
as you've just been singing, such a fullness, the blessed God, the blessings of his
abounding grace, the blessings of the pardon of sin, the blessings of the invaluable,
precious blood of Jesus Christ, the wonder of that best robe, the wonder of that precious,
indestructible faith of that good hope through grace, for those exceeding great and
precious promises given to poor sinners.

Oh, poor thing, do you feel like this poor man? Full of sin? When I say that, I know more of my sin than I've ever known in my life.

You may say, man, what have you been doing? I've been trying to walk in the fear of God, but I see sin where I never saw it before. I see it in the thoughts of my mind.

I see this inward, indwelling sin, this old man that gives one so much trouble that, oh, blessed be God, the fullness that there is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

[33 : 36] I come now and you will observe, and I must say it, our dear friend this afternoon was led to follow very much.

He didn't know anything was on my mind, follow very much, and the spiritual exercises of my soul and the meditations friends, upon this word, but I freely speak what the Lord has given me.

I do not just seek to copy any man. I pray to, like all God's servants, to preach the truth. Yes, be like them, but my friend, may it come from my heart as taught by the Spirit of God, this glorious gospel, and you've been singing that first hymn of that eternity past, and that glory in that eternity past, where we read how that is, let me just find that line that was on my mind there, sorry, that hail sacred union firm and strong, how great the grace, how sweet the song, that worms of earth, does that offend you?

Worms of earth should ever be one with incarnate deity, and in the eternity past, it was this line, on them his chosen people, that great multitude, that shall be found in heaven at last, in robes of white, on them his fond affections ran, before creation work began.

This glorious gospel revealed gradually, as it were, through the old testament, seen in the garden of Eden, oh yes you say the devil was there, he was, oh yes you say, but look at the curse, it was, nothing else, nothing about the gospel, no hope, yes, that it should bruise the serpent's head, also we see, and I feel it's right, to view in the garments provided for Adam and Eve, the slaying of a beast, blood shed, I know no blood of any beast, of all those sacrifices could ever wash away sin, who gave that acceptance to God in that way, but not by way of pardon or peace, but my friend, go through and see the unfolding of the purpose of

[36 : 37] God, see the glorious light beginning to shine, see it as you hear and view those sacrifices of old, as you see the lamb without blemish and without blood, as you see the blood, as you see and hear the word of heaven, when I see the blood, I will pass over you, as you look there at the brazen serpent set high upon the forest, you say, that's me, Lord, I'm there, I'm a serpent bitten sinner, oh, my friend, but yes, many will know about that serpent, many will know about Jesus dying on the cross, but have they looked, they cannot look until God begins that work in their heart, and when he begins that work in their heart, they'll know they're a sinner, they'll know they're lost, they know they're ruined, they know they're far off from God, and they will be brought not to look at their religion, when I say religion, their upbringing, thank God for it, but not to rest upon it, it's Christ Jesus only for my soul, the glorious gospel as the coming of the dear saviour, for unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called, let me just turn that, you must bear with me, in my old age, my mind does seem to fail in some ways,

I have to thank God, for unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called wonderful counsellor, the mighty God, and the everlasting father, and the prince of peace, shining, go to Bethlehem, shepherds keeping watch, directed, an angel from heaven, of glory, the light of the gospel, tidings, fear not, I bring unto you good tidings, which will be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a saviour, which is Christ the Lord, this is the glorious gospel, here it is, here's the gift of God, no greater gift, thanks be unto God, than his unspeakable guest, and trace through his life here on earth, and see the man of sorrows, see him in his loneliness, in his temptations, his hunger, his thirst, his weariness, and stand obeys, and yet he's

God, nothing less than this can satisfy justice, nothing less than this can pardon sin, it must be God, that is the deity, but it must be a man, it must be blood, it must be sinless, it must be holy, it must be pure, it must flow, and my friend, there must be a life of perfection, we can breathe, we cannot do it, we cannot meet the demand of the law, this glorious gospel proclaims him that lived a life without sin, and here on the cross, not, I say, with all the sufferings he bore, have you ever felt you did it, you did it, I did it, sinners pardoned by that blood, means that you're in Christ in that eternity past, in him as he hung on that cross, and he there, as your sin was laid on him by the father, the father then dealt with your sin in

Christ, dealt with the sinless one, and that was the cause of the cry, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me, the glorious gospel, my friend, the victory, and there, when Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, he cried, it is finished, it's done, it's the victory cry, the triumph, and that's sealed with the glorious resurrection, my friend, here we see this glorious gospel, of we trying to proclaim, and this is that which the apostle Paul is speaking of in writing to his son in the faith, Timothy, and he says this, it was committed to my trust, what a solemn responsibility we ministers have, and what a solemn responsibility you hearers have, do you want any other word, do you want a modern version, my friend, when I think of the prayer and the care that those godly men exercise in the translation of the word of

God to bring us as close as they could to the word of God not being diverted with their thoughts of what he ought to be, might be, and satisfy them like the modern version, no, as near as we can say, the true word of God, and we're put in that trust, and how we in the ministry, my friend, you see, it's not just to preach a sermon, it's to preach the truth, oh, I have to pray, Lord, preserve me from error, preserve me from watering down divine truth, preserve me from the frowns of men, mind you, not that we are offended, as one or two people have once said to me, something I've said, on one occasion particularly, I said something, and he didn't, he was an old man, he didn't quite grasp what I said, he got it the wrong way, but he came to me, he didn't foster, he didn't leave it to fester, I should say, and it was soon put right.

[42 : 18] my friend, it's right, don't charge a minister too quickly after preaching, but if you're not clear, don't go say, oh he said this, said that, make sure you clear the point first, don't do the devil's work, be careful.

I say, in trust, again, what do we find in the first epistle to the Thessalonians, we find this, how that the apostle Paul there, says, we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God which trieth the hearts.

Our text then, this first part of the word, says, a glorious gospel of the blessed God which committed to my trust, and you will see how the apostle, and I just briefly name it because it's so beautiful, it is the gospel, it's so precious to my soul, and I read this years ago in a native village where there were one or two really true conversions, an old Christian there, and the minister announced that his text, this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and he couldn't resist himself, and my friend it wasn't improper, the dear man was full of the blessing of the Lord in his soul, and he said, master, read it again, read it again, it does my soul good, does it you, my friend, you hear the word of God, you know, the well-known scripture, for God so loved the world, oh we've heard it so many times, my friend, shame on you, seek out further blessings, there's a fountain, fall there, you'll never exhaust it, 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, this precious

Jesus, this glorious gospel, this is that which has been preached here through the generations, and throughout the dear friend, and I've been privileged to hear him here, and elsewhere, my dear friends, it's the gospel, it's the truth, and that's what we poor preachers may be despised, because we stand in the old paths, or desire to, that we keep to the truth, try to hold faster in love, and contend earnestly for that truth, remembering this, that we are put in trust with that gospel, now I pass on to the second part of our subject, now that is the early part, I should have just said this, and that is this, when you think that the apostle, think of him as the persecutor, the blasphemer, as he says what he was, but wait a minute, there'll be those here, like myself, possibly, who were not brought up as blasphemers, or haters of the word of God, we love chapel, we love to go and hear the word of God, but we were lost, just as much as Paul, admittedly, not sinning in that way, but we were dead, and yet we love to hear the Bible, how do I know that there was a change raw, did God come and speak, did the light shine from heaven into your heart, no, yes it did in one way, but not like that, he shone to show me my sin,

I'm lost, I used to repeat the word, gentle Jesus, meek and mild, I'm not beyond that prayer, now, it's still a good prayer, but it was only said, but that led me to pray, and I remember the lines we used to sing at school, and oh my God, prepare my soul for that great day, and wash me in thy precious blood, and take my sins away, yes we needed that great work wrought in our heart, and oh there was a difference then, as I think of sitting there in that seat, in my old chapel at Tunbridge Wells, oh my friend, there, instead of just looking round perhaps in the sermon, perhaps taking just something unusual, but now, is there something for me, and when my pastors say, now you young people, oh how my ears were on the stretch, now that's the way, the gospel, the gospel, glorious gospel, and my friend, it does not need any amendment, there's a fullness in it, for the vilest sinner out of hell, who lives to feel his need, is welcome at the throne of grace, the saviour's blood to plead, now I come on to the latter part of my subject, for I know, says the apostle, whom I have believed and am persuaded that he's able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day, so now in the first place, while I know Paul was an old man, or getting old as he wrote that first epistle to Timothy, but I'm looking at that more as he speaks of his conversion, his early experience, now we see the man, the God servant, the warrior, the champion for the truth, nearer and nearer to glory, waiting for his end, a prisoner of Jesus

[47 : 57] Christ, and he said, I know know, not what I believe, he did know that of course, contended earnestly for the faints once delivered unto the saints, stood firm and fast for the truth, by gracious say through faith, not of yourselves, into the gift of God, oh my friend, wonderful, how he set forth a precious Christ, the name he hated, the name he blasphemed is now the very joy of his heart, no other name to preach, no other hope to set before the people, and for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain, yes, oh blessed man, he's so favoured, isn't he, full of Christ, oh, as we reminded, he suffered, yes, and those, as our dear friend spoke, and many things he said this afternoon, I felt, came into my meditation, well no, here he says I know whom

I have believed, he, from that moment, who art thou Lord, I am Jesus, whom thou persecuest, and that Jesus, is all he desired to know, determined to know, nothing among men save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, he knew a precious Christ, he had visits from Christ, like the word from heaven from time to time, to encourage him, and to help him, to warn him, and yet to uphold him, and you know, and I just put this in as a passing thought, I mentioned it in conversation today, we don't think of Paul failing in faith, don't think of Paul needing a fear, not that he did, at least on one occasion, if not two, fear not Paul, the angel came from heaven, and so

Paul could say, I believe God, it would be as he said, but Paul, it's not like Jesus came and everything was peace and hushed in a moment, there's no moon, no sun, no stars, the storm is beating against you, the waves are rising high, you won't make the land, you'll be swallowed up in the deep, it will be even as God has spoken and it will be beloved, hold on to it, hold on to it, I know whom I have believed, yes you'll be taught this, I know, behold I am vile, behold I was shapen in sin and iniquity in my sin, my mother conceived me, my I'm a sinner, I'm vile, but I know, this one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see, blessed be God, oh my friend, and then behold the land of God, a glimpse of his beauty, to see him, those with a veil between, and to love him, and to be drawn closer to him,

I know, he says, I know whom I have believed, and whom I have trusted, I put all my trust in him, and whom I have trusted, and am persuaded, I do love this word, persuaded, it leads you to this word, you remember it, do you, a precious word, in Romans chapter 8, I am persuaded, that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Oh, my friend, just one other way where that word persuaded comes. There's some children here, young people here, perhaps you have father and mother talk to you about Jesus.

[52 : 00] I remember when I was a little boy, because my mother and father did, and I had a dear aunt, she would sit me on her lap, and I can remember, I could only have been about four, she would talk to me about Joseph, and talk to me about Daniel, well, I will remember, but here we have that he says to Timothy, the unfeigned faith that is in thee, dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and in thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also is this faith in you.

Pray for it, pray for it. It is the gift of God at the new birth, every born again sinner is a believer, our faith may be very, very low, but it is indestructible, for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able.

Now my friend, this is a wonderful word, perhaps there's some here who have got difficult matters, perhaps you may say, my sin, my sin, my sin, my leprosy, oh he's able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Another one may say, look I'm so burdened with and tried, the devil got hold on me, I'm tempted, I can't get relieved, no, but he's able to sucker them that are tempted.

You're tempted in all points like us we are. Another one may say, I'm not sufficient, I, oh I need grace, he's able to make all grace abound towards you, that all sufficiency for your help.

[53 : 49] You may say, I'm in such a trouble, like Darius said, no Daniel, is thy God whom thou service able to deliver thee?

he didn't, I wonder how he really, whether he did think there could be life, at least he went in some hope, and there comes a voice from the den, my God, ha, he's done it, able, able, ah, you say, I'm so afraid of falling, we old people now, we're more frightened of falling over you now, breaking bones, may we be more frightened of falling away, falling into sin, but my friend, I say, able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy, I know whom I have believed and persuaded that he is able, what a wonderful word that this is, able to do exceeding abundantly above all that you could ask oh my friend, may God the Spirit give us that faith to open our mouths wide, to seek these blessings in reverence and yet in longing desire from our

God, take it to the Lord in prayer, and then he says, able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day, so he had the word, put in trust with the word, no, he said, what I have committed unto him to that day, I believe it could be rendered in first his own soul, what a mercy, when you and I come to the rivers of death, the valley of the shadow of death, to have this good hope, this sweet assurance, I've committed it all to my God, I'm in his hands, and death itself shall never sever me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, my Lord, I believe also he committed his ministry, and doubtless the churches and those to whom he ministered, to his great God,

I come now to a close, and here, I sat over there you know, this afternoon, to my amazement, our friend took it right up, he nearly shut my mouth, I said, no I mustn't, it led me because my meditation had led me on, Paul was near the end of the journey, what a way to come to the end of one's ministry, and one's Christian life as a believer, in measure to be able to say, I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, and I have finished my course, and I have kept the faith, henceforth, my friend today is a hitherto hat, have you this hence forth in front of you, the best is yet to be, henceforth says the apostle, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the

Lord the righteous judge shall give me in that day, and not to me only, and this does it gather you in to them also that love is appearing.

[57 : 47] My dear friends, I pray God to richly bless this glorious gospel, our beloved friend, that he is beloved, that loved among the churches, and I don't flatter to continue in the ministry of the word, that may be accompanied with signs following, and may his own soul be as a watered garden, filled with the love of Christ, and my friend, empowered by the Holy Spirit of God.

I would say now, brethren, I commend you to God, to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

I'm just going to close with an old hymn about this gospel, tell me the old, old story, that I may take it in, that wonderful redemption, God's remedy for sin, tell me the story often, for I forget so soon, the early dew of morning, has passed away as noon, tell me the story softly, with earnest tones and grave, oh may I be that sinner whom Jesus came to save, tell me the story always, that thou would really be, in any time of trouble, a comforter to me.

Don't you love it, friends? Is there anything better, a world sinking in sin, and hear the old, old story?

God bless you all. Amen. We now sing to the praise of God, the third hymn on the hymn sheet, which is Gatsby 667, Tungower Street, Chapel 764.

[60 : 01] Immortal honours rest on Jesus' head. My God, my portion, and my living bread, in him I live upon him, cast my care.

He saves from death, destruction, and despair. Our late friend, Mr. Joseph Short, had a saying, which many of you remember, put the crown where it belongs.

This hymn seeks to do just that. Third hymn. One time, WH county, he Eggs, desert, says vir prophet, si■ nadziej■ Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[63 : 29] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Beloved friends, before I pronounce the closing prayer and the benediction, first I would I would just remind you that the gifts this day are for love's sake, a gift to your beloved pastor.

The Lord bless you in your giving, encourage him in receiving. I've also been asked to announce that after the pronouncement of the benediction, but before the pastor's address, the deacons would like the opportunity to say a few words.

This I'm going to just put a personal word in. I hope I may be forgiven, but it does my heart good to see the old deacon, our dear friend John, here tonight.

[65 : 39] He was here, of course, when I first preached in 1958. A loyal, loving friend. God bless him.

Let us pray. Follow with thy divine blessing, almighty God, upon thy own precious word. Pardon all amiss.

Take all at the close of their meeting, in safety to their homes. Bless us each together. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.

Amen. Well, pastor, we're so very thankful to the Lord, and to you, for your consistent labours of love, as our beloved pastor.

And I've been asked to present three gifts to you, as a token of our affection and esteem for you. The first one is from the members of the church and congregation.

[66 : 55] And it is a free-standing, long-case pendulum, chiming clock. And the comment I'd make on that is, it hasn't arrived at your house yet, but God willing, it will be delivered in the next few days, possibly in the next week, when it will need to be installed properly.

It is what they call a grandmother clock. The second is a book of individual comments and best wishes from the various friends and members of the congregation.

And thirdly, there's an illuminated framed address here, from the chapel, acknowledging the goodness of God and your loving labours over the last 25 years.

And I would read what it actually says on the illuminated address. Presented to our respected and much-loved friend and pastor, Mr. Gerald D. Bass, acknowledging the Lord's great goodness and mercy in maintaining him for 25 years as pastor of Old Baptist Chapel, Chippenham, 1980 to 2005.

And in recognition of the teaching, guidance and gracious ability, the one true God has given to enable friends to be continuously provided with faithful, living and refreshing gospel ministry throughout this period.

[68 : 40] We also, thankfully acknowledge the dedication and help of his dear wife, Heather, over this long period of time.

Our desire is that the God of heaven will bless them together and continue to supply their every need, and above all, go on to bless the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to each of us.

Prospering the word spoken, and getting much honour and glory to his great name. Twixt Jesus and the chosen race subsists a bond of sovereign grace, that hell with its infernal train shall ne'er dissolve nor rend in twain.

Not by might, nor by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Zechariah 4, verse 6.

Well, pastor, I hope the presentation won't hinder you in your address as you're about to give, and wish you God's richest blessing as you go on in life seeking to serve him.

[70 : 00] God bless you. Oh, beloved friends. Not only my own dear congregation, but all the dear friends who've so kindly come some many, many miles to share this memorable day with us and with myself and my beloved wife here today.

First of all, I would acknowledge to my covenant God just how faithful he's been of an unworthy sinner for so long.

We heard much in both services about the word mercy. And I think one of our hymns says, No sinner needed mercy more than ever sought God's face.

And I've often felt that in this pulpit behind me. And that's perhaps why I mentioned the word mercy myself in my preaching, I hope, as much as our dear friends have done today.

It is not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name give glory for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake. I do sincerely thank you, Morris, for your kind address.

[71 : 12] Each of my beloved deacons who've been so faithful to me for many years, especially our beloved dear friend John, who's been my deacon 25 years, and I think was deacon to Mr. Carr before me for as long.

We've never had a cross word, John, have we? All that while. A dear, loyal, loving friend. I've prayed God he'd be spared to us today.

And it's one of my great mercies to see you sat behind this evening, John. The Lord bless you. Now, it would be right to make just one or two comments.

I don't want to keep you alarmed because you've got a long journey, some of you. But there are one of the things I should say for the honour and glory of God this evening, because this is an Ebenezer stone to me and to the church here at Chippenham.

I go back to an unusual day, which one person in this congregation may remember. Whit Monday, 1968, Wehoboth Chapel, Coventry.

[72 : 16] That was the year I was baptised and had just recently joined the church at Rehoboth under the ministry of our friend Mr. Peter Rowell.

It was the custom to have Mr. Leonard Broome as the minister for that occasion year by year, and some of his discourses are remembered now by the older friends who used to attend in great numbers on those days.

But it was at the tea time, and I'd been serving the tea around, and I was introduced to our friend Mr. John Broome.

I think he's here tonight. I'm glad to see our good friend. And after having spoken to him for the very first time, one of the members, Mrs. Betty Burton, who was a most godly stalwart for the truth, well grounded in the faith, she came up to me and she said, Gerald, I believe there's something significant in you meeting Mr. John, you're this friend John, now.

She said, you don't know what may unfold from just this meeting around the tea table at Coventry this day. Little did I think that I would be privileged to labour in the same county as our friend John and my own daughter to marry his son.

[73 : 43] It was truly a prophetic word. In 1977, the church at Coventry sent me to preach, I trust, with God's approbation.

My very first sermon can be remembered, I think, by at least two people, three here this evening, was Emmanuel, God with us.

I have tried in my poor way, and it's been very poor, to preach Emmanuel. I remember Mr. Stanley Dale's now gone to glory, speaking to me, not long after I had to preach, he asked me, how was getting on?

I said, well, I hope with help, but sometimes I felt more free in preaching than others, but I just made this comment to him that I did feel most free when I was able to preach Christ.

He said, my dear friend, go on preaching Christ. May God help me still to do. In January, after preaching twice, I was sent out to preach from the church at Coventry and began to labour among the churches connected with our little denomination.

[74 : 54] Unbeknown to me, Peter Rowell, my pastor, sent a letter to one or two churches, and one arrived on the mat of John Shiles, who was then the correspondent deacon of Old Baptist Chapel.

In it, he said that the man had been recently sent out from Coventry, and perhaps he might be of some help, to the friends at Chippenham. Accordingly, I received my first letter from our good friend John, and even when I opened it and read it, there seemed a warm-heartedness behind it, which I grew to know later, was characteristic of the dear man's love and faith in Christ Jesus.

And eventually, it was arranged, I shall preach here on May the 8th, 1977. That was a most memorable day in so many ways.

First of all, my beloved wife was expecting our third child. Jonathan is with us this evening. And, as I was preparing to leave early that Lord's Day morning, to this strange place, Chippenham, my wife had the first signs that the child was imminent.

We didn't quite know what to do, but my wife, very unselfish, said, look, you'd better go. She said, it might not be today, it might be tomorrow. So, with a rather divided heart, I hope in a right sense, I went down to Chippenham, down the fast way, thinking there's more that would happen in Coventry than what might be happening at Chippenham.

[76 : 26] And I was brought, eventually, down to Chippenham, and I made a phone call on the way down, a Causton telephone box, and they had no mobile phones in those days.

And to my discontentation, my wife was being admitted to hospital at the very moment to have Jonathan in the birth.

So, I was in a very troubled state of mind when I arrived here at Old Baptist Chapel. And I made my way into the vestry, just round here, and our good friend, Mr. Kenneth Bray, who I'd never met before, not to speak to anyway, welcomed me with his usual genial, kind, loving way.

And then, eventually, our good friend, Mr. John Shiles, came in for the first time. And I think he was armed with a box of eggs, which he always gave, to every visiting minister, every time they came.

He never missed with me. And there we were, the very first time, and I sat in that vestry, wondering what sort of people I would find. Well, at 27 minutes past 10, after the deacons had gone in before me, very tremblingly, opened the door and made my way into the pulpit behind me and sat down.

[77 : 42] And there were about 30 people, I think, that morning, regular attenders at Old Baptist Chapel. And, I think, only 12 of them remained in the congregation now.

Many have gone home to glory. Others have been moved in God's providence. But, out of that original congregation, about 12, I think, remain now. And out of the original church that asked me, only four members remain.

I got up to preach. But not before. I'd heard the first hymn. And I can never forget, to my dying day, the effect of the first hymn on my spirit.

I can't remember what the hymn was. But when the friends got up to sing, and they sang without the organ, and it was very hearty singing, dear Morris Edwards, the bass, and David Pryor, the bass, I remember, and our good friend Morris, with the tenor, and Nancy Short leading.

Many dear friends. And, but it was something more than just hearty singing. It had a strange effect upon me that I'd never felt before. Here was a people I felt I could love.

[78 : 52] It was momentary. It passed away. But, it was obviously something prophetic. My text that morning was, Oh God, my heart is fixed.

That's what I desired it would be. It was very troubled, really, about my beloved wife, back at Chippeter Coventry, in Labour, and I, a new man, in a new pulpit.

But nonetheless, that's what I desired. Oh God, my heart is fixed. I felt some help in preaching. I went down the, this aisle, at the end of the service, and I met for the first time, the late Miss Mary Shiles.

And, she came up to me, she was a very timid person, wasn't one to come and speak forwardly at all, but, on that occasion she did. She shook hold of my hand, she said, you know, she said, at four o'clock this morning, I was praying for you.

I was praying you would preach about mercy. And that's what I've been trying to preach about. God fixing his people on the mercy of God. That was the first hint I had of any fellowship in the Gospel with the dear friends here.

[79 : 58] The only person I could recommend seeing before in the congregation was Mrs. Pat Bray, who I'd seen at another chapel some years before, and I recognised her, but I didn't know her.

She was the only one I had any recollection of ever seeing before. I went home and our friend Mrs. Nancy Short, the entertainer, Mr. Short, was ill at that time, was able to preach.

And news came through of the birth of Jonathan. Jonathan, and Mr. Short, in characteristic fashion, said, you have a son, Jonathan, let us pray.

And I'll never forget the prayer he poured out for my lad, a prayer that's been answered. Never forget it. God is good.

Well, at the end of the day, I made my way home, and I understand later from our friend John Shiles that five people went to him in the next week and said, that is the man the Lord appointed for our pastor.

[81 : 03] I know Mrs. Bessie Pryor told me that it was right, she felt in her mind that I should be the pastor of this people. I knew nothing about this whatsoever, but she felt, she told me for the very first time this was the Lord's appointment.

I preached here several times during the next year or so, but it was the anniversary of my first preaching here that I had one of the most remarkable blessings I've ever had in my life, and certainly in any paupal that I've ever preached in.

It was the evening service, and it was the second hymn given out by our dear friend John Shiles, and it was 405. And as the congregation sang that beautiful hymn right the way through, it was as if the love of Christ rolled over my soul in waves of everlasting love.

And all the way home on the fast way went over and over in my soul the blessed covenant of the grace that was in a precious Christ for a poor sinner like me.

And I arrived home and I said to my dear wife, if Chippenham should ask me for a few more dates, I would feel inclined to give them. I had no thought of the pastorate whatsoever, but just thought here was a people I would like to be able to preach one or two times more.

[82 : 25] Unbeknown to me, they had a church meeting arranged to call me to give them three months probation in the next year. And the letter I received a few days later confirmed that, and I was led to go and venture on those words launch out of the deep and let down your nets for a draft.

Those three months were testing months first of all because it was a very snowy winter and every week in the middle of the week the fast way would be blocked and I'd hear tiding that cars couldn't get through but every Lord's Day when I wanted to travel it was free.

It was icy but I was preserved but I went through tunnels of snow to reach Old Baptist Chapel those three months. And during those three months I began to feel a little union to the people growing but there were many questions.

Many questions. I was a very young man and an exceedingly young preacher only having preached just over two years seemed almost presumptuous for me to take a pastorate after so little experience in the things of God.

And having witnessed what a pastorate might mean in burdens and difficulties I was not so keen to readily take up the work without some direct leading from my God.

[83 : 54] As I was driving into Chippendom one morning early March I think it was about probably this time of the year I got to where the golf club is at the present moment and those words dropped in my present shall go with thee and I will give thee rest.

It was very comforting in one way but another part of me tried to put them away I thought no I don't really want this I'm not sure I'm the man to lead this people.

so I finished my three months and perplexity began to fill my heart because there were two other causes one actually wrote another intimate they would write and asked me to give them probationary months for the pastorate elsewhere and this was very perplexing to me but the Lord put those matters very clearly straight for me in one he said I will overturn overturn overturn till he come whose right it is with another what doest thou hear Elijah and I realised that those doors were shut if this one wasn't opened but the matter that brought it to a head was this I came home from preaching at Liverpool one Lord's Day evening having had a good day there I love that people and I opened the door to my beloved wife and she said we're going to Chippenham

I said aren't we yes she says I had a direction from my God today and she told me she'd received a clear leading that day this was the way that we were to go to hear was the pastor's wife ready to go and the pastor not ready strange experience but the next day I went to Attleborough Chapel a place very dear to my soul as well having preached there with some liberty over the years and our dear friend Mr Ben Walshaw was preaching from Bradford and his text was your father knoweth what things you have need of before you ask him and he went right through my life from the beginning to that very moment and now look he said whatever's in the future your father knoweth and it was so powerful in my strength that I went and wrote to our good friend John Shiles I will accept the pastorate here at Old

Baptist Chapel and one other time I was preaching at Rehovert Swindon the place again which has become very dear to me over the years in this area and it was that word and the Lord he was going before they were not failing or forsaking as we were reading the chapter I came to those words thou must go with this people not you can go if you feel able if you want to or someone approves of it thou must it was a divine must and it made me willing I believe to take up the yoke in the intervening period my mind was kept largely at rest until November when we sold our house and I suddenly realised that we were embarking on a course that would be difficult to retreat from and the devil began to suggest it was a mistake and unbelief rose up and I wrote to preach dear friends at Grove one Lord's Day morning and all the way down towards that chapel

[87 : 30] I was very tossed I thought am I doing right and I thought well if I'm doing right why all this unbelief why all these trials and temptations in my spirit well dear John Togwell another dear friend to me got up that memorable morning and this was him he started with dream not of faith so clear that shuts all doubtings out and in a moment the matter was put right and I felt yes leave the doubtings to one side this is the Lord's doing and so on January the 1st 1980 I became the pastor the unworthy pastor of this people here my first text being it is appointed unto men once to die and after this the judgment so Christ was offered to bear the sins of many and to them that look for him shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation and friends those words sin and salvation

I've tried in my poor way to be the cornerstone of the ministry here I know I fail in many things but I hope that is the two things the two great branches that we are to be exploring sin ah but not just sin salvation that glorious gospel we've been hearing of today there are three things that stand out over these twenty five years first of all God's amazing faithfulness the more I go on friends the more I'm amazed at the patience of my God if only you knew how a minister feels going up the pulpit steps perhaps burdened about his text you can IT see you when you baba

I know this way but you can happen