

The Breaking Heart Of God

by Clayton Dougan

This sermon emphasizes the need for revival in the hearts of believers, focusing on repentance, reconciliation, regeneration, and renewal. It highlights the importance of breaking up unplowed ground in our lives, addressing issues like unbelief, prayerlessness, lack of heart for the lost, and wrong priorities. The speaker urges the audience to seek the Lord, respond to His calling, and make room for God to work in their lives.

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Transcript

To speak at our conference in Scotland, in Greenock, Scotland, just two years ago, and at that time he had a major heart condition developed and requiring major surgery, and it's taken him quite a while to recover his full health, and he's now back, just beginning back into ministry in a full-time capacity, and I'm just so delighted to have been able to invite him to be here with us. I met Clayton for the first time back in the mid-80s, when I was pastor in the Alliance Church in Victoria, and Clayton immigrated from Scotland with his wife, Isabel, and I met him as an expert, of course, we got fellowship in, and he came to speak very soon at my church. Over the next couple of years, I developed a deep friendship with him, and with Dennis Scott, another local pastor, and the late, dear Keith Price.

Many of you know Keith Price, I can see many of you nodding your heads, and we just had a wonderful fellowship together, and we used to go out to little cafes, and we talked together, which is quite unique, because they were three brethren men, and here I was, a charismatic, and yet I was one of them, and I think what really united us was not the doctrinal differences, because they were certainly never united, but we all had a passion for God, and as you know, Keith wrote a book, he was mentored by Tozer, and he wrote a book late in life, and the book was called Thirsting After God, and that described his heart, and described our hearts, and I'm just so delighted that Clayton is able to be our speaker today, and I've invited Charles, if you would come up, please, and Andrew, if you would come, please, to pray for our brother as he comes to minister God's word to us. Father, we thank you for your anointing on this brother,

Clayton. Thank you for calling him to yourself, saving his soul, for putting your Holy Spirit in him, igniting a love for you, and a passion for the needs of our world, recognizing that the gospel of Jesus Christ alone is the answer to the deep needs of the human heart, and thank you for the many who found a life through the ministry of Clayton, those who were in darkness, but came to life because you revealed yourself through his life, through his ministry, and we thank you for what you lay on his heart for us this afternoon, and we pray that we will not listen to the voice only of a man, but through his voice we will hear very clearly the voice of the Spirit of God deep in our hearts, drawing us more deeply into relationship with yourself, some of us into repentance, some of us into submission, into surrender, into yieldedness, into consecration, into fullness, all those things we need to be recipients of your glory and the agents for your work in our world.

So, we pray that he will know your anointing, and we will know the anointing on receiving the word into our hearts this afternoon. In Jesus' name, amen. Thank you so much, and good afternoon everybody.

You've heard a few accents this week, but none quite like this one. Charles thinks it's an impediment, but we pray for him. And Gareth Evans thinks that everybody in heaven will speak with a Welsh accent, but he, you know, he hasn't been enlightened yet.

Wait till we all get our Scottish accents. I'd like you to turn your Bible, please, this afternoon to Hosea, the prophecy of Hosea. And just while you're looking for that, and by the way, it's just after the book of Daniel, or as one preacher said, you'll find it in the clean bit of your Bible.

You'll probably get that one on the way home. Yes, as you can hear, I was born and raised in Scotland. I was saved as a boy, and then after high school, I went into the banking world and worked for a bank called the British Linen Bank.

It's one of the old Scottish banks. It began as a linen company and then got into the banking thing, and when I tell my Canadian friends that, they think I'm laundering money, you know, working for the linen bank. But anyway, I worked there, and while I was in the banking profession, I began to have a real desire to serve the Lord, spent time with a senior evangelist in Scotland, and God just, through various experiences, showed to me that He had, in His wonderful grace, given me the gift of an evangelist.

And so, with my wife Isabel, Richard told us this morning that he married the most wonderful girl in the world, but I disagree with that. My wife Isabel has been my partner in serving the Lord for 45 years now, and God has been so gracious, and we give Him the glory. So, let's turn to the Word of God right now, and we're reading from the book of Hosea, and chapter 10, and I'm only going to read one verse.

We will refer to a great many other Scriptures in the course of the message, but Hosea chapter 10 and verse 12, it says, "Soul, with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness. Break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, until He comes to rain righteousness on you." And trust that God will write those words upon our hearts today and speak to us with power. Yet somebody said about the prophet Hosea that Hosea was the prophet for Israel's zero hour.

Hosea was the prophet for Israel's zero hour. In other words, the message of Hosea came to the people of Israel at a very crucial time, a time of great need, a time of great spiritual poverty. And ladies and gentlemen, today when we think of this and apply it to our own hearts and lives, I don't know whether we would call today our zero hour, but I'm sure you will agree with me we're in a situation of desperate need, and we need God to visit us today.

I believe we're living in a day of spiritual bankruptcy. I believe we're living in a day of spiritual bankruptcy among the people of God. And I believe too that when we say that, what do we mean? We mean that we're in a day in our lives where there is no longer in our society a consciousness of Almighty God.

There's no real awareness of God. And people of God, I want to say to you today the thing that will create a new God-consciousness in our society is when the church starts again to experience the mighty presence of God among His people. It's when the presence of God comes among the people of God that that will overflow into our world.

I had occasion to be in a court of law just about a week ago, and I was sitting in the public gathering, and people say nowadays we are firm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. No mention of God. And then they proceed to lie through their teeth, and nobody bats an eyelid.

Why? Because there is no consciousness of God. And when the presence of God comes, people, that is not something that you and I can manufacture. That is something that, as we've heard already this week, is a sovereign move of God by His Holy Spirit when God comes upon His people.

I want to tell you today if the Spirit of God comes upon the church in Canada, all the world will know. There will be a new consciousness, a new awareness of Almighty God. In preparing for this time this week and praying and seeking God, I happened to be reading a magazine article, and there was a definition of revival in there that I don't think I will ever forget.

It's very simple. The definition said that revival is when eternity invades time. When eternity invades time.

Have you ever taken time to sit down and imagine the concept of eternity? Have you ever sat down and maybe read some of the chapters in the book of Revelation, chapter 4 and 5, for example, when we have those amazing pictures of what it's like around the throne in the presence of Almighty God and the exalted Lamb of God sitting at God's right hand? Have you ever thought to imagine what it's like in eternity, people? And I want to tell you today, when we think about eternity invading time, we're not going to have just a happy time. It's not going to be a time when we will just all get all blessed up, and then we'll go on and do our own thing. If eternity invades time, people, you and I will never be the same again.

We will never be the same again. If eternity invaded time at this very moment, the preacher and everybody in this room would be flat on our faces before the holiness of God, overwhelmed with the wonder of who He is. And men and women today, I pray God with all my being that God would send us a time when eternity would invade time, when the Lord would come among us.

He's coming one day. We know that. But when He would come in mercy and grant us a time of revival, a time when the Spirit of God would move in tremendous power.

Now, when we come to the book of Hosea and we keep those things in our minds, the first thing I want to suggest to you is I want you to see from the book of Hosea what I'm calling the call to revival, the call to revival. Now, having just said—let me qualify that, if I may—having just said that revival is a divine act of Almighty God when God in His sovereignty invades time. We understand that.

We do understand that. But I also believe that God would so work in our lives, He would call us to anticipate with joy and to anticipate with hunger and passion that God would do exactly what we want Him to do. And the reason I say that to you is in the text that we read together, it says, break up your fallow ground, for it's time to seek the Lord until He comes.

Until He comes to rain righteousness on you. And I believe the Lord wants us to seek Him with expectant hearts, to seek Him expecting to see something happen, expecting to see, and we'll develop that as we go along. Now, this call for revival in Hosea's day, first of all, I believe it was a call, what I'm saying, a call from within, within Hosea's heart.

The book of Hosea is divided nicely into two sections. The first three chapters are Hosea's personal testimony, and then from then on God begins to speak in chapter 4 right through to the end to chapter 14. And in those first three chapters, we see a deep experience that Hosea was having between Him and God.

For whatever reason, Hosea's wife had gone into harlotry. She had broken his heart. She had gone into harlotry as a prostitute.

And God said to Hosea, I want you to take her back. I want you to take her back. I want you to have more children with this wife who had gone into unfaithfulness and harlotry.

And what was God saying to Hosea? God was saying, Hosea, what's happened to you is a visual aid of the relationship between Me and My people. It's a visual aid of what's happened in the relationship between Almighty God and His earthly people, Israel. And God was challenging Hosea with this incredible challenge, and He was showing him, people, can you imagine what it must have been like for Hosea? Can you imagine the agonies that this man must have gone through in this whole experience? Can you imagine the depths to which he had gone emotionally and in every other way? It must have been a horrific experience.

And what God was saying to him was this. God was showing to Hosea on this occasion the awfulness, the awful significance of Israel's sin, the awful significance of it all. And God was bringing home to Hosea just exactly what had happened in the relationship between God and His people.

After all that God had done for them, they had gone after other gods. People, did you know, has it dawned on you yet that sin in your life, sin in my life, it hurts God? It breaks His heart. That is why I am particularly thankful today for times in my life when God has convicted me of sin and brought me to a place of utter brokenness before the cross.

When you get a sense, people, of what your sin does to God, I'm telling you, you will only want to weep. You will only want to fall at His feet with a tremendous sense of the awfulness of your own heart. People have a problem sometimes these days facing up to the fact that they are sinful.

God's been giving me a new insight recently into that Scripture where it says, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. I want to tell you people, when you see the glory of God, when you get a little glimpse of the glory of God, you will know how sinful you really are. You will know that you have a heart within you that the other prophet says is desperately wicked in comparison with the glory of God.

My heart is desperately wicked. And men and women today, in Hosea's day and in our day, sin in our hearts, sin in our churches, it hurts God. It grieves His heart.

It grieves His heart. It breaks His heart. But alongside this visual aid of the relationship between Jehovah and Israel, there is also a glorious picture of the persevering love of God.

Amen. Aren't you glad about that today? Men and women, let's get this straight. If this isn't true, none of us would be here today.

If this isn't true, all of us would have been judged long ago. But thank God for His persevering love. Thank God that He doesn't let us go.

Thank God that in Hosea's heart, by the grace of God, as he was obedient to the Lord, the very persevering love of God was being reproduced in Hosea's heart. And through his own lonely grief over his wayward wife, Gomer, Hosea got a new appreciation of the amazing love of Almighty God. Men and women today, I don't know how it grabs you today, but I want to tell you, I am very excited about this.

I am so excited about this right now, I could burst. I think this is so amazing that God yearns for His people. He longs for His people.

He longs, dear people, He longs for you. He longs for me. Isn't that amazing? In spite of what we've done to Him, in spite of how we've grieved His Spirit, He longs for us to draw us to Himself.

He longs for us to come into the blessing of His persevering and forgiving love. Oh, hallelujah. Praise His wonderful name.

You see, folks, God is holy. God is righteous. God is just.

And in the Word of God, God is revealed to us in several different ways. He's revealed to us, for example, as Creator. Now, did God create the world and humanity? Did God do that just to possess them? No.

He's revealed in the Word of God as King. Did He do that position just to reign over us? No. That's part of the story, but that's not exclusively what it is.

He's revealed in the Word as Judge. Is He that just solely to judge? No, because He's also revealed in the Word as Father. And as Father, He longs for relationship.

He longs for intimacy in communion between Himself and His people. I've been so blessed in recent times, and God just laid this Scripture on my heart, but I was looking at the first book of Samuel in chapter 13 and reading there about King David and how the Lord said He had sought a king. He sought somebody.

But notice what it says. God had sought for Himself a man after His own heart. He didn't seek for David, you see, just so that he would be king.

That was secondary. He sought for a man after His own heart. And when we get to the New Testament and we come to the letter of Paul to Titus, let me read a little Scripture with you.

Chapter 2 of Titus verse 11, For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires, to live sensibly, righteously, and godly in this present age. All of this, people, it's from the grace of God, God reaching out to you and me to bring us to Himself, to bring us into relationship. And then He says, In order that our lives be changed like that, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Oh, people, are you looking for that today? Listen to me. We've got to keep before us the big picture. Amen? Now listen to me, folks.

Even if God sent us revival today, it would be just to prepare us further for that amazing time when we're going to see His glory. Keep in mind the big picture. And then it says, listen to verse 14, Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify—and here it is again, to purify for Himself, for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

People, I want to remind you today the reason God saved you. If you're sitting in this congregation today and you're rejoicing that you're a new creature in Christ, it is all by the grace of God, and God did it so that you would be for Himself. And the whole heart of God is to bring us into a deep, deep enjoyment of that relationship.

Hallelujah. And when we think of all of that, people, it brings me back to this thought, and it's good for us to look at it in the light of the cross. God gave His Son to make it all possible.

We come to the foot of the cross, and we see that sin breaks God's heart. It doesn't just break His law. It breaks His heart.

Amen? Sin breaks God's heart. I'm thankful that God has taken me in my lifetime on a number of occasions, and He's taken me to weep over my sin. Praise His wonderful name.

And I want to say to you again, people, let us never lose sight of the big picture. In Ephesians chapter 2, when Paul has just been telling us how that by the grace of God we are saved, one stage we were dead. Charles was just telling us yesterday about a message he heard somewhere on the raising of Lazarus, and the speaker said, Lazarus had one thing wrong with him.

You get it, eh? He was dead. He got a big problem. He was dead.

And people, listen to me, before you knew Jesus, so were you. And you were in a condition that only God could change. Amen? Only God could change that.

And like the power of Jesus that raised Lazarus from the dead, Ephesians 2 tells us that God raised us out of the death of our sin. Hallelujah. And made us alive.

Made us alive in Christ. Seated us with Him in heavenly places. That is your position if you're a believer today.

And listen to me, people, how shame on us if we persist in sin and disobedience, not enjoying all that God has given us in Christ. Amen? And when Paul says we've been raised and seated with Him in heavenly places, he says in verse 7, so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in His kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. It's going to take all eternity for God to reveal all He's done for us in His Son.

Doesn't that put within your heart today a longing for Him? A longing, oh God, after all You've done for me, how could I ever for one moment be content with this mediocrity, with this disobedience? With this half-baked Christian experience? With this one thing today and something else tomorrow? I get increasingly burdened. I meet Christians all the time. They never open their Bibles from one Sunday to the next.

That breaks God's heart, people. How can we ever, how can we ever hope to be enjoying the things that God has for us in Christ? He's longing, as our text says, He's longing to rain His blessing upon us. Amen?

He's longing for that.

I want to tell you, if God puts in your heart today a hunger for that blessing, then He's going to give it to you. Amen? Seek Him with all your heart. I want you to know, people, God's grace is so amazing.

I want you to know, too, that lost souls, people out there who don't know Christ, they're lost to the heart of God. I pray God that through this conference and if God sends, well, I know it will happen, if God sends us revival, one of the things that will happen is that we will have a new appreciation of what it means to be lost, and our hearts will break over people who are lost because they don't know Christ. Our hearts will ache, and people, the people, they're lost to the heart of God, and He's longing to bring them to Himself.

Amen? He's longing to create among His people that renewed sense of His presence, His majesty, and His glory that it will overthrow, and everybody around us will know that God's doing something really special. I long for it. So, there was that call to revival from within.

There was a call to revival from above. Chapters 4 through 14 of Hosea, we find there that God is calling His people. He's calling them to come back to Himself, calling them again and again.

Listen to me, folks. Listen to me as we hear the Word of God today. Is God touching your heart? Is God drawing you to Himself in a new way? Is God saying to the church in Victoria today, my heart aches for you, my people? My heart longs after you, my people.

My heart longs to bless you, my people. Are we hearing from the Lord? He's longing to do that. And you know in John 5 verse 6, I love this story about the healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda.

Thirty-eight years he lay there. Thirty-eight years. But I love the phrase, verse 6, when Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been a long time in that condition.

Oh, has the Lord got to come to you and me today and say, I know, my child, you've been in this mess for a long time. Then Jesus says to the man, do you wish to get well? Oh, hallelujah, isn't that great? I believe Jesus is saying to the church in Victoria and Vancouver Island, British Columbia, throughout Canada today, that Jesus is saying, do you want to get well? Do you want to get well? Do you long for my blessing? Jesus is standing there and He's saying, do you want to get well? People, bring your life into the sunlight of His presence. Amen? Bring your life into the searchlight of His glory.

I don't know if any of you have been lately down at Ogden Point, and you've maybe seen the big new sundial down there. It's a very interesting thing, and it's got all sorts of lines and markings on it, and depending on the time of year, if you stand in the right spot, you can tell the time. But of course, the sun's got to shine for that to happen.

Amen? You've got to stand there and allow the light and glory of the sun to come upon you. Oh, people, you would stand in the light of the glory of the presence of Jesus, and He'll tell you what time it is in your life. He'll tell you what you need.

He'll say to you, do you want to get better? Do you want to get well? Do you want my touch of blessing on your heart, on your life? In Isaiah's day, the heart of the matter was that there was no knowledge of God. There was no knowledge of God. People growing as a Christian is growing in the knowledge of God.

Being a Christian is not just getting a ticket to heaven and then drifting your way through the rest of your life. We were talking about Alan Redpath the other day, and somebody was telling me how he said years ago, it's possible. It's possible to be a saved soul and yet a wasted life.

A saved soul but a wasted life. Oh, men and women today, this is the first day of the rest of your life. Amen? This is the first day of the rest of your life, and Jesus is maybe saying to people here this afternoon, do you want to get well? Do you want that touch of renewal and blessing and revival? When you go through the letter, excuse me, the prophecy of Isaiah and see some of the things that God was saying, you come into chapter 4, and at the beginning of this section when God begins to speak, and in this chapter, verse number 1, for example, God's heart is breaking because there is no faithfulness or kindness or knowledge of God in the land.

That's what was breaking His heart. There was no knowledge of God in the land. Down at verse 3, it says, therefore the land mourns, and everyone who lives in it languishes, along with the beasts of the field and the birds of the sky and also the fish of the sea disappear.

Listen to me, people. Do you know that the sin of mankind affects even the planet around us, our environment? We're all supposed to be environmentally conscious these days. Amen? I want you to know that when Christ died on a cross, men and women, He redeemed everything that sin had ruined.

Everything. The book of Romans tells me that creation groans, waiting for the redemption of the people of God, and God one day is going to bring into being a new heaven and a new earth. God has redeemed His creation.

Hallelujah! Everything. We talk about our oceans and the diminishing cod stocks and all this kind of stuff. I want to tell you people, if we came back to God, all that will change.

Do you not believe me? Some of us may remember seeing our video some time ago about the move of God in a little place called Pond Inlet. In northern Quebec, I think it is. And part of the stuff, because of the sin and the brokenness among the people in that community, the caribou even had left.

The berries had stopped growing on the tundra. When the revival came, the berries grew again, and the caribou returned. Men and women, God is a big gut, and this is the one we long would come among us, eternity invading time, and this old world hasn't got the foggiest idea what will happen when God comes.

And sad to say, neither do we half the time. You go on to verse 6 of this chapter 4, and God says, my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because they have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being my priest, since you have forgotten the law of your God.

You've forgotten the law of your God. Oh, men and women, how we need to come back to the Lord. You go over to chapter 5, and you read there at verse number 6. He says, they will go with their flocks and their herds to seek the Lord, but they will not find Him.

He has withdrawn from them. Down at verse 15, these sad words, I will go away and return to my place, God says, until they acknowledge their guilt and seek my face. In their affliction, they will earnestly seek me.

Do you know what I want to say to you today? There's somebody, there's a guy standing here before you today, and if there's any Scripture in the whole Word of God that I am profoundly grateful for, it is the

Scripture in the New Testament in 2 Corinthians, where God talks about godly sorrow. He says, godly sorrow leads a man or a woman to repentance, and it leaves no regret. Hallelujah! Come on, people, that is worth getting excited about, amen? That is worth giving God glory for.

It leaves no regret, and brokenness and confession and repentance before the cross of Calvary means renewal. It means forgiveness. Praise His wonderful name.

It means the removal of the rottenness of our sin. Praise God. Then you come into chapter 6, after having just said that, verse 1 of chapter 6, come, let us return to the Lord.

There really should be a word-like saying in there between the last verse of chapter 5 and the first of chapter 6. In their affliction, they will earnestly seek me, saying, come, let us return to the Lord. Come, let us return to the Lord. For He has torn us, but He will heal us.

He has wounded us, but He will bandage us. He will revive us after two days. He will raise us up on the third day that we may live before Him.

So, let us know, let us press on to know the Lord. His going forth is as certain as the dawn, and He will come to us like the rain and like the spring rain watering the earth. Oh, hallelujah.

Don't you long for that? Don't you just long? Oh, my brother or sister today, if you're sitting here and you know Jesus is saying to you, do you want to get well? You know you've got to do business with God today. Don't you just long to feel the refreshing rain of His presence upon your whole being? Don't you just long for that healing that only He can bring? Our God wants to meet with us. He wants to do these great things for us as His people.

And God goes on in chapters 8 through 10 and 11 through 14, and He talks about awful judgment. We don't have time to go into all the details today, but He talks some very solemn words there. And then in chapters 11 through 14, and it's in this section, by the way, up to chapter 10, we have our text, and God's longing heart, His yearning heart is saying to them, sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness, break up your fallow ground.

It's time to seek the Lord until He comes to rain righteousness on you. We'll come back to that in just a moment. But in 11 through 14, we find the heart of God is yearning, the yearning of God for His people.

The yearning of God says, My people are bent on turning from Me. Though they call them to the one on high, none at all exalts Him. And God longs for His people, longs that they would come back, longs that they would return to Him and into that intimate fellowship with Himself.

So people, all this problem that Isaiah was facing, all this problem, all happened, listen to me, it all happened because in the day of Jeroboam, they installed two false gods, one in Dan and one in Bethel. And that was the root of the problem. They set up false gods in their lives.

Now listen to me, people. I'm not here to tell you what your idols are. You know what they are and you're probably thinking about them right at this moment.

But I'm here to tell you that if Jesus Christ is not Lord of all in your life, He is not Lord at all. And if He is not Lord in my life and your life, that means there are idols there, and they need to be mercilessly destroyed. They need to be torn down and smashed to bits at the foot of the cross, no matter what.

And I'm telling you right now, you will not make one iota of progress until that happens. God showed me in recent months through the experiences of open-heart surgery and all the like of it, how easy it is for a man to have his ministry as an idol. And God faced me up with my own mortality, and God said to me and broke me down over this until I was prepared to say, Lord, whatever, You have Your way, even if my whole ministry is to the couple next door to me, that's fine with me.

If You want everything else, take it away, Lord. Because if it's an idol in my life, I'm wasting your time, my time, and everybody's time. God wants to be Lord, people.

Absolute, unquestioning Lord. Now, just to illustrate some of the things I'm trying to say to you here, I want to say go on from the call to revival to talk a little bit about the conditions for revival. And I want to say this to you, and I almost hesitate in some way to do this, but I feel the Lord wants me to do it, so I better do it, hadn't I? And I was greatly privileged, Gareth's already told you that I'm a good brethren boy, and I was privileged to grow up in an assembly in central Scotland, and I was saved and baptized there as a boy, and that assembly in central Scotland was alive with the presence of God, because God gave us revival.

It was just a little village, just a little village. An evangelist came one time, and he was a godly man, and he prayed his heart out, and he preached his heart out, and nothing happened. He called the church together.

He said, brothers and sisters, there is something in this church that is grieving the Holy Spirit, and he called us to prayer. I will never forget it. I was about 12 or 13 at the time.

It was written indelibly on my mind to this day. He called us to prayer. We went into a prayer meeting that went on all night, and all of a sudden the Spirit of God came upon that meeting, and brothers and sisters were standing up and confessing sin.

They were repenting before the Lord. They were getting right with God and with one another, and God was moving by His Spirit in a powerful way, and the presence of God was there, and in the middle of the night, I'll never forget it, the door of the little church opened, and a man walked in, and one of our elders was called Jimmy Black, and this man walked in. He said, Jimmy, I need to get saved.

It's my sin. Right in the middle of the night, God brought this man right in there, and right in the middle of this prayer meeting, he was gloriously saved. I want to tell you that before I came here today, I have a letter here from a Mrs. McClellan in Scotland, and I phoned her today, and she's an elderly lady now, but she remembers that time, and I phoned her.

I said, Helen, I'm going to tell the folk what happened in Madison. She said, I'll pray for you, and you know that guy that was saved, his name was Willie Kane, and Helen went out one day to do her shopping. She turned up at the grocery store, and there was a woman standing outside with her carpet slippers on, walking up and down on the sidewalk, crying her eyes out.

Helen went to her and said, what's wrong? She said, it's my sin. It's my sin. She was gloriously saved.

There was another lady, and they came into one of the meetings, and the evangelist preached, and she got up, and she ran out the door in a terrible rage. She was mad. She ran out shouting and screaming, I'll never come back here again.

I can't stand this place, and out she went, and one of the elders went after her, bless his heart, got her calmed down, drove her home. She said, I'm never coming back, and then a few nights later, she was

back. She said, I can't get any peace.

I can't get any peace. You know what? And Peter, the evangelist preached, and the woman at the well, you've had five husbands, and he whom you now has is not your husband, and everybody thought this lady was married, and she wasn't. God just convicted her.

She came to the Lord. Her living came to the Lord as well, and they were married in the Lord. Hallelujah! These are exciting things, people.

This is what happens when revival comes. God will do things that you right now don't believe. Now, don't give me it.

You don't. You don't believe that they can happen right now, but I'm telling you, God will blow your socks off if He comes in revival. He will do things that you and I have never even dreamt were possible.

This is our God. And people, what I want to say to you is this. While that little revival was going on, by the way, before I do go any further, in Isaiah 43, we're told, do not call to mind the former things or ponder things of the past.

Behold, I will do something new, says God. I will bring forth. Now it will spring forth.

Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. Now people, I read that verse because I'm not, I'm getting an old man and I don't want to be one of those guys that spends his time living in the past. I thank God for that revival, but God wants to do something new.

It was the late Watchman Nee who said of this Isaiah verse, he said, one of the most serious threats to future blessing is past blessing. And it was Oswald Chambers who said, God does not own a museum. Amen.

God does not own a museum. God is on the move. He's doing fresh things.

You cannot put God in a box. God will do what he wants to do in his sovereignty and almighty power. It will always be in accordance with his word, however, always without exception.

And God will move in power, but God will do amazing things. And when that revival came to the village where I was a boy, there were four things I remember vividly happened. Number one, there was repentance.

Deep repentance. Deep repentance in the church and outside the church. As God worked on the church, God also was then free and able to work in the community.

Amen? That's how it happens, people. There was repentance. There was a man called James Brown in that all-night prayer meeting.

He had never opened his mouth in a prayer meeting in his life before. The Spirit of God came upon that meeting, and he suddenly burst out in tears of repentance and got right with God as a believer and started crying out to God for his kids to get saved. Not only was there repentance, but there was reconciliation.

That assembly came to understand people in a new way what body life is all about. You see, one of the problems we have in our day and age is it's all our individual thing. You know what I mean? That I get all

blessed up, that I get the gift, or that I get this, or I get the other thing, and never mind anything else.

I want to tell you people, if you read the New Testament, whatever God does in your life, He does it for two reasons. Number one, to get you out of the way. And the less there is of you and me in the picture, the better it will be for everybody.

That's why God says in Galatians 2.20, I have been crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, yet it's not I but Christ who lives in me. So God will, number one, get you and I out of the way.

And number two, I've forgotten what it was right now. But God will come in a mighty way, and He will bless us. And I'll tell you what it was.

He'll get you and I out of the way, and He'll start to bless the community all around us. He'll start to move through us as His people. He'll start to touch other lives, just because His glory is among us.

In Ephesians chapter four, verse one, we get the picture there of the church. And I want you to know, I rejoice daily in the phrase, in spite of all our problems, there is one church. There is what John Stott calls the visible church, and that's where all the problems are.

And there's the invisible church that are one, all one in Christ Jesus. Hallelujah. We'll be united as one.

Third thing that happened, there was regeneration. Regeneration took place. Oh, people, this is so exciting.

Again, in the book of Titus, I just want to read it to you quickly, a scripture there in the letter of Titus chapter three. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace, we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Aren't those glorious words? The washing of regeneration.

Do you know what regeneration means? It literally means to be made alive, to be made alive. And people, if you don't know Christ, spiritually you are dead, dead, dead, dead. But in Christ, we can be made alive.

Hallelujah. There was regeneration. There was also, finally, there was renewal.

There was renewal. What do I mean by that? I mean that there were people who were saved on a regular basis when that revival time came. It was a regular occurrence for men and women to be coming to Christ.

Every week people were being saved and lives being changed, and the baptistry and that little assembly. When the night I was baptized, there were 17 of us baptized, 17 of us in a little small church, village church. It was glorious.

I'll never forget the joy. The joy was palpable. There's no joy like seeing people coming to Christ.

No joy at all. It happened on a regular basis when the revival came. I want to say to you something as well, that in that little church there was no gulf between young people and old people.

That's one of the curses of today's church. It's a disease among us. Men and women, it's a lie.

That's right, brother. Men and women, we are a body. We're not two bodies.

We're a body. I thank God for anything today. I thank God for men.

When I was 14 years of age, one of our elders said, Clayton, I'm going in six weeks' time. I'm going to preach in a church in Glasgow. I want you to come with me, and you're going to preach for five minutes.

Here's what you'll preach on. He gave me my outline, Proverbs 3, 5 and 6. In all thy ways acknowledge Him. That was preset.

He will direct your paths. That was promised. I preached my five-minute sermon to my mother every day for six weeks, and nothing much happened, mind you, but I preached it anyway.

I thank God that there were men of God who were willing to take this young guy and make them a friend. Amen? Listen to me, you old guys and you old women sitting here. Don't sit here whining about the young people.

They're like they are because of you half the time. Get out there and reach out to them. Open your homes to them.

Welcome them into your homes. Talk to them. Find out what makes them tick.

Share the Lord with them. Pour your heart into them. If there are any young people here today, stop whining about the old people.

I want to tell you today, there are some absolute gems among our elderly saints. Amen? They've got experience of life that you haven't got a clue about, and you need to hear about it, and you need to learn from them, and you need to soak it in, and we need to minister to each other that we will all grow together as a healthy body in the Lord. When we talk about this ongoing blessing, I want to tell you this story before I finish quickly.

I have no idea how long this has been going on, but one of the elders in the assembly, he and another elder, they went visiting regularly. Mr. Black, two o'clock in the morning one night, the Lord woke him up, two o'clock in the morning, and God said, James, I want you to go visit Mr. So-and-so who lived some way down the way. Uncle Jimmy's lying in bed at two o'clock in the morning.

He's saying, Lord, it's two o'clock in the morning. You don't normally go visiting folk at two o'clock in the morning, but this impression from the Lord just increased in his heart so much so that he contacted Alec who went visiting with him. He said, Alec, the Lord's saying to me we need to go visit this man.

He says, Jimmy, it's two o'clock in the morning. He said, I know, but we got to go, and they went in obedience to the Spirit of God. They went, and when they got to the door, all the lights were on in the house.

They knocked on the door. The lady came, oh, Mr. Black, I'm delighted to see you. My husband's sick.

He's very sick. Come in, and they went into the bedroom in that little cottage, and they ministered to this man, and they led him to Christ, and by seven o'clock in the morning, the man was in heaven. That kind of thing gives you goosebumps, does it not? I want to tell you people that really happened.

That is the kind of thing that will happen if we will allow God to have His way among us, if we will stop doing it our way and get on our faces and say, God, we want to do it Your way. We're sick of it, Lord,

absolutely sick of it, and you're sick to death, people of mediocrity. Oh, that we would allow the Lord to work.

The conditions for revival and finally the challenge of revival. Let me say this to you very quickly. As we come into our text and we conclude this message, real revival means a new lifestyle.

It means a new lifestyle. In the book of Hosea, there's a verse in there which says that the people, they sow to the wind and they reap the whirlwind. I want to tell you people, if we go on the way we are, that's exactly what's going to happen.

There's no point in blaming God for all the mess we're in. The Word of God says, whatever man sows, that will he also reap, Galatians 6. And in the context of Galatians there, the previous chapter, chapter 5, it's talking about this new lifestyle, and it talks there about the fruit of the Spirit, the beautiful fruit of the Spirit. Men and women, the fruit of the Spirit is not produced life.

The fruit of the Spirit is reproduced life. The fruit of the Spirit is the life of Jesus Christ in me being reproduced through me. That is what new life is all about.

That is why when revival comes and God touches your life and my life, that is why you will never be the same again. It means a new lifestyle. Hallelujah.

The old has gone and the new has come, a whole new lifestyle. That's why the prophet says, he says in our text, he says, sow with a view to righteousness. Professor Belich says, sow that righteousness towards your fellow men.

You see, when you're right with God, as I've said already, it will overflow. Amen? You'll sow seeds all over the place. Wherever you go, you will take with you the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ.

You will touch people's lives. There will be seeds sown by how you do things, what you say, what your attitudes are. And it says, not only that, but not only sow with a view to righteousness, but reap in accordance with kindness.

The result will be of sowing those seeds. The result will be, uh, it will be sown like seed that will spring up and it will be the fruit in our lives. Loving kindness, mercy, the life, the reproduced life of God and his people.

How glorious is that? But I emphasize to you folks, before there can be a new lifestyle, there has to be new life. Amen? There has to be new life or there never will be a new lifestyle. That's why Hosea says under God's direction, break up your fallow ground.

You know, when I was preparing months ago when I knew that I was to be speaking at this conference and I began to pray and God said, laid the scripture on my heart very powerfully and I began to say to the Lord, I said, Lord, I can't go and tell those people to break up their unplowed ground if I'm not prepared to do it. Lord, show me the unplowed ground in my life. I think that's the most dangerous prayer I ever prayed in my entire life.

Because I'm telling you people, if you take God seriously and you begin to pray a prayer like that, I'm telling you, he'll show you. He'll show you. He'll show you the rottenness of your heart.

He'll show you your pride. He'll show you your arrogance. He'll show you your untruthfulness, your deceitfulness.

He'll show you it all. I'm from farming stock and I remember as a little boy sitting on a tractor with a plow behind, watching the farmer do the plowing and I always loved to watch these big blades cut through the unplowed ground, turning it over, turning it over, mercilessly. No weed was excused.

It was just turned over, turned over and turned over. God says, I want you to put the plow in there. Because as one commentator says, righteous conduct issues from a new heart.

Nothing will change people until we're willing to get before God with our unplowed ground and turn it all over to him. Turn it over. Get rid of the weeds, the rubbish, the vileness, everything.

Get rid of it. Dr. McLaren says, the old man must be slain if the new man is to live. Oh, I feel a new sermon coming on right now, but I'm going to resist.

People, make no mistake about it. You see, if there's going to be new life and a new lifestyle, you and I have to die to the old life. Do you know the greatest discovery I ever made in my life? The greatest discovery I ever made is that I have been crucified with Christ.

Hallelujah! You know that old bit that I whine about and fight with all the time? It's dead. Hey, do you believe that? I'm not saying that. God says that.

I have been crucified with Christ. I'm not going to argue with that anymore, praise God. I've been crucified with Christ.

He did it. You can't crucify yourself. That's a physical impossibility.

You can't do it. It's not impossible to crucify yourself. Somebody else has to do it, and God did it when Christ was on the cross.

He took the old sinful nature and He nailed it on that cross, and He did away with it, with it once and for all, and He says, now from this moment on, when I see that great truth, it's no longer I who live. Hallelujah! It's Christ who lives in me. That'll change your life forever, people.

That is life-changing stuff. Jeremiah the prophet says, break up your unploughed ground. He says that as well as Hosea, break up your unploughed ground, but he says, and do not sow among thorns.

If the unploughed ground is not ploughed up, people, there never will be any fruit. If you're trying to sow among thorns today and kid everybody else that you're spiritual, just quit it right now, because God is not fooled, and you and I are going to stand at the judgment seat of Christ, and when we get to the judgment seat of Christ, the thing that will be exposed is not what I'm preaching today. Am I being faithful? The thing that will be exposed is why am I doing it today? What are my motives? And God wants to turn over all that garbage and junk and get it out of our lives and bring us into that new experience of life in Christ.

Hallelujah! So, as we conclude, let me just say this. Let's identify the areas of unploughed ground in our lives. There are four of them I'm going to just mention.

I believe the heart of God is grieved today by the terrible sin of unbelief in the church. Hosea said in his day, Israel is a luxuriant vine, produces fruit for himself. And then in verse 2, their heart is faithless.

It grieves God. When you look at Hebrews 11, you see that great catalog of witnesses, men and women who were faithful to God in believing God and taking Him at His word. Then it says in chapter 12, keep your eyes focused on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame.

The joy of having you and I as His own people, folks. It says we're surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses. Let us lay aside every weight.

What's the weight? I believe it's the weight of the great sin of unbelief. Not taking God at His word, not believing God and launching out in Him. Secondly, not only unbelief, but prayerlessness.

Oh, men and women, we're so shallow. Somebody said to me the other day, why don't people come to the prayer meeting? The answer is very simple. We're not desperate enough.

We're not desperate enough. If we really believe the things we say we believe, men and women, we would all be on our faces in agony before God, anguishing in His presence that God would do something by His mighty, sovereign power and for His glory and praise. And the prayerlessness would vanish.

I was blessed in reading Exodus 3 verse 2 the other day when that bush in the desert and Moses saw this bush and it burned and it burned and it wasn't consumed. Oh, hallelujah. The Lord just made it so real to me.

That bush was burning and blazing with the glory of God. Don't you want to be like that? The late Major Thomas said in his book, *The Saving Life of Christ*, any old bush will do so long as God is in the bush. Amen? I just love that.

Any old bush, that's me, people. Any old bush at all, but let's get God in there and anything will happen. Praise His name.

Unbelief, God hates it. It's grieving to God. Prayerlessness breaks His heart.

No real heart for lost people. Oh, that God would work in our lives here. And fourthly, we have all the wrong priorities.

As the prophet Mosiah says, break up your fallow ground for it is time. People, it is time. It is time.

It is time to seek the Lord. I want to tell you folks, all the idols in our lives and we stand at the judgment seat of Christ. There's a friend of mine in Bible school used to sing, by and by when I look on his face, beautiful face, by and by when I look on his face, I will wish I had given him more.

I wish I had given him more. People, we're wasting our time. People tell me they haven't got time to read their Bibles.

What a lie. You women shop till you drop. You men are on the golf course far too much.

Many of us, we've spent far too much time watching garbage, garbage. You know, this nation, you know what happened in Canada? If they closed down all the video rental, movie rental stores, this nation would come unglued. This nation would come unglued.

You guys were addicted to them and most of them are absolute garbage and a waste of time in comparison with eternity. Let's get our priorities right. It is time to seek the Lord.

Let's pray. Father, we bow very, very humbly before you today. Oh God, I've been praying for weeks, Father, and saying to you, apart from you, we can do nothing.

Lord, we bow humbly at your feet today and we cry out to you in the name of Jesus, Lord, come. Come, Lord Jesus, and touch our hearts. Touch this place, oh God.

Come by your spirit, Lord, and your glory and your power. Give us the grace to turn over all that unclouded ground, Lord, to keep nothing back from you. Oh God, bring us into renewal, revival, we pray.

We long for it, Father. We yearn for it, for the glory of your great and holy name. Amen.

It is time. It is time for you, for some of you right now, to answer to what God is saying to your hearts. I know God is speaking to some of you.

He promised to speak, and we have this conference in prayer that he would speak clearly to each of our hearts, and he has spoken. And many of you here sitting listening to my voice now know that he's spoken to you. And it is time that you answer that speaking voice.

Through these doors we have a prayer room where you can find some seclusion, a nice large room, you can find a quiet corner to spend time with God. If you wish to stay here for a moment and spend quiet time with God. Our next speaker will be in about 10 minutes time.

I'm asking you to quieten your hearts. This is not a place for conversation. Wasn't that good? Were you blessed? I'm not.

Just spend time with God. If you need the washroom, go to the washrooms quietly and come back in. Let's spend quiet time with God and respond to what God has said.

If you need to go to the prayer rooms, they're through that door, directly across the corridor.

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/GUh_GDdooiE.mp4

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