

Why Revival Tarries - Six Deadly Sins

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the importance of having a fully devoted heart to God, and warns of the dangers of a divided heart, which can lead to missing the marvelous work and wonder of God.

Duration: 1:23:40

Scripture: Revelation 3:4

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of hearing and following God's word. He compares the value of hearing God's word to being in a miry clay up to one's neck, rather than being in an ivory palace without understanding God's message. The preacher warns against being a friend of the world, as it is considered enmity with God. He urges the congregation to purify themselves from worldly desires in order to be candidates for a powerful outpouring of God's Spirit. The sermon concludes with a reminder to humble oneself, confess sins, and seek a fervor and love for God's Word.

Transcript

Anytime that the children need to go with whoever they can, you know, it's a little early now, but... First of all, you may turn your Bibles, if you like, to Isaiah chapter 29. Isaiah chapter 29. Isaiah chapter 29, beginning in verse number 13.

This was the statement that the prophet Isaiah spoke to Israel as a nation. But there's application to his church, because Israel as a nation during the Old Covenant was his chosen people. Those in whom God was wanting to reveal himself to the world.

But now, since the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, Israel is not the corporate vessel. The nation Israel is not the corporate vessel that God is using to reveal himself to the world, but it's the church, the seed of Abraham, is Christ, Paul said. And we who are of Christ are the seed of Abraham.

So, this is what happened to the nation of Israel according to the Scriptures. It says in Isaiah chapter 29, verse number 13, Wherefore, the Lord said, For as much as this people draw near me with their mouth and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men. Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder.

For the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Now, the problem that God had with the nation of Israel is very clearly outlined here. And that is that there was a drawing near to God with the mouth, but the heart was far.

God is always looking at the heart. The issue of the Lord is always a heart issue. It always has to do with where our hearts are at.

Just like in Matthew, as we read this morning in Matthew chapter 6, Jesus talked about where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Matthew chapter 6, verse 21. The treasure there represents the thing that is of value to us.

The thing that's valuable to us. The thing that is costly to us. Now, as the people of God, as the church of God, the thing that should be valuable to us, the thing that should be costly to us, the thing that should be more important to us than anything else is the Lord Himself.

It's getting to know Him and loving Him. Understanding His heart, hearing His word, being transformed into His image, obeying His word, demonstrating a character that is like His Son, a godly character. So, when God brought this indictment against the nation of Israel, in verse number 13 of Isaiah chapter 29, He said, this people draws near Me with their mouth and with their lips to honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me.

So, in fact, He was simply saying this, that even though with their mouth and their lips they were acknowledging God, they were engaging in all of the religious practices of that day, their heart, that is, the treasure of their life, the thing that was most valuable to them was no longer the Lord. It was no longer the Lord. Therefore, God says, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people and a wonder.

Now, we know through fulfillment of Scripture that the marvelous work and the wonder that God was going to do was revealing His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And we know that Jesus wept before the house of Israel when He came. And He wept and He said, Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, how often I would have gathered you as a hen her chicks, but ye would not.

Therefore, I say unto you, your house shall be desolate, and you're going to know nothing but sorrow until you say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord. So, when Isaiah says that God was going to do a marvelous work and a wonder, this marvelous work and a wonder was the fact that He was going to reveal His Son to the world. The Bible says that Christ came to His own, but His own received Him not.

Therefore, to as many as received Him, to them He gave the power to become the children of God. But Israel missed it. Now, listen, this is very important for us to understand.

The nation of Israel missed the great wonder and the great marvel, the great marvelous thing that God was going to do. They missed it, and it's not because they weren't smart enough to figure it out. It wasn't because they didn't have enough education.

It wasn't because they didn't have enough religion. It wasn't because they didn't have enough money. They missed it because their hearts were far from God.

Now, remember, Jesus said, where your treasure is, there your heart is. So, basically, what God is saying to Israel is this. Because I am not your chief value, I am not your sacred treasure, you have missed the marvelous thing that I'm going to do.

You've missed it. You're after something else. You're looking for something else.

You're looking, according to the prophet Isaiah, you're looking on how you can satisfy your own desires, how you can satisfy your own lusts, how you can get something for yourself in this world. You're looking on how you can establish your own kind of life. You're not broken before me.

Isaiah chapter 66, beginning in verse number 1, Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath my hand made, and all those things hath been, saith the Lord. Listen to this.

But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at my word. God is saying here, listen, Israel wanted to build a house for God. David built the house, or David came up with the plans and Solomon built the house.

And all during the earthly existence of the nation of Israel, listen, all of their life revolved around the temple that was erected by Solomon. They came to that temple, and they offered offerings, and they sang songs, and they engaged in all the religious laws that were taught in the book of Moses. But God said, is this really the house that I'm going to come and dwell in? God said, no, this is not the house that I really want to dwell in.

Yes, I commanded Solomon to build it. Yes, I've made laws and rules. But all of these things in and of themselves do not fulfill my heart.

They're types, they're pictures, they're shadows of a heavenly reality. The heavenly reality was that God wanted to dwell in a living temple, living stones. That's you and I. And so therefore, Israel engaged all their life in religious activity.

They went to the temple that was built. It was a beautiful temple. They went and they offered sacrifices, and they collected the tithes of the people, and they engaged in all of their singing.

And God said, the whole thing is an abomination to Me. I despise it. I don't want anything to do with it.

Why? Because God is not interested in our outward performance, rather, He's interested in our inner condition, our heart. And that's why God says, to this man will I look, to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembles at My word. Sarah, I want you to sit over here, please, quickly.

Timothy, you stay there. Him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, Beloved, the Lord Jesus, before He became a man when He was in heaven, He looked down and He saw the nation of Israel. And He saw that all of their religious activity revolved around the temple.

They loved to go to church. They loved to be a part. They loved the Levites to come and minister.

They loved to pay their tithes. They loved to sing songs. And God says, your hearts are far from Me, even though with your mouth you are doing all the right things.

And so they missed what God was doing. Now, if the nation of Israel missed what God was doing, and that thing that God was doing was a marvelous thing, the prophet here says it was a marvelous thing. The prophet here says it was a wonder.

And they missed it. Then I would like to suggest that now in the New Covenant, in the New Testament, God's people, the church, are going to miss what God is doing. Because the same problem that the nation of Israel had, we've got.

The same dilemma. We have taken the focus off of the heart and off of inward purity and off of inward righteousness before God and off of inward humility and off of being poor and recognizing our need for God and recognizing our need to be broken in the hands of God. And we've put all the emphasis on the external, just like Israel did.

We want nice buildings. We want nice choirs. We want everything perfect outwardly.

And we've neglected the inside. Our homes are in havoc. Greed, covetousness, strife, envy are filling the homes.

There's love for money, pursuit after worldly things. Yet, when we come to church, we sing our songs and we do everything so nice. But yet, God is saying the same thing to you and I as He's saying to the nation of Israel.

I'm going to do a marvelous thing in this last hour. The prophet Joel. Joel chapter 3. You can turn your Bibles there.

This is a Scripture that is referring to the day that we are living in. Joel chapter 2, verse 28. And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.

And also upon the servants and upon the handmaidens in those days will I pour out My Spirit, and I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord. And there shall come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

This prophecy here in Joel had the beginning of its fulfillment in the book of Acts. Peter quoted this prophecy to explain what was happening on the day of Pentecost, Acts chapter 2. So here, God did a wonder and a marvel, just like He said He would do. And He poured out His Spirit on a broken, humble, and contrite people.

But not only does God want to do it then, but God wants to do it now. During the whole dispensation of the last days, God promises to pour out His Spirit. But the problem is that He wants to pour out His Spirit upon His church, but the church is in the same condition now that Israel was in.

They're going to miss it. We're going to miss it. And the reason we're going to miss it, it's not because we don't have enough money.

It's not because we don't have this or that. It's not because we don't have enough administrators or enough leaders or we don't have this or that. The whole reason why is simple.

Our hearts no longer find total satisfaction in the Lord alone. Our treasure has become divided. And because of this, when the Lord reveals His Son and pours out His Spirit, we're going to miss it.

Because we're after things and not after Him. 1 Corinthians 2. And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not

to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

That was the message of Paul. Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And when I was with you, I came in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit, we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world that come to know it. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew.

For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. So here Paul is speaking about a wisdom. He's speaking about a hidden wisdom and a mystery.

And he's referring to none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. But notice what he says in verse number 9. I hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit.

For the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. Verse 14, But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God. For they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For whom hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. So here the mystery, the marvelous thing that Isaiah spoke of in Isaiah chapter 29 is now being revealed through the Apostle Paul.

And that is Christ Himself. He is that marvelous thing. Just like the nation of Israel missed it because their hearts were far from God, likewise there is a great danger in the church today that for the most part, in general, the church is missing what God wants to do.

And the reason why is because the heart is divided. The heart has mixed devotion. And when the heart's divided, we want religion, but we don't want relationship.

When the heart's divided, we want a profession, but we don't want a possession. When the heart's divided, we want to say one thing, but do another thing. When the heart's divided, we want our comfort zone.

When the heart's divided, we don't want to hear Jesus say, if any man follow Me, let him deny himself, let him take up his cross, and let him follow Me. When the heart is divided, we don't want to hear Jesus say, he that loves mommy or daddy or wife or children, or yea, even his own life more than Me, cannot be My disciple. See, when our heart's divided, we want to go halfway with God.

We want the Lord, but we want our own life. We want the Lord, but we don't want a devotion to God that demands that we give up the things that we like. And in that state, we're going to miss what God's doing.

Because the very thing that God is going to do in this late hour is prepare a people who are willing to lay everything down in response for a great reward. And that reward is not going to be the praise of man. It's not going to be being made kings in this world.

But that reward is none other than God Himself. God is going to reward those who lay their lives down with Himself. God will become our reward.

Christ will become our reward. Walking in His fullness. Living by His power.

Demonstrating His character. Possessing the divine nature. Having a peace that the world knows nothing about.

Having a joy that's not connected to things. Having a song when everything around about is going wrong. That's the reward.

I'm telling you, beloved, God is not promising the church all of this hype and all of this Hollywood stuff. God is promising the church Christ. The fullness of Christ.

But many people aren't looking for the fullness of Christ. They're looking for something that will build themselves up. Something that will lift themselves up.

Something that will make them look good. Something that will make them feel good. But God, according to the prophet, is going to proceed to do a marvelous thing.

Jesus said regarding this marvelous thing in Matthew 11, verse 25, Jesus said, and at that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, so it seemed good in Thy sight. It is good in the sight of God to keep hidden from the wise and the prudent the beauty of Jesus Christ.

It is good in the eyes of God to reveal the beauty of Jesus Christ to the babe. To the humble. To the broken.

To the contrite. To those who are empty. To those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

To those who know their state of poverty. Blessed are the poor. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Blessed are those who mourn. Jesus said, to them will God reveal the beauty of Jesus Christ. There's a very clear call from God that is sounding to you and I this morning, and that is simply, who or what are you after? Who or what are you after this morning? Matthew, we're there.

Chapter 10, verse number 34. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword.

For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And the man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me.

He that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me. He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loses his life for My sake, shall find it.

Luke chapter 12. Luke chapter 12. 51 to 53.

Beginning in verse 49. I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished? Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth, I tell you, nay, but rather division. For from hence there shall be five in one house divided three against two and two against three.

The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father, and the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother, and the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. Luke chapter 14. Beginning in verse number 25.

And there went great multitudes with him, and he turned and said unto them, If any man come to Me, and hate not his father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life, also he cannot be My disciple. Verse number 33. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsakes not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple.

This was the thing that caused the nation of Israel to stumble. But it didn't prevent them from building a temple, did it? They had a temple of gold. They had laws that were from the mouth of God that were communicated by the servant Moses.

They engaged in daily religious ceremony. They practiced the three feasts every year. Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

They were faithful in offering all kinds of lambs and goats and pigeons according to the law. They collected tithes from the people. But yet, in spite of the fact that they were tremendously faithful with all of the outward law, yet they inwardly had departed from God, and they were after their own things, and therefore, according to the very Scriptures here, they were not willing to forsake everything for God, and therefore God said, I'm going to do something.

I'm going to perform something. I'm going to send My Son, and you're going to crucify Him. You're going to miss Him.

And the reason why is because you're not after Me. Oh, beloved, may God help us to hear. Isaiah chapter 58.

Isaiah chapter 58. Here's what the prophet said to the nation of Israel. Cry aloud and spare not.

Lift up thy voice like a trumpet and show My people their transgression and the house of Jacob their sins. This was the state of the nation of Israel. Their hearts were filled with iniquity and sin.

They should have been weeping and wailing and crying before God, begging God to deliver them from the powers of hell, from the voluptuous sins of the world that they were living in at the time. But instead, verse number two, yet they seek Me daily. So see, there can be a seeking after God outwardly, but inwardly there's no change.

Just because there's a seeking after God doesn't mean God's pleased, because right here, yet they seek Me daily, they delight to know My ways. There could be an outward delight to know God's ways. This is incredible.

As a nation that did righteousness, there can be an outward appearance like we're a people who do what's right in God's eyes. There could be an outward appearance that we're seeking to know God's ways. There

could be an outward appearance that we're seeking to know God.

And it appears also in verse two that they did not forsake the ordinance of their God. They ask of Me the ordinance of justice. They take delight in approaching God.

I'm telling you, this is a picture of something outward that looks impeccable, doesn't it? This is a picture of something that outwardly it looks perfect. But what was God looking at? The outward or the inward? He was looking at the inward, beloved. We are living in a day when Christianity has become outward and inward.

It's full of corruption. But nobody wants to address it. No one wants to deal with it.

Because we're afraid we'll rock the boat. We're afraid we won't get the tithes. We're afraid we won't get the offerings.

We're afraid we'll lose the gifted people. Because, you know, that singer, I know he's not too spiritual, but boy, can he sure hold a tune. The choir, they're living in adultery.

There's fornicators. There's homosexuals. We can't touch them though.

Hey, because people are coming because they're so talented. God says it's an abomination to Me. Who's going to stand up and in humility and in brokenness say, this is not right before God.

We better stop our religion. We better stop our whole Christianity. We better take the plug out.

We better put a hole in the gas tank. I don't care if everything stops. We better stop.

Because if we don't, we're going to miss what God's doing. It's going to go right by. We're going to miss it.

No one wants to rock the boat. Everyone wants it to look good outwardly. Who cares what it looks like outwardly when inwardly, God says, there's sin and there's despair and there's wretchedness.

We don't want to rock the boat. Verse 3, Wherefore, have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? So here, a nation of Israel is saying, we're doing all this, but yet you're not responding. God says, why have we afflicted our soul and you've taken no knowledge? And here's what God says, Behold, in the day of your fast you find pleasure and exact all your labors.

Behold, you fast for strife and debate and to smite with the fist of wickedness and ye shall not fast as ye do this day to make your voice to be heard on high. So what God was saying was this, your motives are wrong. Inwardly, you're all wrong.

You want your own thing. James says that very thing, doesn't he? In James chapter 4, he says you ask and have not because you ask wrongly so that you might consume it upon your own lusts. What does that mean? What that means is that you are asking with a wrong motive.

God doesn't want us to ask of Him things that if we get them, we'll use them for our own desires. Verse 3, you ask and receive not because you ask amiss that you might consume it upon your own lusts, your own passions. So the nation of Israel here is in a state where outwardly everything looks good, but inwardly their hearts are full of despair and sin and wretchedness.

And so what does God do? God says in Isaiah 29, I'm going to do a work. I'm going to do a marvelous work and you're going to miss it. And I tell you, beloved, by the Scriptures, by the word of the Lord in the Scriptures, God is going to do a marvelous work in the church.

And most of the church is going to miss it, at least temporarily. And the reason why is because we have become so concerned with what is outward, so concerned with cosmetics, so concerned with how everything looks, that we've neglected our heart. We've neglected our inner life.

We've neglected seeking God and letting Him speak to us and to deal with anything and everything in our life that's not right. Our treasure has become other than the Lord Himself. Here's a list of things that need to be corrected.

A list of things that need to be corrected. First of all, David read the first one, Revelation chapter 3. We've been seduced in these areas of our life. First of all, we've left our first love and we need to repent and do our first works again.

Our hearts have become divided. We need to pray that God will restore us back to the heights of that first love. That's found in Revelation chapter 3, verses 4 and 5. Number two, we have a divided devotion.

Matthew chapter 6. Now let me tell you, beloved, be assured, when these heart conditions are present and we continue to pursue after external perfection and external religion, we put ourselves in the same state that the nation of Israel was in. We stand to be judged and punished by God because we're not dealing with the heart issues, which issues alone God are really concerned about, and we're just blowing them by seeking to perfect that which is outward. Divided devotion.

Matthew chapter 6. We read this. Norman read it. I read it.

19 through 21. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Verse 24. No man can serve two masters.

You can't be devoted to two masters. These are the very sins that destroy the nation of Israel. Jeremiah said to the nation of Israel, in so many words, I'm going to paraphrase it, he prophesied and said, Oh Israel, where is the virgin that I delivered out of Egypt? He was remembering the days when Israel was just born out of Egypt and just brought into the wilderness.

When you were tender toward me and you rejoiced and you loved me and you were delighted in my name and you rejoiced when you saw my works. Jeremiah was prophesying and God was saying, Where is this person that I delivered out of Egypt? You've become hard and calloused and you've become adulterous in your heart and you're divided and your affections are on this world. God was actually saying, Where is this woman that I brought out of Egypt who sang and rejoiced? So the first inward leaven of corruption is losing our first love.

The second leaven of corruption is a divided devotion, trying to serve two masters. Wanting the things of God but wanting the things of this world. Wanting God's will but wanting our own will.

Placing conditions upon our service for God. God, I'll serve you if you do this, but if you don't, I'm not going to serve you. God, I'm asking you for this.

If you give it to me, I'm going to serve you, but if you don't, bless God, I'm just going to go out into the world and do my own thing. You can't put conditions on God, beloved. Now, I don't want to come across as being angry or mean.

God, forgive me if I am. I'm not. This is just very, very passionate in my heart and truly I'm speaking to my own heart as well.

But you can't put conditions on your service to God. What master hires a servant and says, all right, what are your conditions upon which you'll work for me? Ah, I see. You don't want me to do that? Okay, I won't.

You don't want me to do that either? God forbid, I won't do that. Anything else? No. If I'm a master and I have a servant, the servant says, yes, master.

Yes, master. You want me to do this, master? Okay, master. Anything else? Now, he might turn around and say, golly, I don't want to do this, but he's going to do it because he's the servant.

We've come to God and we've got the spirit of haughtiness on us just like the world because it's the world that says, you're not going to tell me what to do. Bless God. That is an arrogant spirit.

I'm telling you, God, I pray God will perform an exorcism in the church and get that spirit out of us. A haughty spirit. Bless God.

No one's going to tell me what to do. No one's going to put authority on me. No one's going to show me that I have to do this.

No one's going to cross my will. If you cross my will, I'm going to punish you. You know, husbands and wives, be careful.

Children, be careful. Now, you could punish somebody if they do something you don't like. That's terrible.

You know, the silent treatment or punishing someone emotionally. Or what about saying something you know will hurt the person? What about a sore in their life? Maybe a failure in their life. And they fail you, so you bring it up to hurt them.

That's the devil. That's the powers of darkness working. It's this kind of stuff working in the church today that God is very displeased with, yet we want to come to church and have everything nice.

We can't do it. I'm telling you now by the Spirit of the Word of God in Revelation 18, God is going to unplug the religious system in this country. He's going to take the lights off it.

He's going to do it. God is only going to use those who fear Him and tremble at His Word, who are poor and contrite, just like it says in Isaiah 66. Number three.

A third leaven of corruption within. Now remember, all of these things were in the nation of Israel and they missed what God wanted to do. And it is my belief that the Lord has spoken this in the world to me and said, just like the nation of Israel missed it, likewise, those who are called by my name in this age, and that's the church, are going to miss what I'm going to do because this leaven of sin is within the heart and

there's nothing being done about it.

We're ignoring it. We just want everything to look good outwardly. The third leaven of corruption is James chapter 4, a taste for this world and the things of this world.

James chapter 4. I'll tell you, beloved, I'd rather end up in a miry clay up to my neck because it was God's Word that I was hearing than in an ivory palace, gold and silver and everything I could ask for and not a clue of what God was saying. You hear God, you follow God, you sense what God is saying and you apply it to your life and you'll fall into a lot of trouble, but it'll be blessed trouble. James chapter 4, verses 1-4, beginning in verse number 4 actually, Ye adulterers and adulteresses, don't you know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Do you know what it means to be a friend of the world? You know, friendship simply means mutual interests. To have a mutual interest. When the Bible says to be a friend of this world is an enemy of God, what that means is this.

If we give ourselves over to sharing a mutual interest, that leads our hearts away from total devotion to God. Now watch what it says in 1 John chapter 2. 1 John chapter 2. 1 John chapter 2, verse 15. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world. So when the Bible in James chapter 4 says to be a friend of the world is to be an enemy of God, what it's saying is simply if we are finding in the world through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, that which we are going after, that which is satisfying us, that which is taking us from obedience to the Word of God, then we are setting ourselves up as an enemy against God.

That's what the Word says. Doesn't it? That's what the Word says. See, we have to pray about these things.

We have to ask God, and you know, we can't go into this very deeply because this is a whole other message, but beloved, you need to learn to hear the voice of God. You can read the Word, or you can hear the Word. And too many Christians are reading the Word, but they don't hear it.

You know, the Bible doesn't say, David, faith comes by reading the Word. Does it? It says faith comes by hearing the Word. And it's not talking about hearing the Word.

It's talking about hearing the Word. Hearing God's Word. That is, the ears of your heart have to hear the Word.

That's when faith comes. When I hear the Word, yes, Lord, I hear what you're saying. That's when faith comes.

That's why a person can know this Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and know the letter of it, and read it all the time, but yet, seemingly their life is not being changed. It's because they're not hearing the Word even though they're reading it. And just because you hear the Word being preached doesn't mean that it is affecting you.

You have to pray that when the Word is preached, you hear the Word. Not hear it appear. You've got to hear it in your heart.

It's a heart issue. I don't know about you, beloved, but every day I wake up and say, Oh God, may it never be that I stop hearing Your Word. The thing I fear more than hell is the thought of waking up one day and not being able to hear God speak to me.

That is dreadful. The thought of not hearing God. The thought of going to the Bible and having it turn into a dead book.

A book of nothing but ink. Well, I can't hear God anymore. I can't get a sense of comfort from Him.

Now, I'm not talking about feelings. I'm talking about a real intuitive hearing of God. That should be the most precious thing in our life.

You say, well, how do I hear God? Pray. Pray. Pray and say, God, open up my heart.

Read through Psalm 119. Everything in there is about the Word and how it touches the heart. Okay.

Number one, our first love. Number two, a divided devotion. Number three, a taste for this world.

Number four, harboring an unhealthy heart. Turn with me, if you would, to Ephesians. Ephesians 4.32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another.

Let me say something, beloved. A person who engages in the commandment to forgive those who wrong against you are perhaps acting more like God than any other possible way. Because it is inherent within the heart and nature of God to forgive those who have sinned against Him.

And the quality of forgiveness is an essential... I say it again. The quality of forgiveness is an essential element that must work in our lives. The absence of unforgiveness in our heart is a foothold for the devil to come into our families and into our churches and literally to tear them up by the seams and destroy them.

Your family will be destroyed if you can't forgive one another. You will have a destroyed marriage. Your children will grow up and despise and be bitter if they're not forgiven and if they don't get taught how to forgive.

You will never grow. Listen, you will never grow in a local body if you don't learn how to forgive. Because all you have to do is hang around people for a little length of time and before you know it, someone's going to wrong you some way.

Someone's going to look at you and it's going to offend you. Someone's going to say something to you and it's going to offend you. Someone is not going to meet your expectations.

What are you going to do? You're either going to forgive them or you're not. If you forgive them, then it will be as though they never wronged you and you'll act that way toward them. But if you don't forgive them, then that will be the beginning of spiritual decline in your life.

And guess what will happen eventually? Your words will find you out. You'll start sowing bitterness. You'll start sowing evil reports about that person into the ears of other people.

And before you know it, others will be defiled. You'll start committing character assassination. You'll start assassinating them in the presence of other people.

And it's all traced back to an unwillingness to forgive the wrong that was committed against you. Unforgiveness is running wild in the church today. That's why there are so many divisions, so many breakups.

This company leaves and goes with that. This company breaks up and then they break up. It's because we have a quarrel against one another.

We have a misunderstanding against one another. And instead of coming to one another and looking at each other, squaring the eyes and saying, I forgive you in the name of the Lord. Let's not let this misunderstanding bring a breach in our hearts.

Let's continue to build together. Instead of doing that, there is a conspiracy of silence, of unforgiveness. God's people cannot prosper spiritually, nor can God bless them the way He wants when there is inward unforgiveness.

Are you struggling with unforgiveness today regarding something that someone did to you? You were treated unfairly. You were wronged. You deserved something and you didn't get it.

You maybe went the second mile for someone and in return, they did something wrong. Instead of coming to you and saying thank you, they actually did something wrong. They weren't even appreciative.

Are you struggling with unforgiveness this morning? I admonish you by the Lord Himself and by the Word. Settle it in your heart. You're not going to let unforgiveness eat you up like cancer.

1 Timothy chapter 6. Remember we're dealing with behold, I do a marvelous thing. A wonder. The nation of Israel missed it and the church is going to miss it if we don't repent of these things that we're talking about now.

And just because we have an outward religion and we have a nice outward form and everything looks good and the system is moving on real good and it looks good in the eyes of men and we've got the best of choirs and the best of singers and the best of preachers and the best of administrators and we've got the best of everything, God says there is inward corruption and I'm against the outward system. And unless we repent and come to God and let the system die if it has to, God says you're going to miss it just like the nation did and you're going to end up with something that's not real. 1 Timothy chapter 6. This is the fifth leaven of corruption that must be dealt with in the church today.

It's hard to get through these pages because it's a new Bible and I don't want to crinkle them. So I have to go slow. 1 Timothy chapter 6 beginning in verse 3, If any man teach otherwise and consent not to the wholesome words of the Lord Jesus Christ and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud and knows nothing, but doting about questions and strives of words whereof comes envy, strife, railings, envy, and surmisings, perverse disputings of men, of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth.

Supposing that gain is godliness, from such withdraw yourself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. Beloved, hear the Word.

Hear what the Spirit is saying. The fifth leaven of corruption that is lurking within our hearts today, that is going to be our ruin, it already is in many lives, it is the love and lust after money. The love of money.

Godliness with contentment is great gain. If you want gain, if you want profit, then I admonish you to seek after godliness and to seek after contentment. Because if you can get godly and content, you've got great gain.

But I don't hear this gain preached from the pulpits today. I hear, get all you can and can all you get. I hear, go after it, get it, set your heart on it.

I heard one preacher on TV talk to an audience of a thousand people, and he had on a thousand dollar suit, and he had just taken up a massive offering. And he said, the reason why some of you people are still in poverty is because you haven't come to understand the things I have. And there was silence in there.

He said, I'll tell you what I've come to understand. I've come to understand that I'm just like God. He said, I'm just like God.

And because of that, I know that I can have anything I ask. And the reason why you've got poverty is because you haven't come to see that yet. Beloved, these are some dangerous times that we're living in.

For a man to stand up and say such absurd things. And it's even scarier to think that the auditorium remained full rather than people getting up and walking out. What does the Word say? Godliness with contentment is great gain.

We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. Having food and raiment, let us therewith be content. Do you know why the church is having such terrible, dreadful financial problems? Because they are believing God to finance their lusts.

God doesn't finance lusts. He never promised to finance our lusts. He only promises to provide what we have need of, and then even then sometimes we are amazed at what we think we have need of.

I'll say it again. God does not promise to finance our lusts. Verse 9. But they that will be rich... Do you know what another translation says on that? Now hold on to your seats.

It's not profound, but it's heart-searching. Here's what a better, not a better translation, an alternate translation. But they that are desiring to be rich.

Simple. Now let's just stop there. How many people in America do you know that don't want to be rich? The American dream is wealth, fullness, happiness, anything I want, the land of the free, the land of opportunity.

This spirit has come into the church and is seducing the church. Christians now justify their desire to be rich when the Word says not to. Now that's when you know people have forsaken the Word and they're gathering around themselves teachers who teach what they want to hear after their own lusts.

If I want to believe that God wants me to desire to be rich, then I'm going to find preachers who are going to tell me that so I can say, amen, brother, preach it. Amen, brother. What does Paul say? I'd rather follow Paul.

I'll tell you what. I don't like to follow any man, but if I'm going to follow someone, I'd rather follow Paul. What does Paul say about this matter of desiring to be rich? What does he say? They that will be rich, or those who are wanting to be rich, fall into temptation.

Name it, brothers, write it down. Write it in your Bible. You want to be rich? You want money, money, money, money? Here's what you're going to get instead of it.

You're going to get temptation. You're going to get a snare. You're going to get many foolish and hurtful lusts.

And you're going to drown in destruction and perdition. Without being disrespectful, put that in your pipe and smoke it. You see why we need to get back and hear God speak? And why we need to discern what's coming and what we're hearing and what we're being told? The desire for wealth is a snare that the American church is drowning in right now.

We've got preachers making us think that the work of God hangs on money. It does not hang on money. It hangs on available people who will humble themselves and let God strip them down to nothing.

God does not have a financial crisis in heaven. The work of God does not work by money. It works by prayer and by the Holy Ghost.

Now, I know money, we need to pay our bills, we need to pay the electric bills, but that's not the work of God essentially. The work of God according to Isaiah 55, Come all ye who have no money, come and buy of Me bread. The work of God comes through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Now, let's read on and discern and distinguish between the things that differ so we're not misunderstood. For the love of money. Now, someone says, bless God, it's not money, but it's the love of money.

That's true. But how do you know you love money? When you want it. The test of whether or not you love it or not is whether you want it.

If you want it, you love it. If you could care less, then most likely you don't love it. Jesus said, seek first the kingdom.

Where your treasure is there will your heart be also. You know the God, little g, that most people are serving today? It's the God of George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. I don't know who's on any bigger.

I've never seen a bigger one than a hundred. But George is on a dollar bill and Ben is on a hundred dollar bill. Who's on a fifty? Grand.

All right. They're the gods that we're serving. I've heard so many people say, it's not money, it's the love of money.

Bless God. I agree, it's the love of money. But here's how you know if you love it.

If you want it. If you're looking for it. If you're trying to find it everywhere you turn.

I'll tell you, if that's it, brother, you've got a spirit on you that's not of God. It's simple as that. Repent.

Pray God deliver you. You say, brother, you preach like this, people aren't going to come. You're not going to fill the church telling people that they love money and they need to repent.

Well, I'm not trying to fill the church. I don't care about filling the auditorium. I'm not the one that's going to do it.

God is. And it's going to be around truth. Truth is what's going to do it.

Prayer is what's going to do it. The word of God is what's going to do it. For the love of money is the root of all evil, while some have been coveted after.

When you covet after money or covet after the things that money can buy, you are being ensnared by the powers of hell. They have erred from the faith. Now see, some people say that this is compatible with the faith.

Some people say that strong faith in God will cause you to want money and believe God for a lot of money. Well, there's a danger there, because Paul said that if you covet after money, you've erred from the faith. So there's something here we need to pray through and ask God to show us.

And have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things. I hate to say it, but I don't see many men of God now because most of them aren't fleeing these things, they're pursuing them.

And not only are they pursuing them, but they're preaching it to people. Are you a man of God or a woman of God? Flee coveting after the love of money. I dare you, like David said in this, I'll have a double dog dare you.

I double dog dare you to pray and ask God, Lord, show me, is my heart being moved by greed and covetousness? Do I love money? Lord, I don't care what you tell me, I need to know the answer. I don't want to hear what brother so-and-so tells me. I don't want to say, yeah, but brother so-and-so is doing it and you're blessing them.

You're not supposed to follow people. You ask God in the quietness of your home one day, Lord, am I after money? And let Him speak to you. If you are, I simply beg you to ask Him to deliver you.

But thou, O man of God, flee these things and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. I tell you, I very rarely hear preachers encouraging God's people to follow after these things. Most of the time I hear them telling them, believe God for things, tangible things, things you can see, things you can live in, things you can drive.

Believe God for things. God wants you to have nice things. We're not going to deal with that issue because frankly, God's not against nice things.

He's not. But that's not the issue. The issue is what are you after? Things or are you after God? And let me tell you something, if you're really after God, you don't take a vow of poverty.

I'm not saying you think that to be poor and to have nothing is spiritual, but neither do you follow after extravagant things. You become content with God's provision. That's what happens.

You become content. We're not suggesting, and nor is the Spirit of God suggesting that taking a vow of poverty is spiritual. But if you're after God, you're after God, period.

And you're not going to be after things. You're going to have the testimony of Paul. I've learned to be content in whatsoever state I find myself, whether I am abounding or whether I am without.

Verse 17. Charge them that are rich. Now it doesn't say charge them that are wanting to be rich.

It doesn't say charge them who are seeking after wealth. It simply says charge them who are rich. If you happen to be rich, I don't know how you got there.

And here's what the Spirit is saying. It doesn't matter how you got there. If you are rich, number one, you better not be seeking more wealth.

Number two, you better not love money. And number three, if you are wealthy, then don't be high-minded. Number two, don't trust in your money or in the stock market, but in the living God who gives us richly all things to enjoy that you might do good.

So if you're rich, do good. That means share. Share your wealth.

Be ready to distribute and willing to communicate. Whenever the Bible speaks of ready to distribute and willing to communicate, I have found without exception the implication is my life and my money is open. It's not mine.

It's God's. It's open in order that the needs that are available might be met. If God made me wealthy, He didn't make me wealthy so I can live like a king necessarily, but He did it so I can demonstrate what it's like to be the steward of natural wealth and show the kindness and generosity of God in sharing with others who are in need.

That's God's thought for wealth. So if you are wealthy, then search your heart now. If it's the love of money that has made you wealthy, then you need to pray God to live you for the love of money.

If you keep your wealth while God does that, fine. You might lose your wealth. Well, then that's fine too.

Whatever happens, happens. Hebrews 13, 5 through 6. This is it. After one more.

Hebrews 13, 5 through 6. Let your conversation... That word conversation means way of life. Let your whole way of life be without covetousness. Wow.

Do you know what that means? Every area of your life cannot be motivated by greed or covetousness. That's what it means. You say, brother, this sounds like bondage to me.

This sounds like legalism. Doesn't God want us to be free? Beloved, this is the word. Let your whole life be without covetousness.

What is it that is currently moving you to do something that's springing out of greed or covetousness? That's what the Bible is saying. And whatever it is, you need to stop doing it. And be content with such things as you have.

Do you see what's happening? You wonder why Christians are sinking financially now? You wonder why? I'll tell you what, you cannot justify believing God to provide for your needs and your financial debts when

those debts consist of nothing but the things that you coveted after and you were greedy for and you bought with what you didn't have. And then you say, oh God, You've got to get me out of debt. Well, I don't know what God's going to do.

I mean, He loves you and He'll probably work out some way, but beloved, God doesn't finance our greed and our covetousness. We should be content with what we have. A number of months ago, the Lord showed me while praying that most of what people are after are things that they don't have need of.

And therefore, the pursuing of those things are going to reap trouble in their life. It's springing out of, well, everyone else has got it. Well, that doesn't mean you should get it.

This isn't law and bondage, beloved. This is truth. This is truth.

Search your heart. Say, God, what is it in my life? You know that Paul said a greedy person is an idolater. And idolaters don't have an inheritance in the kingdom of God.

Now, I know this doesn't sound good to most Christians. And the reason why it doesn't sound good is my last point. My last point is the leaven of harlotry within the heart.

And that's Revelation chapter 18. We've preached on it a number of times. Revelation chapter 18 is inclusive.

It captures into one chapter all of the characteristics of the spirit of this world and is identified as the mother of harlots, great Babylon. This Babylonian harlot spirit is seducing the world, and because the church is in the world, and the church is too immature and too carnal and too fleshly to stand on the word of God, she's being seduced by the spirit that's in the world. The spirit's not in the church.

The spirit's in the world. The spirit of God's in the church. But when the spirit of God is ignored by the church, then that gives the spirit of the world the power to come in and seduce us.

This harlot spirit is basically seducing the church into following after the things of this world that satisfy and creating a fullness in us, preventing us from hungering after God. It's everywhere we turn. And unless this spirit of harlotry, this spirit of Babylon, is identified in our lives and in our families and in our churches and is cast out, and we apply the cross of Christ and the truth that we are crucified with Christ and that after the flesh I don't walk anymore and I don't fulfill the lust of my flesh anymore, unless we reaffirm that truth, we are destined to fail as a people of God and will become a reproach and a byword and a proverb.

Oh, the city of God, how the mighty have fallen. In closing, 2 Corinthians 10, verses 3-6. The weapons of all warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.

We begin fighting this battle by humbling ourselves, confessing our sins, and acknowledging the grace and power and forgiveness of God. And by asking the Lord to give us a fervor and a love for His Word and a sensitivity and a willingness to obey His Word. Number one, falling from the heights of our first love.

Number two, divided devotion. Number three, a taste for this world. Number four, harboring an unhealthy heart.

Number five, the love of money. And number six, being seduced by the mother of harlots, the mystery Babylon of Revelation chapter 18. It is these six leavens of sin that lurk within the house of God that constitutes its present spiritual decline.

And unless they are identified and cast out, they will become our ruin spiritually. And they will be the reason why when God does this great thing in this last hour, and believe you me, it's not going to be anything that's going to glorify a man or a ministry. It's going to be a revelation of the perfections of Jesus Christ.

And the fullness of Christ will come to a people scattered everywhere, and they will arise out of the death of self and sin and selfishness and walk in obedience and love of God, and God will do great exploits through them. There's no doubt about it. But these things will be the reason why anyone in the church misses it.

And so this is a clarion prophetic call from the heart of the Lord this morning. May God give us eyes to see, may He give us hearts to hear, and may we be thoroughly purged from these things so that we can come before Him and be candidates for a mighty outpouring of His Spirit, which I believe the world has not yet seen. I believe the world has not yet seen what God is going to yet do before God says, it's time, it's over.

And I want, because of the grace working in me, I want to be a part of that. And I don't care what it takes. And I don't speak as Peter, Lord, though all men forsake you, I won't, because I know that if it's not for God's grace working in me, I'm the first one to forsake Him.

So my faith and confidence this morning, I want to publicly declare it, is not in myself or in my tenacity or my willpower or in my own righteousness, which all in God's eyes are worth nothing, but my power and confidence is in the mighty working of God in me as I maintain a posture of humble dependence upon God. May God fulfill His Word and bring it to pass. Let's bow our hearts and pray.

Father, we commit Your Word into Your hands. Perform it. Purge us, Lord.

Search our hearts. I pray in the name of Jesus that the power of God, which is Christ Himself, would take in His hand as the high priest did the sharp two-edged sword, pierce into the depths of our being and cut out this leaven of sin that lurks in us that's resulting in our hearts being far from You, though we maintain an outward profession of religion in Christ. Father, I pray that You will reveal Your Word and Your countenance and light so tremendously in our midst that nothing can stand but humility and a testimony of dependence upon God.

Lord, do something new. Shake us, Lord. Do something new.

Reveal the glory of Your Son in Jesus' name. Send Your Spirit for Your honor and glory, I pray. Help us not to compromise.

Help us not to faint in the heat of the battle and help every person to take responsibility for prayer and searching Your Word. God, I'm asking You to perform Your Word according to Your own heart, Lord. Glorify Thy Son.

For His sake I pray. Amen and amen. On bended knees.

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