

(Apostolic Vision) the Cause of Broken Communion

by Dale Heisey

Revival is a return to God, separating from worldly influences, understanding the Word of God, and responding to God's Word.

Topics: "Intimacy With God", "Broken Communion"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by asking the congregation if they would be satisfied if their relationship with their spouse was like the relationship described in the Song of Solomon. He then reads a passage from the Song of Solomon that describes the deep love and intimacy between the bride and her bridegroom. The preacher emphasizes that we should strive for a close and intimate relationship with Jesus, just as the bride had with her beloved. He also mentions that there are things that can break our communion with Jesus and cause a broken relationship, and he plans to explore these topics in future sermons.

Transcript

This evening I do wish to greet you in Jesus' name. It is a blessing to be here. It is a blessing to be where souls are gathered together in Jesus' name, be they two or three or be they many.

For several years, and I hope that this does not humble you too much when you think of what kind of person you ask to come to these meetings, but for several years I preached to a congregation of between eight and ten people. That is what was gathered there where we held services on the side of a mountain there in Marseilla, in Costa Rica. And we had the services there at 2 o'clock on Sunday afternoon, and that's about what our attendance was for several years.

And I'm thankful today that the Lord chose to add to that number. But two or three in Jesus' name is a precious opportunity to worship the Lord, and we want to worship Him here tonight. And so God is not impressed with numbers.

God is not impressed with numbers of persons or numbers of dollars. You cannot impress God with numbers. If you want to play with numbers, go out on a clear night and look up.

If you want to be impressed with numbers, you can't impress God with numbers. You can't impress God with speed and noise. God is not impressed with speed or noise.

I'd like to ask you a question. You cannot impress God with speed or noise. Where is Adam tonight? The first man, Adam, where is he tonight? Now, if when he died at 900 and some years of age, if he would have sped towards the third heaven at the speed of light, he would not yet be outside of our solar system.

He'd have quite a journey ahead of him yet, if he intended to go much farther than that. You can't impress God with speed and noise. You can't impress God with numbers.

And so the only thing we can do is fall down and worship God. I'd like you to take your church hymnals there and turn to number 367. Maybe we can stand together and sing this most beautiful, worshipful hymn to our Heavenly Father.

And this will be a link between the message of the morning and the message tonight. Let us stand and sing this together. Number 367 in your church hymnal.

Revival is a return to God. Revival is separating or taking away from our lives that which separates us from God. It is understanding that something has come between us and God and doing something about it.

And maybe we can go a bit deeper and say that revival is a return to the Word of God. There is a popular group out of Nashville, Tennessee, that sings, although acapella, they sing very beautifully. They sing a song that says, I'll say yes, Lord, yes to Thy will and to Thy way.

When Thy Spirit speaks to me with my whole heart I'll agree and my answer will be yes, Lord, yes. That's what they sing. And that almost sounds right.

That is almost right. But there is one mistake. What do you do when the Bible speaks to you? Then do you say yes, Lord, yes to the will and to the way.

When the Bible speaks to me with my whole heart I'll agree and my answer will be yes, Lord, yes. You say less yes when the Bible speaks to you. Now you say, well, we don't wear jewelry.

We don't cut our hair. We're women. And we wash feet too.

We obey the Bible. But may I ask you a question? Revival meetings at Tangent, Oregon. When is the last time, are you listening, when is the last time you read in the Holy Bible, you read in the Word of God, you read in the Bible, and as a result of your reading in the Bible, you fell on your knees and said, Lord, it's not I. I'm not doing it.

I'm sorry. I repent. I change.

I obey. I want to hear you. I'm willing to do it.

I accept this as your will. I'm ready to make a change in my life. When's the last time that happened? Or are we so up to date in understanding God's Word so well and so complete in everything that God has nothing to say to us as we read 66 books wholly inspired by the Spirit of God given to us for one purpose, for our exhortation and encouragement and correction and instruction in the ways of God.

This book should challenge us. This book should move us. This book should be an authority in our lives.

We should be thrilled to talk about its holy message. And revival is a return to that concept of the Bible. I had that experience.

I was out in a hen barn collecting eggs. You know, sometimes the hens don't understand that they're supposed to put the eggs in the nest. They don't understand that.

They haven't learned that in 3rd grade or 4th grade or whatever grade the hens learn to put eggs in the nest. I don't know what grade it is, but they didn't learn that. And so they find a nice comfortable place down on the floor in there in the shavings in the litter in the dirt down there.

And there they put their eggs down there. And down in some corner down under some box somewhere they put their eggs. And they're supposed to be up here in the nest.

And so I was down under there digging out and trying to find these eggs in there in the litter. And I found myself somewhat disgusted at these hens. And while I was down there digging around for these eggs, a hen came up behind me and jumped up in the air and landed right on my head.

Set right on top of my head. And I guess you want to aggravate the situation. And I felt the normal tendencies.

The normal tendencies. I felt those tendencies. And about that time a verse from the Bible came flashing through my mind.

The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all men, but patient. Now that word patient caught my attention. The servant of the Lord must be... You put a few dots there and then patient.

And I left the hen barn. Left the eggs. Went into the house.

Got my Bible. Looked that verse up in 2 Timothy 2. Read that verse several times. I got a Vines expository of New Testament words.

Looked up that word patient there. But by this time I was on my knees. The Bible was lying open on the chair in front of me.

I had this Vines... Look at this word patient. I went back to look at this verse again. The servant of the Lord must not strive.

He must not be impatient. He must be patient. And right there, I repented before the Lord.

Before the Word of God. Has that ever happened to you? Revival is that. That is what revival is.

It's hearing what God's Word says and responding to God's Word. And that's a real simple definition for revival. But that's a Bible understanding of revival.

And wherever there's revival among God's people, there's a return to the Word of God. And I want that to happen among us here. We mentioned this morning the importance of having this intimate relationship with the Lord Jesus.

And we used some introductory verses to the Song of Solomon to help us understand it is God's intention for us to have unbroken fellowship with the Lord Jesus. And as we have that beautiful story in John 15 of the vine and the branches abiding permanently together, we must walk with Jesus that way and live with Jesus that way. And we discovered this morning that anything that we do for the service of the church apart from abiding in Christ had to be done in the flesh because we had no other spiritual connection with which to do it.

It was done in the flesh. If it was not done abiding in Jesus. And there is this thing called momentum.

You can turn the engine off at the top of the hill and the car coasts down. In fact, without the engine running, the car will actually pick up speed going down that hill. And then it goes down to the flat at the bottom and goes a long distance.

And you can say, just look what all I'm able to do here. I don't need gasoline. I don't care what the price is at the pump.

I'm doing fine here. Without this engine even running. Well, look how far we're going.

But you're slowing down all the while. And very soon this thing is going to stop and there's going to be a hill in front of us. We can do a lot in the flesh.

But until we're abiding in Christ, no holy thing, no eternal thing will result. The kingdom of God cannot be built in the power of the flesh. And so, we need to abide in Christ.

But now on this evening, I want to show you that the love relationship we have with our Lord Jesus can be broken. And there are several causes of this broken communion. And so I want to speak to you tonight on the cause of broken relationships with our Lord Jesus.

The cause of broken communion. And I invite you to Song of Solomon 2. They had been in the banqueting house. His banner over her was love.

There was wine. There were apples. These are symbols of sweet communion and fellowship.

These are symbols of great delight, of great joy, of great love. His hand was upon her. He held her.

She spoke well of Him. She was with Him. They had sweet communion.

But something happened to that relationship. And we like to just look at two short passages in the Song of Solomon tonight and look at some of the things that cause broken communion. That break the relationship with our Lord Jesus.

And just to give a little bit of an outline to what might happen this week in some of the preaching for those of you that might be interested in somehow becoming aware of this, I thought that maybe starting tomorrow night we will take a look at a few doctrinal messages on the difference between pietism and biblicism. And then as we move out of those messages, we will come into something a little closer to our hearts and needs and look at what the Bible teaches about brotherhood and brotherhood relationships. And then as we come closer to the end of the week, maybe look at what's going on down in the secret recesses of this heart that you and I have.

And by presenting ourselves before God in that way, how is my walk with the Lord? And so with that as a little basic elementary outline to what might happen this week, I'd like to begin reading this evening in chapter 2 of Song of Solomon, verse 8. Again as we read, I'd like you to answer the same question that I asked you to consider this morning. Would I be satisfied if my relationship with Jesus Christ tonight was like this lady's relationship was with her beloved, with her bridegroom? Would you be satisfied if your relationship with your wife was tonight like this lady's was with her bridegroom? Would you be satisfied tonight if your relationship with the Lord Jesus was what we have here in this portion that I'm going to read? But now verse 8. The voice of my beloved, behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a roe or a young hark.

Behold, he standeth behind our wall. He looketh forth at the windows, showing himself to the lattice. My beloved, speak, and set on to me.

Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past, and the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear in the earth.

The time of this singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtles heard in our land. The fig tree put forth her green figs, and the vines with their tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

Whom I dove. Thou art in the clefts of the rock and the secret places of the stairs. Let me see thy countenance.

Let me hear thy voice. For sweet is thy voice and thy countenance is comely. Take us the foxes, little foxes, that spoil the vines.

For our vines have tender grapes. And that was the bride speaking there. But she was speaking from verses 10 through verse 15.

She was telling us what the bridegroom himself was saying. And although it was she telling us this, from the words, Rise up, my love, in verse 10 until the end of verse 15, she's telling us what He has said or what He was saying to her. And now in verse 16, she speaks.

My beloved is mine and I am His. He feedeth among the lilies until the daybreak. And the shadow flew away, turned, my beloved.

Be thou like a roe or a young heart upon the mountains of Bethlehem. I might just read a little more here. By night upon my bed I sought Him whom I so loveth.

I sought Him but I found Him not. I will rise now and go about the city and the streets. And in the broad ways I will seek Him whom I so loveth.

I sought Him but I found Him not. The watchman that go by the city found me to whom I said, Saw ye Him whom I so loveth? It was but a little that I passed from them. But I found Him whom I so loveth.

I held Him and would not let Him go until He had brought me into His mother's house and into the chamber of her that conceived me. I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem, by the rose and by the hinds of the field that ye stir not up nor awake my love till He please. Something has happened with this relationship between her and her beloved, between her and her Savior, between her and the Lord Jesus.

She is no longer with Him. If you would have read the intermittent verses between what we read this morning and what we have here in verse 8, you would have found out that they were very close together. They were sharing in sweet communion.

They were blessing each other. They were in each other's presence. There was not a public relationship.

It was private. They were alone. But as this verse opens, He is far from her.

And He is moving towards her direction. But the distance is great. He comes running.

He comes skipping. He's like a deer. And you've seen deer do this.

They come bounding with large leaps. And when they get to the fence, they don't open the gate. What do they do? Just one leap.

They're over the top of it. In a hurry to get to where they're going. They're anxious.

They're just bounding. And they're coming. And the first thing she hears about her, thinks about her lover, her beloved coming, is this leaping over the mountains and skipping above the hills.

He's coming. But He can only come so far. And He comes to an obstacle that prevents Him from coming further.

Did you read in the Bible what it was? He came bounding like a heart. Or like a white-tailed deer. And He came as far as to a wall.

And that wall stopped Him. She was inside. He was outside.

She was in there. And there was a window in this wall. So He comes up to the window and looks in the window.

And through that window, He calls to her. Through that window, He speaks to her. And something has caused this to happen.

And we like to study this thing and find out why is she not with Him? Why did she leave Him? And why in His quest, why in His desire for her, did He have to spend this energy looking for her? And you know, it's always Lord Jesus who stands at the door and knocks. You don't spend any time trying to get His attention. Before you speak, He hears you. He was waiting all the time for us.

I suppose we could paraphrase Isaiah chapter 40 in this way. They that wait upon the Lord shall find out that He was waiting for them for a long time before. And she was not with Him.

Something had broken that relationship. What was it? And this early part of the Song of Solomon teaches something important about the Christian life. Something that is not very popular for me to say in a public pulpit.

But there is in the Christian experience a danger. A danger of falling away. A danger of growing cold.

A danger of becoming lukewarm. A danger of losing our first love. There is a danger of letting something come between us and God.

There is a danger of something very, very small, beginning very, very small, something imperceptible, something that did not catch our attention. You know, I visit various kinds of churches. There are Amish churches and Amish Mennonite churches and there are Mennonite churches and there are Brethren churches and we get into various kinds of churches and some churches are more conservative than others, if you can use that kind of expression in an understandable way.

And I was speaking in a church that for our relationships would be more of the liberal or progressive kind and I was speaking there and when the service was over a lady walked up to me and said, in this service I found freedom from my red sweater. And I could not understand, of course, what she was talking about. What do you mean you found freedom from your red sweater? And then she explained to me the story.

She said, evidently she had been somewhere or had done some, what they call these days, shopping. I don't know what it was, but she saw this red sweater. To her it was a beautiful red sweater and she did not have a red sweater.

She had never had a red sweater and it was not a proper thing for them in that particular church, evidently, to wear a red sweater. She didn't have one. And she just began to see herself with this red sweater on.

She just began to imagine how this would look to have this red sweater. Can you imagine a woman? She wanted this red sweater. And so she began to imagine.

She said to me, she said, over there there's a beachy church. And that church had some positions and some standards, some brotherhood agreements that they didn't have in their congregation and maybe just a bit stricter in some of their ways. And she said, over there I saw a lady that had a sweater like that.

And she said, I thought, if she can have a sweater like that, then I can have a sweater like that. Now this immediately, this immediately is sin. I mean, you don't need to go any further before you're in sin.

Talking like that. Why, this whole thought was pure selfishness. The whole thing.

It was as selfish. Why, it might be a child about four years old that's trying to tear a toy out of someone else's hand. And I want that sweater.

And this thing became a passion for her. She wanted that sweater. And can you imagine how sweet it is to commune with Lord Jesus when this red sweater stands between me and God.

A simple red sweater. And she said, Brother Dale, tonight, I don't need that red sweater anymore. It is gone.

She was so happy. She was rejoicing. She was free of a red sweater.

And I don't know what this lady's problem was here. This lover's problem. This bride's problem.

That something came between her and God. And I think, as I look at the story and study it as closely as I can, I think we can identify what it was. It was not a red sweater.

It may have been, but it was some form of worldliness in her life. The world had called her away. The world had offered her something.

And the world had brought her away and destroyed her relationship with the Lord. Her worldliness, or the attraction of the world, or what the world would have chosen to offer her, got her attention, and took it off the Lord Jesus. And she finds herself separated from Him by quite a distance.

And the Bible tells us that there's a wall between them. And the communion is broken. She found some temporary and some elusive fulfillment in something that this world offered and felt, listen, everything is still alright.

I am still my beloved's. He is still mine. But there's a danger in this world of falling away.

And that little sweater, that little red sweater can do great damage to you. And all you need to do is teach your flesh the simple gratification of allowing yourself one little thing that you otherwise would have felt. I am not sure this will please the Lord.

Hey, go ahead and allow that in your life. Just go ahead and allow that in your life. And you'll find that the next thing that comes along is not going to be a red sweater.

It's going to be something else. Something larger. And the conscience is taught to be quiet.

The conscience is taught to be silenced. And after a while you don't have a little alarm clock in there to remind you this does not please me. I am grieved.

I cannot have this. I cannot have this world in your life. And so she found some temporary fulfillment, some temporary satisfaction, something that was really a poor substitute for a relationship with Jesus.

I noticed another thing that helped me believe that there was worldliness in her life. Look at verse 10. My beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

Come. Come away. You're at the wrong place.

Come away. Come out of there. You're on the other side of this wall.

Come. Come out here where I am. Come out to the outside.

Come out of the camp. Bear my reproach. Come out here.

You're with a false love. You have a wrong set of company here. A wrong company.

Come outside. Be with me. In verse 13 he repeats the same thing.

Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. And then he talks to her as gently as he can. He says, Something has happened to our love.

There are little foxes here. There are little foxes coming, verse 15, spoiling these vines. There are tender grapes in these vines.

Our love is just beginning to flourish. It's just beginning to become fruitful. And the foxes will come and take all that away and destroy the whole thing and destroy your fruitfulness.

There are little foxes here. The world is having its influence on you. We'll look out for that.

I'd like to read some verses to you from the Bible that help us understand what God's attitude is about worldliness in our lives. And I would like to emphasize this evening that your decision to follow the Lord Jesus Christ is a decision to separate yourself from this world. And you cannot have Christ's love and the world at the same time.

You must and I must make a clear decision that it's going to be all of Jesus and none of this world or we're going to have as much of this world as we want and have none of Jesus. We cannot have Jesus and this world. They do not mix Jesus and this world.

Do not mix. This world crucified our Lord Jesus. This world spit into his face.

This world killed him. This world mocked him. This world would not have him.

This world rejected him. This world refuses him. This world will never have Jesus.

And you can have as much of this world as you want, but you can't have Jesus with it. And if you're going to have any of Jesus, all the world must go from your life. And if there's anything we should learn to recognize in the Christian life, it is what the world does to us and what the world's effect is upon us.

And until all the world is gone, we can't be for Jesus what He wants us to be. And He will come calling us. He will say, arise and come out.

Arise and come away. Arise, my love, my fair one. Come away.

1 John 2. Love not the world. Verse 15. 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, the pride of life, and a red sweater is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away in the lust of the love, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

Now I use the illustration of a red sweater because that's what was bothering that lady. I don't think it's wrong to wear a sweater. I don't suppose it is.

I don't know that it is. And I'm not sure which color sweater it should be. The problem in that lady's case was not the sweater, and maybe the problem was not the color.

I'm not sure. But I know one thing. She wanted something that she was perfectly satisfied God did not want her to have and she looked for ways to justify the getting of it and used another church group down the road as an excuse to be able to buy that sweater.

And she certainly had a poor sense of values to make that kind of comparisons and she forgot to get on her knees and ask God what he thought about it. She made a serious mistake. The love of this world, the pride of this life, that which the eyes want, the flesh wants it.

It grieves God. It cannot be. We cannot love this world and love the Father at the same time.

We must decide which love we want. You drive into that car lot and you get out there and you start walking down between the automobiles and you look at the price tags and you look at the features and you look at the design and you look at the style and this thing catches your eye and you say, well, listen, if I could get it past Dad, and I think if I got it past Dad, I don't think the preacher would say anything. I think if I got it

past Dad, I think I'd be alright.

But you didn't get on your knees at all. You didn't pray at all. You've got enough to do with it.

The will of God has enough to do with it. If God wants you to have this car, it was not the point. There's this car.

This car. And you will discover as you walk with God, you will discover as you live in this world, that Satan and this world will barrage you. They will hit you.

They will attack you with their stuff. They will put on the parantes, the loudspeakers. They'll make it as loud as they can.

They'll glare at you. They'll put on the billboards. They'll scream it at you.

They'll get your attention with it. They'll put it on the girls, and they'll wear it. And they'll put it on their CDs, and they'll play it.

And they'll keep on hitting you with this thing. And Satan is bold with his program. He brings it right out and shows it to you and tells you about it and calls your attention.

You can't miss it. And while that's happening, where is the Spirit of God and what is He doing? And the quiet, humble, retiring Spirit of the Lord is back here. And He's not blaring.

He's not trumpeting. And He's not screaming at you. And He's not putting it out on all the announcements.

And it's not coming out across the airwaves. You can't find it on the Internet. But there's truth.

And truth is waiting. The love of God is patiently waiting for you to make your choice. Now dear brethren, if we'd got that picture in our minds, we would find out why we so often choose wrong.

And God says here, choose whose love you want. It's either the love of the world, or it's My love. You cannot have both loves.

I'd like to turn to James 4. Verse 4 says, Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is an enemy of God. This is strong language here from the Apostle James. Ye adulterers and adulteresses.

Friendship of the world. Enmity with God. Being a friend of the world is to be an enemy of God.

He says it two times to be sure that we got it. And He calls that spiritual adultery. We're an adulterer.

When we love the world, more than we love God. Or we love something in the world. Take us away from God.

This is adultery. Now words that sound similar to what we read in the Song of Solomon are found in 2 Corinthians 6. And I will read some of the verses there. Verse 14 says, Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers? For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Billy? Or what part hath he that believeth with Inverdell? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For yet the temple of the living God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them.

He wants a perpetual. He wants a continual abiding. He wants an unbroken relationship.

He wants to be the only one, the only lover, the only interest, the only affection. He wants to be in our lives. I will dwell in them and walk in them and I will be their God and they shall be my people.

Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean things. And I will receive you and will be a father unto you and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. And that is the only way that He can do it.

That is the only way He will be our Father. That's the only way Christ will be our Lord. That's the only way He can be our Savior.

That's the only way we can have a relationship with Him. It's if we come out of these things and be separate from that and don't touch it and don't long for it. Let that power be broken in your life of a desire for the world.

In the last book of the Bible, Revelation chapter 18, we have similar words in verse 4. And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people. Come away. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

Come out of her, my people, that she may not partakers of her sins, that she receive not of her plagues. And this lady, this bride, allowed somebody to come into her life there. And the fruit was being destroyed and the foxes were eating it.

Little children, keep yourselves from idols, it says the last verse of the first epistle of John. My little children. And something happened with this bride's attitude.

I want to show you something in Ephesians chapter 4. Something that we should be very sensitive to tonight. And this would be worthy of a week of preaching, this 30th verse. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed into the day of redemption.

Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit. Do not be guilty of bringing grief to the Holy Spirit of God, whose temple you are.

You're the temple of the Holy Spirit. Well, that's the only divine life you have. That's the only relationship you have with God.

It's through His Holy Spirit that He's given to you. And we grieve the Holy Spirit. And yet we're going to be used of the Holy Spirit.

We're going to be worshipping God in the Spirit. We're going to be praying in the Spirit. But we grieve that Spirit of God.

Now, how are we going to live? And where's the power coming from? And how are we going to minister to God's people? And how are we going to raise these children for God? How are we going to minister to those customers that come to the shop, to the store, to the business? How are we going to be able to teach the Christian day school, those beautiful children sitting there in front of us, as we grieve the Holy Spirit of God? And how are we going to make wise decisions? And how are we going to have His anointing upon our life when we grieve the Holy Spirit of God? And this lady grieved the Holy Spirit of God. And she did something worse. Did you read it in your Bible? In chapter 2 of Solomon? Song of Solomon.

He said, Come, come away. Come with me. Come to the other side of this wall.

Don't let a wall between us. Don't let the world build up its mortar and its blocks and stone and divide us. Don't let it do it.

Come over here. Come out of that. Come with me.

And she chose to disobey. She consoled herself with this feeling that, well, I'm my beloved's and He feeds among the lilies. I know what He's doing.

And He's just fine. And then she said something else. Did you see it in verse 17? Well, I might consider it, but not now.

If I do choose to go, it won't be until the day breaks. And the shadows flee away. And then I'll see what I can do then.

And so she chose to hold on to this wilderness a while longer and just see how it goes. And she made a grave mistake when she made that decision. That whole day went by and she did nothing.

That whole day went past and she did not go to her Lord. She did not leave her wilderness and leave her silly decision and leave her, in this case, the illustration of her red sweater. She didn't go to find her Lord.

And that night came again. Now it's time to go to bed. And she began to get lonely.

And began to think, I've lived all day without God. I've lived all day without a testimony about my life. I've lived all day without His blessing.

I've lived all day without one holy thought going through my mind. I've lived all day without one word of testimony for the lost people that I've met. I've lived all day, didn't have one solitary word to say for Jesus.

I've lived all day, didn't have an opportunity to serve God. I've lived all day, was cross here, entertained there, proud over there, impatient over there. I've lived all day.

I've raised my voice to my children over here and sassed off over there. I've lived all day without God's blessing. I've talked to some employees, had a fire one, hired two more.

I've lived all day in the flesh. And then I came. And now she saw Him and found Him not.

We can grieve God. We can grieve God. We can say, listen God, I'll do it in my terms.

I'm coming when I'm ready. A little more time, God. A little more time for myself, Lord.

I love this thing I've got here, Lord. I kind of want to hold this a little bit longer, Lord. And when she saw Him, she found Him not.

She rose up. Now she went out. Went out tonight.

Now she went out to find Him. And verse 2 says once again, she found Him not. And I'm thankful that she finally discovered Him who's her soul love.

I want to charge you as she charged the daughters of Jerusalem. Be careful. Be careful with your love.

And so a worldly spirit entered in here and destroyed their relationship. And that's the first thing that I wanted you to notice. The cause of a relationship is worldliness in your life.

Something that God will not allow in your life. We make excuses and we allow exceptions and we grant ourselves privileges that the Holy Spirit of God would never have granted us. We grant ourselves little liberties.

We grant ourselves sportive glasses. We allow ourselves the privilege to partake of certain deities of this world and the Spirit of God would never have granted it. And we allow ourselves to turn those pages and we allow ourselves to linger with our eyes on some of those pictures and we should be moving through there and never looking at it at all.

We allow ourselves those little moments. The Spirit of God is grieved. And I wonder if I would just pause right here without saying one more word.

I wonder if you can think of anything in your life that has grieved God today. Anything in your life that grieved God this past week. Anything in your life that just hindered your testimony and just brought you to a place where if you would have even wanted to say something for God, the words wouldn't have made sense because it came out of an impure vessel.

How do you plan to live with God like that? And so we allow ourselves these choice little rewards for the good we have done. Why I was so faithful and I was in His arms and we were in prayer together and I sang that beautiful hymn and I memorized those verses and I was president of the whole service and I didn't miss one revival meeting. I was there all week.

And we grant ourselves a little reward. I read my Bible. I'm up to five chapters a day.

I prayed for 15 minutes. I was on my knees for 15 minutes. I've gone through the whole prayer list.

And we grant ourselves privileges. We've done all these beautiful little things now for God and He owes us something. He owes us a little glance.

He owes us a little touch. He owes us a little reward. He owes us a little time to play with this world.

He owes us a little something. I'm not mentioning things tonight. I want the Lord to do that in your life.

You're in that store to buy something. You're into the bank. The TV set was on.

You had an extra two minutes. You had some extra time. And so you just kind of stood there and kind of kept your eyes on what was going on there and kept watching that.

And He kept getting your attention. And you just wanted a little assistance. You had to see how that turned out and just see how far this might go.

And after all, it's good for Christians to know what this world is all about and what is happening in this world and just how bad it is. And you might be more effective in your witness if you just were a little more informed. And so now we have some justification.

So we check out some more. And all the while, the Holy Spirit of God is grieved. He's very grieved.

And this matter of a pure heart is the matter of getting all worldliness out of there. And we need to confess. We need to confess that we lost something to build up between us and God.

And He comes searching for us and says, come away. Come out of her. That is not for you.

That's not for my children. Come over to me. The foxes are destroying the vine.

Chapter 5, verse 2. There's another thing. And this is the last time in the Song of Solomon there's a separation between the bride and the bridegroom. There's something different here.

See if you can notice what it is. Study the passage real closely as I read it. And see if you can discover what it is that's dividing the bride from the bridegroom in this passage.

I sleep. Verse 2 of chapter 5. But my heart waketh. It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled.

Remember the English Bible has the word undefiled there. The Spanish Bible has the word my perfect. My perfect.

My perfect one. Here it says my undefiled one. I suppose those two words mean the same thing.

But undefiled kind of has the impression that it's not real dirty. But my perfecta. Mi perfecta.

My perfect one. Gives a beautiful picture. My sister.

My love. Notice how it's going deeper and deeper. My dove.

My perfect one. For my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. I put off... and that was him speaking.

So now she speaks in verse 3. I have put off my coat. How shall I put it on? I have washed my feet. How shall I defile them? My beloved put his hand by the hole of the door, and my vows removed for him.

I rose up to open to my beloved, and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock. I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself and was gone. My soul failed when he spake.

I sought him, but I could not find him. I called him, but he gave me no answer. The watchman that went about the city found me.

They smoked me. They wounded me. The last time she was out in the city searching her beloved, when the watchman found her, they helped her find him.

They asked her, what can we do for you? You're out in the nighttime. What are you doing out here? It's dark. You ought to be in bed.

What are you doing? It's my beloved. I don't know where he went. Would you tell me? I could not find him.

And now she's at every place. Now these same watchmen, maybe it's the same ones, they wound her. The keepers of the law took away my veil from me.

What good does this veil do when we're insubmissive? What good does this veil do when the relationship is broken? What is this veil standing for or stand for when my heart is not submitted in love to my beloved? They took his veil off her head. She lost her testimony in the world. Her testimony was gone.

I charge you, daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my beloved, that you tell him that I'm sick of love. So the daughters of Jerusalem speak next. What is thy beloved more than the other beloved? O thou fairest among women.

What is thy beloved more than the other beloved that thou dost so charge us? If your beloved was so great as you say he is and you can eulogize and speak so highly of him and in certain moments your testimony seems so brilliant, then why aren't you with him? And why are these things coming up that keep dividing you from your Lord? So she begins to explain once again and gives a beautiful description of him in verses 10 through 16. It's a beautiful description. And I'm going to stop there and speak a little bit about these verses then come back and read just a few verses more.

But what has happened in this lady's life here? Why is she away from her Lord? What has happened? It's night time and she's in bed. And while she's in bed sleeping, he is doing something. If you notice what he is doing, he's outside.

His head is filled with the dew. His locks with the drops of the night. She's in bed.

And when he calls her, Open to me my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled. As he calls her, she answers him. You know, I got ready for bed, you know.

I mean, I got ready for bed. And I'm in bed here now. And I got my bath before I went to sleep.

And I'm all cleaned up. And I just, you know, I mean, I got to take care of me. Selfishness.

Not worldliness. Selfishness. Breaks relationships.

Causes of broken communion. My interest in myself. I'm tired, you know.

I was hungry and I came in early. And cleaned up and got ready for the night. I'm busy, you know.

I'm taking care of me. And while she's lying there in that bed, in the softness and sweetness and quietness of the night, his head is wet with the dew of the sky. He's working out in his vineyard.

Working out in the field. Tending the sheep. Looking for the ailing.

Looking for the lost. Meeting their needs. Leading them and guiding them.

Pouring oil upon their heads. Looking for those little foxes that spoil the vines. Nurturing those tender, tender plants.

Working in the vineyard. And she is at home asleep. And while he is deeply occupied in a work that should be consuming all of us, she is sound asleep.

And it reminds me of a question that Jesus one time asked, What can you not watch with me one hour? And on that occasion, his locks were not wet with dew. But there were drops of sweat as of blood that dropped from our Savior. And his three choice disciples were sound asleep.

And I wonder how many times my Lord is busy working in his vineyard. How many times my Lord is busy working in his fields. How many times my Lord is busy working in his kingdom.

And I am taking care of myself. I didn't have time. I was too busy.

They said there was a meeting, a cottage meeting that week. But I got home late and I was tired. I didn't go.

Why, they're singing at the old people's home. I have a sore throat. I have a sore throat.

I need some honey and some tea, some lemonade. I need some juice here. I need to clean this thing up.

I need to gargle. I need to take care of myself. I can't sing tonight.

Take care of ourselves. But we wanted to go to town and pass out some tracts. I don't know.

I had experience on Friday night waiting for 12 hours and 15 minutes to pass so that plane would leave the next morning in that Atlanta airport. And I thought I'd sit down here in a row of chairs. And a big black man came and sat down beside me.

And before I could say a thing to him, he reached into a pocket he had. He had a pocket inside his coat, an old coat. He had an old stocking cap on.

It must have been frozen. I thought it was just a beautiful temperature. He must have been cold.

He was dressed up for the North Pole. And I saw right away what it was. It was the Gospel of John.

And inside that Gospel of John there was a tract. And as he picked it up, a little piece of paper fell out and landed on the chair between him and I. I picked up this little paper. And on here was the name of a man.

It said on there, Brother so-and-so missionary to the Atlanta airport passing out Gospels of John and Gospel tracts. And then I thought, somebody is at home taking these Gospels of John, putting these tracts inside there, getting them ready, and says tonight is the night. Goes up to the Atlanta airport, starts passing these out.

Here comes a man. Here comes a worker coming to work. Here comes a passenger getting off a plane going out with their baggage.

Here comes somebody, a taxi driver, passing out these Gospels of John throughout that night. And I thought to myself, how much are we doing? We have a holy message. We have a beautiful way of life.

People need to hear what we believe. People need to hear why we're doing it this way. People need explanations for who we are and what we're doing.

And we're in bed. And we've taken our bath already. And we were dressed for the night.

And we just can't take care of that. And he comes and his locks are wet. And he calls us and he says, Open.

Open. Open the door. And he takes his hand and tries to reach inside the hole.

Tries to reach his hand in there. Tries to reach for the latch. Tries to see if he can get to the latch.

And he can't quite reach it. And by that time we come out of bed to see whether we should be responding. The opportunity is gone.

Not very long ago I had the privilege of leading a soul to Jesus. In our living room, this lady had fallen into adultery. She was not a Christian before.

She had serious problems with her husband. And she came to see me. And she began to cry and told me her story.

And said, I'm dirty. I'm worthless. I'm guilty.

I don't know what to do. And then she said something to me. I only say this to encourage you.

I only say this to stimulate you. I only say this to help you realize what you're here for. She said, I don't know anything about the Bible.

The only thing I know about the Bible is the story you read in my home a few weeks ago. I felt pressed in the spirit to go there. If I can use that kind of expression and go there and just say something to that home.

I went to that home. And they were at home. The lady was there.

And her husband was there. And their three children. And I said, is it ok if we read a Bible story? I read the story of the lady with the issue of blood 12 years.

From Mark chapter 5. I tried to explain that story to her. I said, this is the way we all are. You're that way.

This woman was that way. And I'm that way. We have things in our lives that we can't take care of.

We have needs in our hearts that only God can supply. We have difficulties that no doctor can fix. And no psychologist can repair.

We have needs in our lives that we cannot take care of. We have to come to Jesus. You have needs like that.

I have needs like that. This woman had needs like that. She would have died if she wouldn't have come to Jesus.

And he was able to take care of her needs. She said, that's the only thing about the Bible that I know. But it's enough to teach her that this adultery in her life that I was one answer for, Jesus would take care of it.

And I think I have missed many opportunities like that. And his head is wet with the dew of the night. And we're in the bed.

And we give our reasons. We give our excuses why we can't do it. We look around us and say, no one else in the church is doing it.

We look around and say, that's perfectly acceptable to everyone else to look at that way. My church doesn't ask this of me. And the Spirit of God is calling us to come and work with Him in His vineyard.

And we are selfish. Protecting and taking care of ourselves. And we have so much already.

And we're trying to add some more to it. Oh, my dear people. This lady lost her testimony with the world.

And lost her contact with God because of her selfishness. We recently had the beautiful experience of receiving into the congregation a young father for whom we have prayed for five years. And he came to my home Monday morning, at 7 o'clock in the morning.

He said, Brother Dale, I know that many people have been praying for me. And I've been living a wrong life. And I'm far from God.

And I want you to know what happened. Last night, I told my wife that I can't go on like this anymore. I'm far from God.

I can't go on like this. And we knelt down beside the bed and I prayed. And poured out my sins to God.

And asked Him to save me. He said, we got into bed and He said, I slept like a baby. I slept like I didn't know a person who could sleep.

He looked at me and He said, and all of this was gone. He was talking about the resistance and the wall of separation He felt with God. It was all gone.

He just wanted me to know about it. I said, Maximo, we prayed for you for a long time. Could you tell me what it was that was hindering you in your life? What in the church was hindering you? What in your life was hindering you? What did we do wrong? Could you tell me what it was, Maximo? And this is what He said.

Pointed across the road to where a family lives that has been members of our church for a long time and known in the community for the bad testimony that has come out of that home. He said, it was that home. But He said, Brother Dale, God has done something in their lives that may have changed.

They're not the same as they were. And when I saw the change in them, I couldn't resist anymore. It was a very selfish family.

And God allowed a very serious thing to happen in that home to change the pridefulness that was in that home. It brought a great tragedy into that home. A terrible tragedy.

And the power of selfishness in that home was broken. The testimony greatly changed. And the church loses its testimony when there's selfishness in the church.

Pridefulness and selfishness. And I'm looking out for me. And I defend myself.

And I resist when others try to help me. And I have an answer for everything that I do. And I have the right to do what I'm doing.

And I can justify what I'm doing. What are you wearing that veil for then? And why all that high talk about your Savior? And why this beautiful hymn that you sing? And why do you have that music playing on your recorder if you're not living it anyway? And so this bride lost her testimony. And I want to end with something very beautiful.

When she found Him, when she found Him out in the field, out in the gardens, when she found Him out in the meadows, in the vineyard, He looked at her and began to praise her. Verses 4-10. He began to praise her.

I won't read all this, but verse 8 says, There are three score queens and four score concubines and virgins without number. My dove, my only defiled, is but one. She is the only one of her mother.

She is the choice one of her to bear her. The daughter saw her and blessed her. Yea, the queen and the concubines and they praised her.

Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as the army with banners? And here we are. We've grieved the Lord. We've grieved the Holy Spirit of God.

And when we turn to Him, He receives us and praises us and blesses us and never reminds us, never reminds us of how awful it was and how He was grieved and how He was hurt and how He was turned away and how the door was shut and how He tried to open the door and couldn't get in and how we resisted Him and disobeyed Him and did not respond to Him and did not love Him. He does not remind us of that. But He forgives us of our sin and takes us into His banqueting house and His banner of rest, His love, and He calls us His beloved.

He puts a ring on our finger. He puts shoes on our feet and closes us with His holy robe. And He grants us His life and grace.

He calls us into His service and identifies with us as His children because we've come out from among them and we are separate. We shall be the sons of God. That's how God responds to us when we come to Him.

That is the nature of our God. If you want to hear just one impressive thing about Jesus Christ tonight, if you drove a long distance and wanted to hear at least one thing about Jesus tonight, I want to tell you this. That when He rose from the grave, He never once referred to what He suffered.

He never once said, Can't you see what terrible things He did to me? He never spoke about the agony. He never made one reference to the intense pain. He never made one reference to the terrible shame He faced hanging there unclothed upon a cross until the darkness of the noon day covered and concealed His dying body.

He never said a word except to forgive. And when He showed the Prince in His hands, it was only to convince one who refused to believe that it was He. My dear ones, that's the way Christ receives us.

We enter the wilderness and the selfishness in our lives. When the communion is restored, that's the way it's restored. But I just want to ask you tonight, is there something in your life that has broken communion with the Lord Jesus and is grieving the Spirit of God tonight? Is there something in your life that you ought to take care of? Is there something in your life that is hinging your testimony this evening and you could not give a witness if you wanted to? There's no witness there.

The testimony is gone. Has God spoken to you? Do you know what it is? Are you ready to get on your knees and do something about it? That's revival when you make those things right. Let us stand.

Our Father in Heaven, we ask You to come and speak to our hearts. We ask You to be glorified in this assembly. We ask You to speak to each one of us.

We ask You, Father, to show us how wrong it is for us to love this world and the things this world offers us. O God, forgive us for taking those special little liberties, for looking and making those extra glances.

Forgive us for desiring those things that You never chose for us to have, although maybe others may have them.

Father, help us to seek Your will. And seek to glorify You. And seek what pleases You.

And seek what best will bring honor and glory to Your name. And help us, Father, to live in that way day after day. We need Your forgiveness tonight.

We need Your acceptance tonight. We need Your cleansing upon our hearts tonight. We need You to give us direction in these days.

We need You to speak to us. We need You to help us identify the little foxes that are spoiling the vines. We need You to help us see why we're putting it off.

Why we stay until the day breaks. Why we stay a little while longer. Dear God, help us to see our disobedience tonight.

Help us to see our rebellion. Help us to see our selfishness. Dear Father, if there's someone here tonight that wants to free themselves from these things that is hindering.

In Your gentle and holy way speak to them and bless them and help them find the victory they need tonight. And restore to them the joy of Thou's salvation. And help them to walk with God.

And help us each to walk with God. And so may these thoughts be in our hearts throughout the day tomorrow. And would You, dear Father, gather us together tomorrow night according to Your will.

And would You come and feed us. And come and give direction to these services. And be glorified in these meetings.

We do pray tonight in Jesus' name. Amen. And I thank You for Your beautiful attention.

I thank You for Your interest in this meeting. I would like You to pray that God would speak to our hearts. I would like You to ask Yourself throughout this night and throughout the day tomorrow are there any little foxes in my life? Would You just, Lord, speak to you? And do not expect that we're going to make a lot of exhibition up here and have a lot of altar calls and people coming and a lot to show here in the meeting.

We will not be doing that. If you would like someone to visit you in your home we're available 24 hours a day. I'd like to be here by 7.30 tomorrow night.

I'd like to be here by 7.30. But we're available throughout the day, throughout this night. If you'd like to talk to someone after the service this evening, we are available. Your ministers are here.

They're available tonight too. I would prefer if you're a young person and you have a need in your life and you feel bad about something that's going on in your heart, I'd like you to go home and talk to Daddy and Mom about it and get it right with Daddy and Mom and get it right with God tonight. If you would like to make sure there's nothing between you and God, take care of it tonight.

Look for your father and mother. Look for your godly pastor. We're not here to make a large demonstration in public about what's going on in these meetings.

I want God to speak to your hearts. I want you to be honest with God and deal with God in the privacy of your own life. I want you to make decisions not in the press of the moment, but because God's Word has spoken to you.

Make your decisions clear. Make your decisions firmly. Make your decisions carefully as God speaks to your heart.

May the Lord bless you in your destiny.

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