

# Friends From Zulu - You Have to Keep It (Testimony Meeting)

by David Wilkerson

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*The secret of keeping revival is to keep our eyes on Jesus and not let anything else become more important.*

**Duration:** 57:30

**Scripture:** Acts 19:13

**Topics:** "Testimony"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the beauty of a crow and how it realizes its own beauty. The speaker then tells a story about a fox who asks the crow to sing a song before it dies. As the crow starts singing, the cheese it was holding falls out and the fox grabs it. The speaker uses this story to illustrate the importance of holding onto what is precious and not letting others take it away. The sermon also emphasizes the need to discern false teachings and stay true to the word of God.

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## Transcript

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But again, we want to give praise and glory unto our God for the privilege that he's given us to know you, to see what you're doing here. And now when we pray for you, we'll pray with a better understanding. And please pray for us.

We want you to pray for us, especially for this one thing, that we shall be faithful to our God right to the end. I'll ask Brother Chell, and I'd like us to sing you a song. We'll sing a song now, and when I finish, before he starts, we'll sing you another one.

But I thought we could perhaps sing you the first song that we'll sing on Friday evening. Even though your sins be as red as scarlet, they'll be washed whiter than snow. I believe, I believe, the song says, because of what Christ has done for me.

And I'm so thankful tonight, I know of at least one Zulu that is here. I was so excited after the service this afternoon, there somebody came and spoke to me in Zulu. I was so happy.

And so, when we sing and you hear the clicks, you'll know that we're not bluffing you. Brothers and sisters, I'm sure that after hearing everything that we had to tell you about revival, you perhaps had a fear in your heart and you asked yourself, but this life, how can anybody keep on? How does one keep revival? Doesn't that worry you? Because perhaps you've heard about revivals, they came and they went. What a pity that that happens.

So it's a great mystery. How do you keep revival? Revival is from God. You can try and make it happen, but let me tell you now, you won't get it right.

God has got to do it. And putting it in simple terms, if you want revival, you must have God all the time, because only he can bring revival. But there are just a few things that I thought I'd mention to you tonight.

We might not see one another again, I hope we shall see one another again, but so that you will remember these things, that Lord, what you have given to me, I'll keep it. I'm reminded of Revelation chapter 3 verse 11, hold on to what you've got so that nobody will take away your crown. Revival is one of those things I've heard men of God say, if you've got it, you can never, never be satisfied with anything less than that.

You cannot. You can go anywhere in the world, but if you've experienced revival, and you've known what it is to see God working, and you've known what it is to walk in God's light, and to feel the warmth, and the heat, and sometimes the fire of God, you cannot be satisfied with anything less. You can try, but you'll never be satisfied.

I know people who've sometimes said it's too much. This constant walking in the light, God always looking at me, I've got to keep my thoughts, I've got to watch my words, it's too much. And then they go away, but I can tell you till today, I know of none of them who's satisfied.

Sometimes they've been honest with you, they say brother, since I left the revival, I've got no peace. You can never be satisfied again, so if you've got it, you've got to keep it. Not in your strength, but in God's strength, but I thought I'll just illustrate this to you.

Often in revival, we speak of a baby. If you've got God's spirit, and God's fire, it's like a baby. Just a month ago when I was in London, a good friend of ours told me something interesting.

She is a small woman, but very interesting woman. Strong willed, also very good wife of a good friend of ours. They stayed in the Netherlands.

They are South Africans, but they stayed in the Netherlands. And one day they were sleeping in the middle of the night, and suddenly she was awake. She's a very light sleeper.

And she had heard some footsteps coming up towards their bedroom. And she looked in the darkness, and there she saw a burglar come right into their bedroom. She says she was petrified.

She couldn't do anything, but she looked, and the men couldn't see that he saw her, or she saw him. He came in, looked around, and then all of a sudden he turned out of the bedroom towards the bedroom where their baby was. This woman says, I don't know what happened, but the moment I knew that this man is working towards my baby, she said she stood up and she screamed.

She tried to wake up her husband, but he was just fast asleep. He didn't even wake up. So the next thing, she ran, and this burglar was so shocked that he started running.

And she ran after him. She chased him out through a window. And just the moment he went out, she came to herself.

She realized that man could have killed me, but why did I run after him? Because he went for my baby. Friends, revival is like that. It's like a baby.

You come to a point where you say to yourself, I'd rather die, but I dare not lose this. And friends, that's one of the prices, one of the secrets of revival, where you can put anything in front of you, you say, I'd rather die, but I cannot live without this. That would be the case.

If you have experienced revival, and if you slip on that, you are lost. I'll use another illustration that we often use back in South Africa. The devil won't be satisfied.

He won't be happy with revival anywhere in the world. That is why he will try to take it away. I know of revivals where God has worked, and one day they've lost it.

I know of a young man, I don't want to say much about him, I'm not judging him, but he wasn't in the West, but God worked in his country, and God used him mightily. One day people came, they wanted to hear more about it, eventually he was invited to the West, and all of a sudden, he lost sight of Jesus. People praised the work, and people praised him, what God was doing through him.

The moment he took his eyes away from Jesus, and it was him, it was gone, it was gone. What a pity. The devil will try to take it away from you.

Now, we use just very easy illustrations. Let me use this one. Do you have crows in America, a crow, black sometimes with a white collar here? A story is told that a crow one day, by some good chance, got a very big piece of cheese.

Oh, the poor bird was so happy, I've got my cheese. So the crow thought, now I must go to a safe place where I can enjoy it alone. So what did it do? It went right up to the highest tree that it could find, and there it thought, I'm going to have my meal, but unknown to it, somebody else had seen that this crow has got this piece of cheese, and that was the fox.

The fox thought, I cannot bear it. A crow eat that beautiful cheese, I should have it. How do I do it? The tree is too high for me, I'll never get over there.

And so the fox thought of a good way of getting the cheese. It went under the tree, it polished itself, and the speech as well, and there it started with songs of praise unto the crow. The fox said, oh, what can I say, words fail me, beautiful bird, God in all his creation could never have created anything better than you.

Look at those shiny black feathers, I can hardly even look at them. All those nice legs, I wish they could walk by here. Oh, and that shiny beak, I wish I could get closer to it.

And those eyes, how can I even look at them? And all this time, the crow felt, hmm, so I am beautiful. I thought about it, but I'm more convinced now that I am beautiful. And the fox said, with such beauty that I see, I wonder, what is the voice like that comes from such beauty? Crow, do this one thing for me before I

die, sing me a song, just one song, and I'll be satisfied.

So the crow looked down, its feathers went a bit higher, it struck the good note, the key within, and it started singing. And as it started singing, you know what happened? The cheese fell out. Did it fall on the ground? No.

A red mouth was waiting. Grabbed it, did the fox listen to the music of the crow? No. He went away and he said, what, a crow? I know the terrible music, I've got what I wanted, and it left.

Simple story, but we've used it often in Africa. Young girls, young boys, you've got your cheese, but there are foxes that want to catch it, that want to get it from you. Young Christian, there are foxes outside, but even with us in revival, we know that they've got something precious, it's cheese, it's precious, but they are foxes.

And let me tell you, dear friends, there are always foxes trying to snuff out God's life amongst us. And sometimes these people come with all good traits. So sometimes one has got to be blunt.

Sometimes people come from politics, good sounding words, but you've got to say, politician or no politician, you're my ruler, but when it comes to this, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord. And sometimes you won't be famous for it. Some people will dislike you for it.

We try to be good to people, but we must be aware of this one thing, we can only be good as far as they are. When they are looking for this, which God gave to us, then we'd better say, then let's rather die than lose this. Now, dear friends, you are praying for revival here, and I'm sure also that God has done many things for you.

Let me tell you, there are foxes outside. You must remember that, but remember also, he that started a good work in you, he's going to finish it. If you just allow him, he will complete it.

And remember Hebrews chapter 12, verse 2, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. We cannot forget that. But if you take your eyes off that, if anything else becomes more important, if you become more important or anybody or anything else, and you take your eyes off Jesus, then your tears will go.

But remember, people are poor. You could say to Timothy, Timothy, I'm going, I've fought the good fight, I've got a crown waiting for me. It is possible, friends, and it has happened.

Finally, there are songs from America that I like. I have said before, and I'll be frank with you, some of them are a bit too lively for me. I'm not like that.

But there are songs that I like. Do you sing here, oh, when the saints go marching on, do you sing that? When the saints go marching on, Lord, I want to be in that number. And then the song goes, I've got a loving mother, I've got a loving father who's gone the last miles away.

Friends, I know of many people, my own father, I told you about him, he lived and died in this revival. And there are many others. I've got aunts.

I've got friends, brothers and sisters, they've gone the last miles away. They kept their cheese until they died. So it is possible.

So keep on by God's grace, and may the Lord bless you. Thank you. Before I sit down, we're going to sing for you a song in English where we sing, I've made my choice forever.

May that be your song as well. I've made my choice forever. Nothing will change me.

I've made my choice forever. I have made my choice forever. Twixt this world and God's dear Son.

Nought can change my mind, nor never. Here my heart is fully won. Take this world with all its pleasure.

Take them, take them great and small. Give me Christ, my precious Saviour. He is sweeter than them all.

Sweeter, sweeter than them all. Sweeter, sweeter than them all. Give me Christ, my precious Saviour.

He is sweeter than them all. Since I've made my choice forever, since I walk with Christ my Lord, life to me grows richer, sweeter, as I listen to His word. Take this world with all its treasures.

Take them, take them great and small. Give me Christ, my precious Saviour. He is sweeter than them all.

Sweeter, sweeter than them all. Sweeter, sweeter than them all. Give me Christ, my precious Saviour.

He is sweeter than them all. Second chapter. I want to share with you tonight one of the foundational principles of revival and one of the most important aspects in keeping what we've just heard, keeping that cheese, keeping that life, walking forward, going forward right to the end.

And I'd like us to look at a text in Revelations 2 we're going to read from verse 1, something which we often preach to ourselves. Verse 1. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write, These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. I know thy works and thy labour and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil.

And thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars. Let's stop there for the moment. We're going to continue after that.

The Lord Jesus is writing not to the heathen, not to the unsaved. He's writing to his people, to a church which has experienced revival. The church of Ephesus.

If you go back in the book of Acts you'll find a wonderful story, I think it's in Acts chapter 19, of the time when God's people were revived through an incident which caused great fear to come upon the church. It wasn't a revival of giggling and howling on the floor, but a revival of the fear of God. Because the sons of the high priest decided they can also do what Paul does.

You know, some people think, well, that Christian does that, what's to stop me from doing it? And they take hold of something which God has not anointed them to do. And they said to the demons, in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, get out. They had the right theology, they had the right Jesus, whom Paul preaches.

But what happened? Did the demons get out? Not at all. They had to get out. And they left hurt and wounded.

And when this happened, the Bible says great fear came upon the church. And they began to confess their deeds of darkness. Just imagine this, this church, these people knew Christ, but they had allowed deeds of darkness, occult deeds of darkness.

And it says that they brought it to the light. They exposed it to the light. They brought their books and fetishes and whatever, and they burnt it in the public bonfire.

And the Bible says it was worth a lot, many tens of thousands of dollars. You know, in revival, that's what happens. We have fire services again and again.

Right from the beginning, when the first witches came. And after they got converted, they went back home, they fetched their fetishes, they fetched the strings and the skins and the human fat and all the elephant dung and all the strange things that they use, and they said burn it. We cannot stay with this in our home anymore.

That's what it's like when God's fire comes. You bring these things to the fire. And so we sometimes have fire services where an area, perhaps half the size of this auditorium is filled not only with witchcraft fetishes and things from different sects and cults, but even stolen property which cannot be returned to their rightful owners.

Many people say we cannot live with this anymore. We don't know who the rightful owner is. We would have returned it, but it's got to be burnt.

And the Zulus believe that if you burn witchcraft medicine, lightning will come down from heaven and strike you dead. You'll anger the ancestors. And when it doesn't happen, Jesus is glorified and they say, indeed, he is Lord.

He is King. And this is what happened to this church. Revival broke out.

They could not stay with their deeds of darkness. But now we find the same church some time later. And Jesus writes a personal note to them.

And this is what he says. He says, brethren, my children, I walk amongst you. I know you.

Sometimes we need to remind ourselves of the fact that we know so well, but often we don't know it. At least we don't live like we know it. Jesus knows us.

He knows us, our thoughts, our deeds, those secret things. He says, I know it. And he starts by praising them and thanking them.

He says, I know your labor. And it was good labor. It was labor for him.

He says, I know your patience. You've been patient even though you've gone through a difficult time. I know that you cannot bear them which are evil.

They did not allow evil in their midst. They used church discipline. He says, and you've tried those which say they are apostles.

There are many people bringing many various teachings and very strange teachings sometimes. But this church had discernment. They could recognize it.

They had the gift of discernment. Jesus praises them for this. He says, you've tried them.

You found that they're not apostles, but instead they are liars. Would that that discernment would be in the church today. It's sorely lacking.

He says in verse 3, and hast borne, and hast patience, and hast for my name's sake, for you have labored and you have not fainted. This was an enduring church. They knew what it was to go through tough times.

Some Christians tend to flounder and fail and grow weak and fall simply because the going's tough. Chocolate soldiers, when the sun gets hot, they just melt and disappear. They're sweet, but they just vanish into nothing and are useless because the sun gets too hot.

But this church wasn't like this. However, although we'd love to stop at that verse, it continues in verse 4. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. That is what I'd like to share with you about.

Because thou hast left thy first love. This is what the Lord Jesus is more concerned about than anything else. Your labor, your patience, your correct doctrine, your discernment, your ability to see those who are apostles and those who are not, your practicing of church discipline.

All that the Lord Jesus says is good. He doesn't ignore it. He acknowledges it.

But he says, this I have against you. And this is what breaks his heart. And I pray that somehow, by God's Spirit, we'd have a glimpse into the heart of the Lord Jesus tonight and see what he feels when it comes to the subject of first love.

He doesn't say, you've forsaken your love. He says, you've forsaken your first love. And this is what grieves his heart.

And I'd like us to look tonight and go a little bit into the subject. What does it mean? What is this first love all about? What is it that grieves him to such a point where he says, unless you repent, unless you get back to the first love, I'm going to come and remove your candlestick from its place? What is it that can cause such grief and such anger in his heart? The first love. You know, Jesus is often likened to a husband or the bridegroom, although I must say the vision and the picture of the bridegroom and the bride is so often dimmed today because of the confusion in marriage.

And Jesus wants marriage to be a reflection of what his relationship is like with his church. And you very seldom find it. But you know, the relationship of a bridegroom to his bride, of the husband to the wife, in the first place, it is a relationship of love, of first love.

Jesus isn't satisfied only with love, some measure of love, but he demands, he's not even asking for it and saying, I would like it to be like that. But he says it must be like that. And if you don't repent and get to that first love, this is what is going to happen to you.

Have you seen, in case you haven't experienced it yourself, true first love in a married couple when you can see the joy, the shine, the absolute fullness of love between a married couple? Well, read the Song of Songs. Read what it is for a true love between the bride and the bridegroom, what it is really like. And that is not just something erotic for you to read.

That is the picture of Jesus and his people. When she says, I woke up and I could not find him whom my soul loved. I went out and I searched for him.

That is what it is like when somebody is in love with the Lord Jesus. They cannot rest a moment, a moment if they find him not there. She says, I went to the watchman and I said, have you seen him whom

my soul loves? And they didn't know where he was.

Then she said, I went beyond the watchman and I found him whom my soul loved. And I embraced him and I clung to him. And I took him into my mother's home, into the bedroom.

She says, and I would not let him go. Oh, that first love. The Lord Jesus wants the first love.

Now we are going to look at it in two different ways. The first love came from the love that you had at first. In other words, when you first came to Christ, when you first got converted, when you were first born again, when you first knew the forgiveness of sins, did you know then that burning first love for the Lord Jesus? I'm sure many of you can testify to the truth of it.

What was it like? Now we need to remember, the Lord Jesus goes on later on here to say in verse 5, remember. Now let's remember a bit. What was it like when you first came to Christ and when you first knew the relief of sins forgiven? When you could walk on air.

Now I'm not trying to highlight feeling and experience, I must be careful here, because some people say, well I never felt it like that. Your salvation is not on your feeling, but nevertheless, when you first came to Christ, you had first love. And you loved Jesus more than anything else.

Even your own life wasn't of any worth to you in comparison. Didn't you find it was easy to be obedient to him? If he demanded something of you, you let it go. Maybe he spoke to you about your smoking, and you said, Lord, if that's what you want, that I should let it go, I'll gladly do it for you.

And it was gone. Wasn't that wonderful, when you, with a willing heart, with a first love burning in your heart, you said, Lord Jesus, anything for you. You were able to lay down your lives for the next person.

You could do anything for the next person. You wanted them to know this love as well. You wanted to introduce them to your lover.

This lover of your soul who had washed you, who had cleansed you, whom you loved more than anything else. You wanted to introduce them, maybe even did foolish things. Sometimes this first love causes people to do things in their zeal, which maybe are not so wise.

But I say, Lord, rather that lack of wisdom, with first love, than ice cold stony hearts. Or a half love, where there's no first burning love anymore. How easy it was to be obedient.

You found that you love people with their mistakes. Even if there were things wrong in them, you looked right past it, for love, what does it do? It covers a multitude of sins. But if the love starts dwindling, and as the years go by, other things start creeping in, and you become a serious, professional Christian, what happens? You start finding the first sign of the dwindling of first love is that you begin to see faults in other people.

You begin to find fault with your brother and sister. And you begin to see things which are wrong. And maybe they are wrong.

Maybe you have discernment, but because of your lack of first love, you see things which are so big in that person's eye. And you forget the log in your own eye, and you attack that speck as if though it's a log and you injure your brother. You know, a person who has first love is able to very delicately take out the speck in his brother's eye.

And what a delicate process it is. When you go to help your brother or sister in Christ, be careful. You can't just blunder in.

Because the eye is very sensitive. I remember just a few weeks ago, just before we came here, we were preaching among the schools, and one morning we would get up about 25 schools we would cover in the morning. We reached about 300,000 children in about 10 weeks.

But one morning we went out, it was just as the sun was beginning to rise, and as we left I felt something in my eye, and oh how painful it was. I tried to look in the mirror, it was still too dark, I couldn't see anything. But I felt there must be something there.

And I'd look and there was nothing. I tried to convince myself there was nothing there. And the brethren were singing, it was in a little bus.

They were rejoicing in the Lord, there was the beauty of nature, the sun was beginning to rise. And here I was, I was just concerned about this eye. You know, something that comes in, it can affect your whole spiritual life.

And even if it comes into your eye, you might think it's so small, but the trip there was miserable until I got to a place where we stopped outside the school, the sun had come up and its reflection was on our faces, and I said to a brother, now have another careful look. And because sometimes we need our brethren, don't we? To say, hey I can't see this, but maybe you can see it, now have a good look here. And as he looked, he saw an eyelash that had somehow come out and it bent over backwards and it was right on the eye.

So small, but he delicately and very carefully, though I was so sensitive, and though I was so touchy about my eye, he delicately removed it. Now dear friends, that's what the spiritual life can be like as well. If you want to go and help somebody, be careful how you do it.

Look out for the log in your own eye first. But you know, oh, when a person is losing his first love, and when he is so slick about his Christianity, he does everything well, but the criticism that he feels about other people and the talk, maybe he says to somebody else, you know, I don't want you to say this to anybody else, it's just for you. Now do you know that Sister So-and-So has done this and this and this.

Nobody else must hear it, just for you. And of course that person goes to somebody else and says, now don't tell anybody, this is for you. And it goes from one to the other.

And you know, in a church, especially this size, well, it can wreak havoc. We tell the story of a preacher who had a lady like that in his congregation. I don't know why it is, but very often it's the ladies who have this problem.

But very often the men are like the ladies as well, and they get involved in gossip. But this lady was the local newspaper. If you wanted the news, you'd get it from her.

She knew everything. The most recent love affair, So-and-So was pregnant. Anything you wanted, So-and-So was having an affair, she knew it.

And one day the preacher called her and said, now lady, I want you to do me a favor. I want you to go home and I want you to buy a chicken. I want you to slaughter it.

Now in South Africa, we don't buy ready-made chickens. We usually buy them live and then slaughter them at home. She said, I want you to slaughter it, and then I want you to do something.

I want you to pluck the chicken all the way here back to me. As you're walking from your home, I want you to take out the feathers. By the time you get here, I want a clean chicken.

She thought it very strange that the preacher should ask her this, but she said, all right, since you ask it, I'll do it. And she went home, she got a chicken, slaughtered it. And as she walked to the preacher, she began plucking the chicken.

When she got there with the clean chicken, the preacher said, all right, sister, I want you to do something now. You go back to where you started and collect all the feathers. She said, pastor, that's impossible.

You know I can't. The wind's taken it. He said, sister, that's exactly what you are like as well.

Everything you've said has been taken by the wind. And can you ever get it again? No. You can't even apologize to all the people that you need to apologize to.

Gossip, if we read in 2 Timothy 2, it can go like cancer. It can go amongst the brethren like gangrene, and it eats. Maybe you're not the gossip.

Maybe you're the one who listens to it. You don't even pass it on. All it does is it poisons your spirit.

You hear something about somebody else, and it defiles you. And you wonder why your joy is a little bit less. And your first love is being attacked.

And you find that that brother or that sister or that pastor or that elder or whoever it is about which that gossip has been spoken has somehow decreased in your value and in your eyes. When you see that person again, you see them with this new image which the devil has been telling you about. And you are spoiled with them.

And let me tell you, unless you confess that, unless you get that out, unless you are washed of that poison inside you, you're going to find that your love towards your Lord is going to diminish day by day. And anything else is going to poison you more easier than the last time. And the love grows colder and colder.

The Lord Jesus says, I want you to have the love that you had at first, and I don't want any other love. I want more than that even. I want it to be growing every day, the love that you had at first.

But then the Lord Jesus also intends by this to say, I want your first love in the sense that I want to be number one. I want to be the first one that you love more than anything else. Remember the Lord Jesus said to Peter after his resurrection, and remember when they'd been fishing all night and they'd grown tired and weary and not catching anything, and in the morning as he stood on the shore, remember the time when he called out, children, have you caught anything? And all that happened, and how Peter swam to him, and when he got there, how he found fish already prepared, and as they were hauling in, there was 153 big fish besides all the others.

And then the Lord Jesus said to him, Peter, do you love me more than these? Not just do you love me, but do you love me more than these? In other words, am I your first love? Do you love me more than anything else? And Peter said, oh Lord, you know that I love you. And Peter answered in the sense that Lord, you know that I love you with the love of a friend. Jesus said, but do you love me with the love of God, with the

agape love? He said, Lord, you know that I love you with the love of a friend.

And then the third time, Peter was grieved. You see, Jesus asks that question again and again. He's satisfied with nothing else.

He wants to be the first one. And let me tell you, any true husband and wife has that same attitude. They don't want to be the second one in their marriage relationship.

Isn't it like that, husbands and wives? You want your wife to have you as the first one and nothing else. The first love. Just before I came here to the States, I was staying with a friend in Peter Maritzburg, and he told me, he woke up one morning, he said, you know, I've had a dream.

And oh, this dream, I woke up and I was crying when I woke up. He said, I dreamt that I was in my room with my wife, and outside in the passage of the bedroom, in the house, was a man walking up and down, and he wanted my wife. He said he didn't do anything.

He didn't come into the room. But I was conscious that there was somebody who wanted my wife. He said, oh, the jealousy that burned inside me because somebody wanted my wife.

He said, oh, the jealousy. And he woke up from the dream like that. He was crying because the jealousy was so strong.

Brethren, if a husband can feel that, and wives feel it too. I don't know why husbands are very unfaithful to their wives very often. It's not something that usually troubles women, but men, even in the church, unfaithfulness to their wives because they lose their first love.

Now, Jesus feels that passion and that jealousy for you. So when you go flirting around and start playing with sin, there's a fearful jealousy, a passion of jealousy that burns inside him because you are forsaking your first love. You're not treating Jesus as your first love, and you're making your lover angry, so to say, if I can use that language reverently.

The Lord Jesus wants your total love, and here you are flirting around, having a glimpse at pornography every now and then. You don't buy it, but you just peruse and go through it every now and then. Looking at other men's wives with an evil eye.

Looking at other women's husbands with lustful thoughts. Oh, Lord, wouldn't you take my husband to yourself? Maybe you want him in heaven because, Lord, maybe that's the one that you want for me. And the Lord Jesus sees that heart of yours.

He sees that you're forsaking your first love, and you're flirting with the things of the world. Maybe you're flirting with some doctrine. Maybe it's some Christian doctrine that's eating away at your first love.

It might be a true doctrine, but you've got so engrossed in it, and it's so captured your mind and your thoughts, that the Lord Jesus Himself has faded from the picture. Like Brother Fanon said, looking unto Jesus. You're no longer looking unto Him, you're looking unto other things.

And no longer is Jesus Christ your first love. What's it like when you love Him with all your heart? When you love Him with all your heart, is anything too difficult to do for Him? You know, if a wife loves her husband or a husband the wife, anything they want, anything, is the easiest thing in the world to do. It's not even a sacrifice.

We often, with a very serious face, say, Well, Lord, I'm thankful that I was able to sacrifice so much for You. Oh, dear friends, if you love somebody, you cannot sacrifice really. It's hardly worthy of being called sacrifice, because you love Him.

You do it willingly. You want to do it for Him. You love Him.

What is the result of a person who loves the Lord Jesus with all his heart? He does something. There's an expression of that love. You don't just say, Lord, I love you, but you express that love.

You do things for Him. What does it help to just say, I love... and there's no result? You know the story, perhaps, of that young man in a very romantic mood, sitting in a park with his girlfriend on a moonlit night. And sitting next to her, he waxed eloquent as he said, Oh, that I had a thousand arms with which to embrace you.

And she said, Well, why don't you use the two you've got? When you love somebody, there's the consequence. You'll do something. You want an intimate relationship with the person that you love.

And you want time with the Lord Jesus. Oh, spending time. When did you last have a refreshing time with the Lord Jesus alone? When did you last get time with the Word of God and you were refreshed? And you were bubbling over with what God had spoken to you? What did He say to you last week? If we could call you now to the front and say, What has Jesus spoken to you in this last week? What? Has He spoken nothing? Are you still speaking about something a month ago? Old manner? Don't you talk to your lover, the one who loves your soul, and the one whom you love with the first love every day? Doesn't He speak to you? Dear friends, you want to do anything for Him.

And He'll call upon you at times to do things for Him. And it's the easiest thing. Another thing about a person who's in love with the first love is that there's a beauty about that person.

Well, let me use an example. Have you seen a mother who looks at her little baby? Just looks at her. Looks at the baby and the mother's face shines.

Why? Because of love. She looks at the baby and the baby looks at it and the baby smiles and the mother beams. And there's a beauty on the face.

Well, it's the same like that between lovers, isn't it? There's a beauty on the face. And that's what it's like with a person who has the Lord Jesus Christ in their hearts and who loves the Lord with all their hearts. They have a clean, beautiful face.

Even if they are tall or very short or if they've got five chins or a flat nose or a long nose, they are beautiful. Don't you find your Christian brothers and sisters beautiful? You know, as we first came into this church on Friday night, I remarked to Brother Fano. I said, you know, have you noticed the clean faces? And I was so blessed just to see clean faces.

I said in my heart, bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh. Clean faces, washed in the blood. There's beauty.

Doesn't matter if they're very old and in human terms, ugly. They're beautiful. Isn't it like that when the love of the Lord Jesus shines in a person's face and there's a joy and the overflow of Christ? There's beauty.

And in Corinthians, it says, as we gaze upon him, as we look at him, we are changed from glory into glory. Dear friends, is there that first love where Jesus takes first place in your life? Oh, Jesus is satisfied with

nothing less. For he goes on to say in verse five, Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen.

Dear brethren, we can hold on to the right doctrine. Have the right labor, have the right zeal, have the right discernment. But if we forsake our first love, not even just the love, but our first love, we have fallen.

That's what Jesus regards us as. He says you've backslidden. You have fallen.

The danger and the terrible thing for me is this, and that's why I preach this to myself as well. I'm not just speaking it to you. Is that you can still keep the form of godliness, but it lacks the power, it lacks the love.

And you know, people in the church may not recognize it in you. They might just think that perhaps you've got a bit of the flu, and that's why your face isn't beaming as it normally is. But you know, you can stay in the church for months and for years, and the first love is getting less and less.

And everything seems normal. People still hug you. People still say they love you.

And the Lord Jesus says, remember from whence thou art fallen. And then he goes on to say, and repent and do the first works. Why does he say that? Well, how did we get our love in the first place? Love comes through repentance.

We cannot work up a love for the Lord Jesus. It's not in the human heart. We hate him by nature.

Oh, the love of God towards us. You know, I went through a very painful experience until the last hour when I got on the plane to come here. For three weeks, my son was in hospital in great agony, in great pain.

11 years old, had appendicitis. He had the appendix out, and then it got a complication. The moment we got home, he developed an obstruction, a very dangerous symptom.

He was rushed back to hospital, had a labrotomy. It was cut right down the middle. They had to free the obstruction, and it was in agony.

He wept and screamed in agony sometimes, despite painkillers. My wife and I sat with him at the bedside for nearly three weeks. Sometimes we just wept with him.

The pain was so much. I often said to the Lord, Oh, Lord, if only I could be in this bed in his place. If only I could take his pain.

If only I could be the one that would suffer for him. And the Lord spoke to me later on through that and said, You know, you do it because you love him and because he loves you. He's your son.

But I did that for you. I loved you and wanted to take your place and did take your place while you still hated me. And it so struck me that, yes, I think I have great love for him.

I'm willing and I was perfectly willing to take his place and to suffer for him, to do the weeping for him. But I couldn't. But the Lord Jesus loved us while we were still rebels.

While we still hated him, he loved us. Isn't that love? It's easy to love somebody who loves you. But to love somebody as he loved you and me while we hated him, while we scoffed at him and rebelled against him, while we lived in enmity against his law, he loved us.

Why do we love him? Because he first loved us. And dear friends, how do you get back to the first love? It's through repentance. Remember the story of that woman who came weeping at Jesus' feet, wiping his feet with her hair.

And the good righteous disciples and those around were very upset at this embarrassing situation of an immoral woman touching their Lord, their Messiah. And Jesus later on said to them, you know, the one who is forgiven much, loves much. Do you want to love much? Do you want your first love? Then be forgiven much.

Is there something that needs to be forgiven? Is there something that still needs to be brought to the cross? Is there some sin that is still held in darkness? Some secret that you're unwilling to confess? Something that some perhaps some secret between you and a friend, you've never gone and broken that union. Bring it to the Lord Jesus. He who is forgiven much, loves much.

You can't go and work up this love. Don't go and say, Lord, just give me a first love. Say, Lord, I repent.

And I ask you to take this away and return again that love. Fill me with your love. The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by his Holy Spirit, not by any work that we can produce.

Dear brethren, it's a serious word because the Lord Jesus goes on to say, if you don't repent and if you don't return to that first love, I will come in my anger and I'll remove that candlestick from its place. I'll make you of no worth. It's a terrible thought, but that's how seriously Jesus takes first love.

Don't be satisfied with anything less. You husband, are you satisfied with anything less from your wife? Your wife, are you satisfied if your husband has eyes for other women? No, you want him to have eyes only for you. You want him to be the one who loves you and just you.

Much more so, our Lord Jesus, and he deserves it too. He who first loved us deserves our first love. He is satisfied with nothing less.

And I ask you, don't be satisfied with anything less in your life. Amen.

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