

On Eagles' Wings Pt 65

by Don Courville

The sermon emphasizes the dangers of bitterness and the necessity of spiritual cleanliness and reconciliation for revival.

Duration: 29:29

Scripture: Isaiah 59:1-2, Acts 24:16, Philippians 4:4-9, James 3:6

Topics: "Radio Show"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of meditating on good things as instructed in Philippians 4:8. He warns against inviting demons into churches through rock music and highlights the confusion and destruction it can cause, particularly among young people. The preacher also emphasizes the need for teaching and living by the right standards to experience the power of God. He shares the powerful impact of making restitution and seeking forgiveness, citing testimonies of people getting saved through this act. Additionally, he addresses the destructive nature of the tongue and the importance of avoiding bitterness in the church.

Transcript

Well, it's good to be back with you again today on Eagle's Wings. I trust that Jesus Christ is very special to you. He's very special to me.

For he saved me. He took me out of a life of self and sin some number of years ago and has done a new thing in my life. And through all of his working and everywhere he's sent me and all of the stuff somehow or another he's put me together today with you.

And I trust that this time will be a blessing to you. I never know where I'm going to be from week to week. Never know where I'm going to preach or not preach.

Never know what state I'll be in. Along with my family, we have yielded ourselves to be available to the Lord for him to use us as he sees fit. And about two years ago we moved away from our pastorate and have gone into a revival ministry, a ministry of helping churches.

We took the first year off basically for our family to spend time with our children, to prepare them for this time. We didn't know exactly how deep God would take us into this area, but he's taught us to let go of many things, to deal with many things, to give up many things. And every time we've given up something

he's replaced it with more of his grace and his goodness and his presence.

You know last week I was talking with you about restitution if you were listening to the program. I just can't overemphasize how important it is to be clean spiritually. It's very key that you deal with sin in your life.

And Heavenly Father, I pray for my friends today listening that Jesus Christ will be all they want. He's all they need, but he that he will become all they want. And Father you guide our time on the air, you direct us as to what we share, the subjects we talk about, and I pray for my friends listening.

There may be one without Christ as their Savior, and I pray that you would speak to them that Jesus is what they need. That they would come to a point, even right now, where they would repent of their sin and turn and ask Jesus to come into their life. Do what you want now, Father, during this time in Jesus' name.

Amen. Amongst all of the things that are going on in the world, there's nothing more serious than sin in your own life. And as I've been talking to you about this, I feel like the Lord today would have me share a little bit with you about the destructive elements or effects of bitterness.

I have some notes from a good preacher friend of mine, Evangelist by John Musser on bitterness, and the scripture is full of bitterness, and you can just find all kinds of illustrations of bitterness all around us. But if you're praying for revival, and that's what this program is geared for, for a revival in our nation, and it's got to start somewhere, and the best place to start is in my heart and in yours. And I have a burden for our churches.

So many of our churches are not seeing souls saved. We're not dealing with things in our lives. We're not making restitution, and we're inviting demons in, and that's why I'm offering to you a booklet on on rock music.

If you would like to receive this, you write to me, send a donation of five dollars to help cover the cost, and I'll send you this booklet. And also anytime anybody writes me, I usually send them a copy of the booklet Revival or Ruin that I wrote about almost six years ago, about how God worked in our part of the country in revival where it went for seven months, and that booklet deals specifically with what God did in our church. But it went through the state for seven months, and it's continued on even today in different areas.

One of the things that we're trying to focus in on in this area of revival ministry is how to keep it going in the church. And I've been reading a book, an old book, it's 130 years on revival, and I'm learning some new truths and principles about it. Many of the old revivals went on for years after it hit in a land or a city or an area of the country.

It went for years, and we're having to relearn these principles, these things. But let me cover this with you before we share with you something about bitterness. The Bible says, Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither his ears heavy, that it cannot hear.

But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. That's from Isaiah 59, 1 and 2, and if you know anything about the Bible, Isaiah 58 is to me a key revival passage before that. The first step in preparing the way to pray for revival is dealing with the sin in one's own life.

And a good way to start is to keep a pencil and a notepad handy while you're praying, or you're reading the scripture, and anything that constantly comes up to interrupt your communion with the Lord should be

noted. You know what Paul said in Acts 24 16? He said, and herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man. A very good principle to practice.

Anything that the Spirit of God keeps bringing up to you over and over again in your conscience is something that you probably need to deal with. I read of a story how in Argentina there were two men in a church who had not spoken to each other in 15 years, and they were brought to see how that displeased the Lord, and they were reconciled. And then a nurse in another church was making some side money doing abortions, and God convicted her of it, and she vowed that she would do it no more.

Then she took her kit of instruments, and she drove her car out on a big bridge that spanned a river coming down from the east side of the Andes, and she stopped the car and tossed the instruments over the railing and into the river. Dealing with what the Spirit of God had spoke to her about. A well-to-do couple invited a lady friend to have dinner with them in an expensive hotel in downtown Buenos Aires, and the hall leading into the dining room sparkled with luxury, and the floor was beautifully tiled, and there were huge plate glass mirrors on the walls, and along one side was a row of magnificent flowering potted plants.

And after the meal, this lady, when three of them came out, they paused in the hallway to admire the flowers, and the single lady thought that one of the flowers was especially pretty. So she glanced up and down the hall, and then as her British brethren would say, she pinched the flower pot in awe. She took the flower, the pot in awe, she took it out, put it in her car, and took it home.

And a few weeks later, God tapped her on the shoulder and asked her, how come? Has God ever done that to you? Maybe he's doing that to you right now. He's just saying, why'd you do that? Why'd you say that? And even though she was sick with a bad cold, she got out of her bed, she went back down to that hotel, and she paid for her sin. How come? Why'd you do it? Why'd you say that? And the Spirit has been talking to maybe some of you for years on something.

A habit. You know, making an apology or a restitution is one of the most difficult things a believer is asked to do, and that's probably why we don't see it going on in our churches. But without it, you're not going to have revival.

You're not going to see God's fullest blessing. But just here, we can offer a word of encouragement and consolation to you. In most cases, where the Lord has squeezed us into asking forgiveness, he will have gone ahead and worked in the heart of the other person so that the injured party may receive you in a way that you've not imagined.

Sunday nights in the church that we're in, the pastor opens it up most of the time for testimonies, what God's doing, and many times they share how God has worked in an area where they went back to make restitution. And the stories are amazing. Amazing the things that happen.

All kinds of things happen. People get saved when they go back to make restitution. The people, they drop their jaws.

They just, their mouths fly open when somebody comes up and tells them to do that. It is something that's so unheard of, but it's so powerful. A humbling of ourself.

You remember last week? How frightened Jacob was when he got the news that his brother Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men? I shared that with you. But God did something in Esau's heart so that

when they met he, he was actually delighted and hugged Jacob. Jacob lived in fear of nothing.

Esau's heart had melted. Now if you've not quite had the courage to straighten up some sin in your life, and you're invited to participate in a time of prayer, it might be wiser to decline than to risk short-circuiting the prayer of the entire group. I believe many of our prayer meetings are just shams, because we know there's somebody there with sin in their life, and we're letting them pray with us.

We're tolerating sin. Now, let me talk with you about prayer for revival a little bit more before we go into our study today. But Dr. Torrey said, it's not necessary that the whole church get to pray and to begin with.

Great revivals always begin in the hearts of a few men and women whom God arouses by His Spirit to believe in Him as a living God, as a God who answers prayer, and upon whose hearts He lays a burden from which no rest can be found except in importunate crying to God. You say, well, I don't know of anybody else I can pray with. Well, that might be the case.

But that's no reason why you can't pray yourself for revival. Pray that God will give you somebody to pray with you for revival. Perhaps the Lord will put you in contact with one or two others in your area who would be interested.

You know, even though He might not do that, you can still be a David Brainerd. He prayed alone in whole villages of Indians, men, women, and children all turned to the Lord. James Frazier in Burma also prayed alone with the exception of a few of his relatives on the other side of the world in England, and some 20,000 of the Lai Su people came to the Lord.

So if there's one, two, three neighbors or your friends that have an interest in prayer for revival, then start a little prayer meeting with them. Small prayer meetings are more flexible than the large ones anyway. It's easier to agree on the time to get together and all that.

So pray for revival for America. Pray for revival for your church. Many Christians, I believe, have the notion that the more people they can induce to come to a prayer meeting, the better.

That's not necessarily true. You never know in a large meeting how many Aikens you have. Read Joshua chapter 7. One preacher said, he said, I once had what I thought was a nice prayer group only to learn that one of the women who prayed the loudest was the cook in a house of prostitution.

So you just pray. You start praying that God will send a revival in your life, in your church. And if you like this booklet, you write to me on rock music.

I believe many of our churches are inviting demons into their churches. Many of the young people are confused. There's two standards.

They're not being taught what's right. And they're they're being taught what's wrong and it's destroying them. They're wondering why they have no power.

You ever wondered why your church is not sending out missionaries anymore? We've compromised so much, accepted the ways of the world so much into our lives. Now, as we go into this new year and we're just getting started this month, one of the most destructive sins that I know of. Is that of bitterness? You can get out your Webster and Webster will define bitterness as having a sharp, generally disagreeable taste, painful as a bitter experience, severe as bitter, cold, cruel, stinging as bitter words.

The Greek word for bitterness, *Piazzo*, means to squeeze. Actually, it will squeeze the life out of you, out of the person that's bitter. That person is always hurt more than the one that they're against, means to squeeze, to seize, to officially arrest or in hunting to capture, to apprehend, to catch, to lay hand on, to take, also to pack, to press down from strong.

Are you bitter? Are you bitter? The Bible says, if you'd like to turn in your Bibles to Ephesians 4:30, and I'm going to take you through many passages that we are to let all bitterness, we're to let all bitterness be put away from you. Ephesians 4:31. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice.

Have you ever thought about this thing of bitterness? Are you bitter? Are you bitter? It is the attitude that refuses to make reconciliation with others. Last week and today, I've talked with you a little bit on reconciliation. I will not go to them, to them.

They offended me. I am right. They're wrong.

They can come to me. That, my friend, is the attitude of bitterness. First of all, bitterness has a conforming process and not a transforming process.

If you know what the scripture says in Romans 12, Paul said, I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world. I propose to you that bitterness is part of this world, but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Bitterness has a conforming process, not a transforming. The word of God, as you saturate yourself on that and you think on the word of God, you become what you think. As a man thinks, so he is.

So if you're bitter against somebody, that's the area you're going to conform to. It conforms us actually to this age, which is under the control of Satan. So we're not to be conformed to this age, we're not to take on the shape of this age and the patterns of thinking.

I was looking at Ephesians chapter 2, verse 2 and 3. Paul said in verse 1, And you had been quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Bitterness is a conforming process to the flesh, to the lust of our flesh, to the desires of the flesh and of the mind.

It's from the world, it's actually from the pit. Bitterness, Satan is a bitter, bitter fallen angel. Very bitter, bitter people, if you get around them, they spoil your fun, they spoil your party, they spoil the atmosphere, they are angry inside, they are bitter.

Do you know one? Are you one? It is actually enmity with God. The Bible says, in Romans 8:5, and let me just inject bitterness in the place of flesh. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh.

For they that are after bitterness do mind the things of bitterness. But they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For to be carnally minded, or let's say to be bitterly minded, is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Because the carnal mind, that bitter mind, is enmity against God. For it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. It's not from God, it's not subject to the law of God.

Bitterness actually is meditating upon evil, which is strictly forbidden in the scripture. Strictly, God has strictly forbidden us to do this. If you turn over to Philippians, in chapter 4, the Bible tells us that we are to meditate on those things which are good.

Philippians chapter 4, starting actually with verse 1, you come on down through there, in verse 4, you are to rejoice in the Lord. In verse 6, you are to be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. Let your request be made known unto God, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things which you have both learned and received and heard and seen in me do, and the God of peace shall be with you. So you might ask yourself, as you're thinking on something, does it fit into the category of Philippians chapter 4, verse 8? Is it true? Is it honest? Is it just? Is it pure, lovely? Is it of good report? Just think on that.

If it doesn't fit in with it, drop it. Get rid of it. It'll destroy you.

Meditating upon that which is evil is actually taking poison into your own soul, which will actually destroy the spiritual life which is within you. We're to think on those things which are good. Love thinketh no evil, 1 Corinthians 13, 5. It doesn't dwell on the evil.

The opposite of love is bitterness and evil which is at enmity with God. For God is love, 1 John 4, verse 8. Let me share with you in our remaining time today some consequences of bitterness. Maybe God can use this in your life, or maybe you can take something that might help somebody else that's bitter, and you can minister to them.

I have actually six consequences, if we can get through them. First of all and foremost is broken fellowship with God. If you turn over back to 1 John, chapter 1, and verse 6, the Scripture tells us about our fellowship with God, that if we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.

Actually we are not practicing truth. 1 John 2, 9 and 11 says, Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are made known, or manifest, and the children of the devil.

Whosoever does not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. You know that you cannot love someone with bitterness in your heart.

You have a false love, you have a hypocritical love. You have a Judas type love, when you come up to your brother and put your arm around and say, Boy, it's good to see you, but yet you've got something in your heart against them. That is a Judas type love, and it will betray.

Broken fellowship with God, you can't fellowship with your brother. This type of bitterness is one of the sins that grieves the Holy Spirit most. In Ephesians 4, 30, we are to put aside, let all bitterness, all of it, be put

away from you.

Secondly, not only is there broken fellowship with God one of the consequences of bitterness, broken fellowship with God, but also broken relationships. How many of you know of a family member, a spouse, or a friend, or someone in a church, or a whole church that's split, or an organization, or whatever, that has this problem? Somebody's bitter. Bitterness toward one person will defile all your relationships, if not dealt with.

It will just defile you. Just a little bit of dirt in your glass of water will dirty it up. I'm turning over to James, chapter 3. James, chapter 3, in verse 6, James said, And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.

So is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. And we wonder why God's not blessing in our church. We wonder why we're not seeing very many saved.

Bitterness. There's some deacon in your church that's bitter against another one, or bitter against the preacher. Or, Lord, help us if the preacher's a bitter preacher.

I have run into bitter preachers. I was talking to one last summer. Bitter.

Bitter against one of the deacons in the church, and been there for 23 years. 23 years that had been going on. Wow.

No wonder the world isn't impressed. Broken relationships. But also, another consequence of bitterness is a broken spirit.

Job said in Job 21.25, And another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with pleasure. Self-destruction, mental suicide, entraps our own spirit in bondage and frustration. What a frustrating thing it must be to have a close relative that you have to avoid to stay away from.

Is it worth it? Is it worth it to go through life like that? My friend, life is short. It's just a vapor. It's just a vapor.

And then it's gone. And so many times we boast in our own pride. We say, I'm right.

But now you rejoice in your boastings. All such rejoicing is evil. And I will not move.

I'll stand my ground till hell freezes over. We say, until they come to me, I won't go to them. Wow.

You won't see revival in your life or your church with that kind of attitude. A broken spirit. And then the logical thing to follow next is a broken health.

The fruits of bitterness. We have lives that are shipwrecked. We have hurt loved ones.

We have destruction, confusion, and sickness. You know, all these things can lead to premature death. I was just reading, if I can get over to it, in 1 Corinthians 11.

You know, before you have communion, your pastor will read, and many times he'll read 1 Corinthians 11. 1 Corinthians 11. And verse 28.

Paul said, But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself. I know of one preacher, that a high percentage of his time is in the hospitals.

Going from hospital to hospital to hospital. There's probably four or five hospitals around in his town. And they haven't dealt with these things in his church for a long time.

And I wonder how many of those people in those hospitals from his church, and there's a high percentage of them, just fit into this category. To bring damnation to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

And that doesn't mean they're cut and seized. That means they're dead. Paul said, If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. Bitterness is of the world. It's of Satan.

It's of the flesh. And when it's allowed to come into your life or into the church, it poisons. Why do we allow poison? Would you allow somebody to walk into your home, put a little strychnine in all of your glasses of water? You say, No.

But actually we are being poisoned to death. We had some wheat checked out here just a few weeks ago. A friend of ours went to a biochemist and checked out her wheat and our wheat and found out that each of it had a little trace, just a slight, slight trace of strychnine, and it comes from the fertilizer, I guess.

Many of us are slowly poisoning ourselves to death with certain foods that we eat, too many sugars, which I like sweet things and have to watch it, but bitterness is a poison more deadly than strychnine. And over a period of time, it will break your health. You can have a broken spirit, broken relationships, broken fellowship with God, broken health.

There's a fifth thing that it does. It gives place to Satan. It means to oppress, to afflict, to torment us.

Actually, if you have bitterness, you can give him a legal right to come into your life. The Bible says, Neither give place to Satan. Giving him the legal right to afflict and to devour us, to destroy us.

If you have bitterness, you actually are giving him the legal right. Neither give place to the devil. It means don't give him a chance, an opportunity, or a foothold, or a loophole.

That means a legal right because he'll take it every time. Ephesians 4.30 For not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God. I wonder how many times we've grieved him with our bitterness.

And the last thing in closing is it can bring us into mental imprisonment. I was reading over in Proverbs chapter 5, verse 21. For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord.

521, 522, and 523. Before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings, his own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

I was noticing one thing there. It says he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. Our own sins can act like a rope and imprison us.

Peter said that Simon the sorcerer was in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. And he hollered out to Peter to pray for him. I just wonder, in closing up, as I've shared this little Bible study with you today, there wouldn't happen to be a bitter spirit in you, would there? I'd hope not.

I run into so many people that are bitter. You look in their face. You can read people.

They're like a book. You can't hide the pages of your life. They're on your face.

And they're in your eyes. I've been talking with some people in the last few weeks. I was with them this week at a funeral.

And fear is all in their face and in their eyes. And they've done something against God. And they've invited Satan into their lives.

They've given place to Satan. And their lives read like a book of fear and torment. My friend, let me pray for you.

Lord, I pray, if there's one today listening, that they would come to you and confess it. Get rid of it. Forgive.

It's not worth it. I pray that you'd set them free. In Jesus' name.

Well, I trust that this has been a help to you. Just a little Bible study. We've been dealing with the subject of reconciliation.

And bitterness is one of the chief sins in our age. In all ages, probably. And until next time, I trust that God will richly bless you.

My friend.

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