

Revival - Urbana Conference 1961

by Festo Kivengere

Revival begins when God chooses a poor lot and brings hope and change to a person's life by meeting them where they are.

Duration: 51:05

Scripture: Genesis 32:28-33, Deuteronomy 10:12, Ecclesiastes 1:9, Matthew 6:33, 2 Corinthians 12:9

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being practical and simple in our faith, as that is what God desires. He uses the story of Jacob to illustrate this point, highlighting how Jacob struggled and worked hard for 20 years before receiving God's blessings. The preacher encourages the audience to not waste time pretending to be someone they are not, but to confront their inner struggles and critical voices. He also emphasizes the power of revival, citing examples from the Bible where Jesus' gaze brought hope and transformation to individuals like Peter.

Transcript

Let us bow in prayer. Dear Lord Jesus, we have come this evening, we have come to thee. We have not come to men, we have not come to things which threaten us and lead us into despair, but we have come to that sprinkling precious blood of our dear Saviour, which speaketh better things to guilty consciences like us than that of others.

Dear Master, come, come and sit with us here and explain and support us by thy grace in Jesus. I feel I need your prayer very much this evening from many angles. One prayer that one will survive these atomic lights and shots I see about around here, because your continent is a continent, we say, a space continent, and one has, in coming here, we who come from Africa, have to be very careful just in case, in case we find ourselves in the atmosphere.

But I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has been here. This is the second evening of our meeting, and my brother William and I can say that this is rather a very extraordinary experience for us. Extraordinary because everywhere when people with hungry hearts, people with the desire in their own inner man, meet, they meet with that wonderful personality called Jesus Christ.

Of course, the subject which has been announced to you is a very familiar subject, and it makes one feel a bit trembling within. One wonders what you expect in that world, very much of a word called revival, and it

has got so many, many experiences that, well, let me tell you this so that you may sit back and feel safe with me. I'm not a revival, and I'm not a technician in revival either.

In fact, I was saved, and for quite some time, I never knew that I was saved during a time of revival, and I never heard the word revival until about eight years after having been saved. Because, you see, I was not saved by revival. I was saved by a man called Jesus Christ, and it is that wonderful man, that wonderful God, that wonderful personality, Jesus Christ, that living risen Savior, I will like, I should like to share with you tonight because I know, and I know without any shadow of doubt, that where he is, there is revival.

And therefore, I think there is no better introduction to this subject than what we have just sung in Charles Wesley's hymn, Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature's night, Thine eye diffused a quickening ray, that is revival. The eye of vision, looking at people like us here, it is that look which revived Peter's soul that night, that terrible night when Peter was in great darkness after having denied his master. What else could have brought hope again to that terrible experience of a soul trembling with guilt? And he turned and he looked at Peter, and Peter wept, that was revival.

You see how it begins? It's very near, isn't it? It is in the eye of Jesus. I know that's what has happened, as we are going to say a few things here, and I must not beat about the bush, because I think we were, we really must mean business. God is here, and he has been here through the talk, through the Bible reading, through the messages of today and last night, as our brother Billy gave the message.

The Lord Jesus himself has been here. We are not introducing something new from Africa. The world is full of new, new, new things.

In fact, there is nothing new really. That's what the Bible says. There's nothing new under heaven, even these atomic bombs, they're not very new.

So what we want to share tonight, revival, as I have remarked already, is when the eyes of Jesus meet the eyes of a sinner. Or let me put it the other way around. When the eyes of the Lord Jesus meet the eyes of a saint, and I believe you are saints here.

Believe me, saints have many problems, I can tell you that. Believe me, believers, saved people, can be in utter despair. Long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin, and night, and nature's night, thine eye diffused a quickening ray.

I woke, and the diamond flamed with light. It was revival for that soul. It was revival in the soul of Charles Wesley.

It can be that tonight. It must be tonight if you meet that wonderful person called Jesus. It was that when I met him, but let me say this, it is not, it was not a meeting him once and for all.

It has been a meeting the Lord Jesus for the last 20 years of my life, and it has made such a difference. Yes, call it revival. I'm not ashamed of that, as long as you connect it with my dear Savior.

But if you think about revival apart from him, I take off my hands because I don't know anything like it. Revival, yes, if Jesus is there, and I'm sure he's here. But perhaps this is a word, as I said, a bit of a word.

People connect it with all sorts of things, and therefore I'm not going to talk about revival tonight. That's a rather disappointing thing, isn't it? That one should refuse to speak about a subject which has been

assigned to him. But let me say, I want to talk about something better, the very source of the blessing.

And I'm going to take, to begin, where does revival begin? Where does the Lord Jesus bring a blessing? I take a text from Deuteronomy, just to encourage myself and you. And this, this is the word. In Deuteronomy chapter 32 and verse 9, there is a short verse which reads like this, for the Lord's portion is his people.

Jacob is the lord of his, inheritance. The Lord's portion is his people. Jacob, with emphasis, Jacob, with emphasis, is the lord of his inheritance.

What a lot! What a lot! Fancy that God should have gone and looked around, and in hundreds and thousands of other lots, that he should have looked around, and in a corner, as it were, he might have seen a lot labeled Jacob. And he went, because he's God, he graciously went right around, as it were, winding through, and he picked up that label, that parcel, that lot, as the Bible puts it, called Jacob. And he said, this is going to be my lot.

What a, what a wrong choice it must have been for God. You know what that name means? A cheater, a supplanter, a sinner. All wrong within that lot.

Nothing at all, nothing right, nothing good, nothing straight, and yet God chose that lot as his own lot, and as his inheritance. Will you take off the label, take off the name Jacob, and carefully write yours, carefully put yours in the place of Jacob, and see whether you fit in. I'm sure there are many people who have come to Urbana, here, in this crowd here of young people and old people, and some of us are not very young really, we just, you know, young means below 90.

Well now, take that lot, put the label of your name, and that is where God begins. God chose this poor lot as an inheritance, a name called Jacob, in which there was nothing, and God started to bless this name. The intention of God was to make this poor lot, this broken lot, into something wonderful, and I think this is how revival begins.

It simply begins when God chooses a very poor lot, just as he chose it. Some of you perhaps think that you, in order to experience the life-giving water which Jesus brings, the fullness of the Lord Jesus himself, you need to be an extraordinary person. Well, I don't believe in that, simply because I have never been extraordinary.

In fact, I've lost my hope of ever being an extraordinary at all. I can't come to that, but there are some lucky ones who can be, I cannot. And thank God, I want to encourage my brethren, my brothers and sisters, like you needn't to be extraordinary at all.

Keep your label on, your life, keep it on, and you will see that before you leave Urbana, before you leave this place, you will have experienced something wonderful. Remember, this poor lot is in the hand of God. This poor lot, Jacob, is in the hand of a master, very skilled hand, and I want to tell you, no other hand could have chosen that lot.

Impossible. No one could have ever chosen that lot, and if they tried, they would be terribly disappointed. But the hand that chose that lot, Jacob, was a master hand, and I want to tell you tonight, you are in very good hands.

You are in very good hands tonight. It doesn't matter who you are. Don't you get worried about it, and don't quite change your label.

Keep it on, and you will see that Urbana, this place here, you will go from this place completely a different path. Now the problem with Jacob is the problem with us. God chose that lot.

Will you turn to Genesis and see what happened? God having chosen that lot, that poor lot called Jacob, in his mercy and grace, just as he chose you, just as he chose me, and I tell you he chose a poor lot when he chose me in 1941, in October. I was not a religious young man. I had just finished college in my first year of teaching.

You see, I'm not very young, and at that time, a young man away in Central Africa, completely given to the bottle, if you know what I mean by that. You know these bottles which make your head go round, and in desperate seeking that I in that, perhaps, and another thing, and pleasure, and terrific amount of smoking, and pleasure, and all night dancing in villages, and little towns. You haven't got big towns back here.

It's just the same thing anyway, and in that desperate, in that struggle, trying and failing, brought up in a mission school, had about visas since I was 11. You see, my parents were Tagans, and I grew for the first 10 years. I was a Tagan born.

I worshiped a bit of the old spirit, but then I left, and I went to mission school, and they heard the gospel. They was baptized and introduced into the church, Church of India. You call it here Episcopal, I suppose.

I don't know what that means. Sometimes in East Africa, you say that in some very keen evangelical mission, people sort of raise their heads and say, what? Can anything good come from over there? But you see, remember the text said, and Jacob is the Lord of my inheritance. He chooses that, and he met this poor young man one afternoon, and he chose that poor Lord.

I was coming from a drinking party. It was Sunday afternoon. I remember it as if it were just yesterday, because it is one of the most unforgettable moments when a sinner meets a wonderful Savior.

It was not in a church. It was on the road, and I was driving madly with a drink in my hand, and I was stopped by a young man with whom I was speaking, and he looked me full in the face with the glow of Jesus in his eyes. He had met the Lord Jesus three hours before, and he said to me, do you know? I said, what? He said, I have found Jesus just a short time ago, and I want to tell you I know he's in my heart now, and I want to say goodbye to you, my dear friend, and he said, I want to apologize for the sort of thing we have shared and said against him.

He said, I'll never be like that. I belong to him. Three hours after his conversion, and God used him to win the hardest young man.

Two hours later, I came to Jesus, so he won a soul within three hours of his conversion. That's wonderful, isn't it? He was still a trembling Jacob. He couldn't preach to someone at all.

He didn't even know how to begin a testimony or where to end. You see, you don't need to be a technician in this matter, but yet God used his word. That was all.

I repeated exactly what he said to me, and that was all, and the Spirit took that, and he applied it to a needy soul like mine, and he pushed me to my house. I closed all my doors, knelt by my bed, and I looked

Jesus in the face, and in utter despair, and what a difference. I've never been the same.

Well, that's a poor lot, wasn't it? And that was the beginning of a poor lot. So take courage, please, tonight. Let us look at Jesus tonight together.

Let us see where the change can come over. The problem with Jacob was not that God was not prepared to bless him, and that's where many people, many evangelicals, many of us make a mistake. We speak about praying for revival for 30 years.

We speak about wrestling with God as if God is mean and unwilling to bless, and yet last night, didn't you hear carefully that he paid a tremendous price at Calvary's cross? For what? To bless me, and then the devil says, having paid that tremendous, that colossal price of the blood of his dear son Jesus Christ, then we turn around and we say, I am wrestling with God because he's not willing to bless me. What a mistake. Can he really buy that wonderful mighty blessing, and by mighty blessing, I mean all that is in Jesus for me, for you, a trembling sinner.

All that is in Jesus for a defeated, all that is in Jesus for a shaky young convert. Like the one who gave his testimony to me, he was only a babe, but a lovely babe, wasn't he? He won us all. Yet there were people who had been in the church and perhaps who had been Christians for 20 years who had never heard him.

Anyway, Jacob spent a long time, and this was the trouble. I want to be quite brief and simple. The problem is that we try to be simple and then we become terribly complicated.

Look at chapter 27 of Genesis. You see there one of the clues which may be the problem tonight for you. This may be your problem.

It necessarily doesn't mean a young convert has this problem. You may be 20 years old, as I am since I met the Lord Jesus, and you may still be suffering from that terrible problem. Jacob wants the blessing.

The Lord has chosen this poor lot, and in Jacob's heart there was that longing for the blessing, not created by Jacob, but created by the God who chose Jacob. So you see, the longings which are in your heart are not your own. You've not stirred them up.

They have been created there by the God who chose you, you Jacob. And because the longing was there, Jacob wanted a blessing. But let me show you where things went wrong.

Look at verse 14, I think, will give us one of the clues. Chapter 27 of Genesis, verse 14, it says, Jacob went, and he said, and he brought them his mother. And his mother made several meat, and such as his father Isaac loved.

And Rebekah took good raiment of her eldest son, Ethel, which were with her in the house. And he put them upon Jacob, her young son. And she put skins of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck.

That was the trouble. Jacob, the poor lot, is now trying to run away from his level. You see what, where the trouble lay? He starts on the wrong track.

He's a Jacob, but look what is happening. He's putting on the garments of Esau. Yes, I love, I long to be blessed.

I long for revival, but God cannot bless me. Jacob, as I am, I need change. I must be a wonderful Christian.

And he put on a beautiful garment, which were not his own. And then skins of goats on his arms, around his stiff neck, he put that. Of course, he couldn't bend it.

There he was, Jacob, in Esau's garment, with goats around his neck, with goat skins on his arms. For what? For one simple reason. He doesn't like to appear as Jacob.

He wants to be another. He wants to be Esau, the elder brother, the blessed one, so called. And he runs away from what God has labeled him to be.

And there may be people here, at this convention, who are trying to run away from what God says you are. Seeking the blessing, but trying to be wonderful, wonderful Christianity, victorious outwardly. And listen, it goes on.

Garments of Esau, skins to cover his poor Jacob arms, very poor, nothing on them. Skins to cover the old hard neck of Jacob. Yes, and then he beautifully clothed himself in the garments which did not belong to him.

And listen what went on. It's wonderful. As skins on, verse 17, he brings with the savory meat and bread in his hand.

And he comes, verse 18, my father, and he said, hear my, who art thou my son? In other words, I know you, my son, who art thou? You see that that question was unnecessary. Why, who art thou my son? And Isaac had only two sons. He knew who this chap was.

And he said, who art thou? In other words, God is using Isaac to confront Jacob with the fact of, who are you? Are you prepared to say who you are? My son, I know you, but who are you? You have to make that confession yourself. You have to admit who you are if you want the blessing. And that was a very crucial moment, wasn't it, in the life of Jacob.

And it can be a crucial moment here, tonight, in a man's life. That's how you answer that question. Who are you, my son, says God tonight.

Who are you? Don't you try to change your level. I know you've got skin. And Jacob said this, and some of us may do it.

Verse 19, and Jacob, Jacob, you see how it begins? Scripture is wonderful. And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau. Oh, what a pity, what a miss.

God had chosen Jacob as his poor lot in order to change Jacob into something. And here is Jacob saying, I'm not a Jacob. I can't admit I am a Jacob and get the blessing.

Well, God never brings revival or life to those who don't admit who they are. Whether it is in a school, whether it is in a church, whether you are a wonderful pastor for your congregation, when the Spirit of God comes, you'll have to be what you are. I have had that experience of being what I am before my class as a schoolmaster, and schoolmasters don't like to be what they are before their students.

I remember one afternoon when God had said to me, be what you are, and it was a very costly business. But thank God he gives the grace. So Jacob made the mistake.

I am not Jacob. I am Esau. Listen to that terrible thing.

I am not Jacob. I'm not defeated. I'm a victorious Christian.

I belong to a very evangelical church. I have been brought up by wonderful parents, or a church, or a mission, or a board, or a doctrine, all these wonderful things. I can't be anything but a victorious Christian.

I'm Esau. And then you wonder why the blessing doesn't come. You think you have not prayed enough.

You pray, you pray, but you are praying over Esau all the time. You are not willing for the skin to be taken off. You are not willing for your neck to appear.

You are not prepared to take off the garments of Esau and be what you are. Now as soon as you are that, the whole thing changes. Look, it says, Jacob has denied, but Isaac is still being used.

He says, verse 21, And Isaac said unto Jacob, God is giving you an opportunity. Come nearer. You say, yes, I'm all right.

Yes, all right. Come nearer still. The Lord Jesus said, I won't steal you.

In fact, of course, the Lord Jesus doesn't need that. Poor Isaac, he was blind. But the Savior you are dealing with tonight is not a blind Savior.

He's absolutely, his eyes are like the flames of fire seeing through you. And he loves you so dearly because he shows you a poor lot who you are. How God brings survival.

He brings survival to poor lot. Are you prepared to join the gang? You ready to join the company of poor lot here? It's not easy. I have seen pastors weeping as they joined poor lot gang.

You know, these crowds of nobody at the feet of Jesus Christ. It's very, very contradicting. In my home, when the Spirit of God comes to me, and I have a wife who loves the Lord Jesus, whom I think is the best wife in the world, of course, um, that's what husband thinks.

And he loves Jesus, and we walk together as poor sinners saved by grace. But you know, the surprising thing is that many times I can't tell you when I have put on skins, goat skins of hypocrisy. Not intending it, mind you, because I love Jesus, that's all.

I don't like to be a hypocrite. And yet I find myself a hypocrite, times without number, sitting, and when all is not well, and I put on this wonderful borrowed smile, you know, wide wonderful borrowed smile, to impress my wife that I'm a wonderful Christian. I'm not.

The Lord Jesus knows I'm not. All is not right. I know there's something crooked which has come in, which has interrupted the fellowship, which has made me cold, but I don't like other people to know me for what I am.

I want them to think I'm a victorious Christian, a successful preacher, a wonderful man. Yes, I may impress this crowd here, but it's very difficult very often to impress your wife that you're all that wonderful. And thank God for that.

She has been very faithful with me. If I preach, if you were in this congregation and I shouted at you, when I go outside, she would take me by the hand and said, look here, dear, you had microphones. Why did you shout? So you see, it's a wonderful thing to have somebody who really is faithful with you, and it's a blessed thing.

And some of you may be as faithful as that. It's a wonderful thing. But you see, I've been playing that game of saying I'm not Jacob to my own loss, and it may be that loss.

It is that which stops revival from coming into home. It is that which interrupts Christian serenity. No one wants to be what they are.

Everybody's trying to be what he's not or she's not. And it takes God a long time to bring us to that point. Come near, come near.

And Jacob came tremblingly, and he was felled. And the old man said, in verse 22, the voice is of Jacob. Oh, what a terrible discovery.

The voice is Jacob. Oh, what a waste of time. All those garments, all this skin.

I am still Jacob within. Yes, you are. Yes, you may be wonderful on the pulpit.

Yes, you may sing beautifully. But that little, that small, whispering voice of Jacob is still there. Parents, sometimes I have got four girls who keep me in order many times, and they sometimes not whisper in that voice.

Although I'm smiling, but the whisper, that angry tone comes in. You are Jacob. You are Jacob.

You are pretending you are Esau, victorious, wonderful, lovely. But what about that in? What about that angry, critical voice in you? That's Jacob. You may as well not waste time at all.

And Jacob, you know how it took him a long time? God meant to bless him very quickly, just as he means to bless you tonight. You don't have to wait for 20 years, or 10 years, or two hours at all. But you know how long it took Jacob? 20 years of hard work.

20 years of hard work. Jacob was struggling, and preaching, and he had to leave his country. He had to go to Lebanon, in Sadanaam, spent there.

Oh, grueling years of trying to be blessed. 20 years of hard work. I wonder how long it's taken in this struggle and pain in business.

Some of you, perhaps, it's four years, three years. Some of us, 20, perhaps, 15. Inwardly, you feel defeated.

You long for the blessing. It was as if God is refusing to bless. No, it is not.

The key lies with you tonight. Jacob might have been blessed before those 20 years of grueling effort, futile effort. Had he done the simplest of things, had he admitted he was a Jacob.

It took 20 years. I wonder how long it has taken you. Now look here, let me be brief and finish, because I think we must be very simple tonight.

Many years passed, and God said to Jacob in chapter 32, God said to Jacob, after many years, long time of defeatism, cheating and being treated, no satisfactory, outwardly very prosperous, inwardly very dry. Don't you feel that time? Even sometimes when you're preaching, as I'm preaching, you can feel very dry. I can tell you many times, I feel very dry.

God is teaching me to tell William, my brother, when I'm dry, even before I come preaching here, I tell him, I'm very dry, pray for me. It's a wonderful thing to admit you are a Jacob. After all, that's what you are.

In chapter 31, verse 3, and the Lord said unto Jacob, return to the land of thy fathers and thy kindred, and I will be with thee. That was a wonderful message after 20 years. Return, which is the way.

How am I going to get back into this land of blessing, of Abraham and Isaac? The way, Jacob, the way you are going to go back lies where Esau lives. Not that. The way back to this land is not going to evade Esau.

The only way you are going to go back is through Esau's country. Chapter 33, chapter 32 tells you the story. Jacob, verse 3, Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau, his brother, and to the land of Seir, the country of Edom.

Verse 6, and the messengers returned to Jacob saying, we came to thy brother Esau, and he also, he cometh to meet you and 400 men with him. Now you have come to Jacob. Poor Jacob.

You evaded it. 20 years you hid. Here you are again.

Esau is coming, and he's coming with 400 mighty men with their weapons. Poor Jacob, now he can't hide. Kings can't stand this kind of dilemma.

Yes, the governments cannot really stand it. Nothing can stand this at all. And so Jacob is now trembling.

There are many people trembling in the world with great confusion and trouble. Fear has made hold of God's people. They have faced these situations.

Jacob had to. Verse 9 says, Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which has said, stand to me, return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee. I am not worthy of thy, of the least of thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast showed unto thy servants.

For with my staff I passed on over, and now I've come in peace. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him. He is beginning to be Jacob now, do you see? Many years away, but now he's coming near.

I wonder whether you have faced a situation which makes you tremble, and fear, and despair. And you wonder what to do. This is the beginning of good things.

Good news is starting, but I must hurry on and just leave you to the last part. But you know the old Jacob doesn't die quickly. He has prayed now, but look, if you have time, read on and you see, after he has prayed, then he begins to scheme.

Then he puts goats, and sheep, and cattle ahead, and says, I'll keep in the kinder part. I'll keep at the back. It reads here, verse 20, and say, moreover, behold your servant Jacob is behind us, behind us.

See, Jacob is behind all this stuff. He's pushing cattle, and goats, and servants, thinking that that will be a sufficient sacrifice to atone for his sin. He's still scheming Jacob.

Very clever. For he said, verse 20, he said, I will appease him with the present that goes before me, and afterward I will see his face. Peradventure he will accept of me.

That is Jacob. The blessing doesn't come that way. This is the wrong way of coming to blessing.

Appeasement. Trying to make him forget. You wronged him.

You wronged her. You said a nasty word, and you want to put on smiles and give a cup of tea. I remember in Africa some time ago, when things went wrong between us and missionaries before the Lord began to revive us, the missionary, if you knew something went wrong, the missionary would invite you for a cup of tea.

Then you go sit there, and Africans knew how to be very nice boys. You sit there, and pretend that you've got a lovely face, and you smile. And the missionary thinks you're a wonderful boy, and he gives you the cup of tea, and you think, oh wonderful.

And yet underneath, you know there's something wrong. There's strained relationship. There's an issue to me, whom you offended.

And our Lord Jesus said, even if you have gone as far as the altar, and you remember that your brother has got something against you, leave the sacrifice there. Walk, because there were no motokazos there. Walk to your brother, and put things right with him first.

Face your ethos. Face him for what you are. Jacob failed there.

And he schemed, and many of us are scheming beautifully. Mind you, I'm not saying that planning and scheming is a bad thing. And Jacob had a wonderful gift in scheming.

He was a man of gifts. He had it all on his fingertips, as it were. Goat here, cows there, servants over there.

Everything beautifully done to meet ethos. And after doing all that, listen what happened. Verse 22, he had done beautifully.

Verse 22, and he rose up at, he rose up that night, no peace at all, no sleep. Even after the scheming, and the beautiful planning, and every clever way, no sleep at all. No peace in the heart, no reconciliation.

They are very futile, aren't they? They fall short, these things, and the blessing doesn't come that way. Don't you try to scheme tonight. And if you remember, there is an issue somewhere in America.

Tonight, just be what you are. If it means writing a letter, if it means having to go back and put that thing right. In Africa, sometimes, we have seen people who live in a convention like this, take their bicycles and go 50 miles, and put things right, and come back and give a testimony.

Be practical, be very simple, because that is what God wants you to be. And that is what Jesus died for. And so Jacob had no sleep.

Verse 24, and Jacob was left alone. I hope this is going to be your experience tonight. He put all these things aside, and he was left alone.

And we read, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. There wrestled a man. I believe that man is Jesus Christ.

I can't see an angel. Here it doesn't say an angel wrestled with him. It says, and there wrestled a man with Jacob.

Many people put it the other way around. They said, Jacob wrestled with man. No, scripture says, and a man wrestled with him.

In other words, the battle, the hardness was not on the man's side, but on Jacob's side. 20 years of growing experience, and then a whole night, God struggling and wrestling with Jacob to bless him, and Jacob was a man. I think that word, in capital letters, he was a man.

A man hard, a man with a stiff neck, a man not easily giving in. And it took God, the God sent man a whole night. I don't know how it has taken Jesus with some of them.

Years of wrestling, because you see, he came from heaven, because he saw Jacob in this dilemma. In this miserable 20 years of defeat, and cheating, and failure, Jacob was a missionary. He was chosen by God to be a missionary of good news to the nation.

Through him a savior was going to come. He was a missionary, but a defeated missionary. 20 years hard work.

The battle was over, and thank God that he intervened at the right time, and he ended this struggle, and he wrestled until the breaking of the day. Some of us, it is nearly the breaking of the day. Is Jesus, the wounded man of Calvary, still struggling with you tonight? Are you one of those men who are hard, sticking to your doctrine tenaciously? Oh no, I can't admit I'm a failure, because if I do, then it means I was not properly trained.

You see, what we might think if I say that I've been defeated. There are many people who are defeated in the world today. Men who live under the cloud of impurity, and the cloud of jealousy, and hatred, and fear, and criticism, and unforgiving spirit, and pride in their heart, and they dare not admit it, because if they do, what about the society in which they live? What about those who have respected them? The Bible comes when a Jacob admits who he is, and I must think now, and about 25, and when he saw that he prevailed, when the man saw that he couldn't prevail against Jacob, Jacob was too strong for him, he touched the hole of his thigh, and the hole of Jacob's thigh was out of joint as he wrestled with him, with the man.

As the man wrestled with Jacob. Now tonight, there are some of you who have their strongest points tonight, and the man called Jesus Christ, this wonderful man who was wounded for you and for me, whose hands were nailed on the cross because of your jealousy and mine, because of your pride and my pride, because of those things which you hide, this wonderful man is going to touch somewhere. What is your strong point brother? Can't you remember it? What is your strongest point in life? Are you willing for this man of Calvary to touch it? He's tired, he's tired of wrestling, he started two days ago over that particular point about which you are terribly strong.

Do you know why you are not blessed? Do you know why churches are dry? They are too strong to bless. Yes, mighty men, strong men of valor, of doctrine, they have no weakness as far as they are concerned, although they are very weak. He touched, I hope he will touch somewhere tonight, I hope he will touch in the heart, and he will put you out of joint on that particular point.

And as he did it, then he said, let me go because really I can't go on like this, and Jacob said, oh you can't leave me Lord, I'm too weak now, you can't leave me, I want the blessing now, I'm no longer strong, I'm halting, look I'm nearly falling, I'm no good, I'm defeated. And then listen to the question, verse 27, and mark it carefully, and then answer it tonight. And the man said unto him, what is your name? Again, after 20 years, the same question comes, what is your name? This time he answered quickly, Jacob.

Thank God for that. Jacob, and that is the key to the blessing tonight. If all the people here in this room, if you will be sincere enough to say, Jacob, Lord, is my name, a keter, a supplanter, a defeated Christian.

Yes, I hide it from people, but Lord Jesus, you know what it is, and tonight can be a wonderful, memorable day. And he said, you are no longer Jacob, you are now Israel, a priest with God. See, the whole thing has changed.

As soon as you admit you are weak, then your weakness changes into strength. The Bible has come. As you read on, you'll find Jacob is halting, but light has come upon him.

The sun rose upon Jacob, and do you know what happened? He said, this place is painless because I have seen God's first faith, and my life has been saved. And he learned a new way, if I may finish now. Jacob learned a new way.

No longer scheming. Chapter 33, he put everything behind. He went forward to meet his brother.

Yes, he was still weak. The problem was still there. The dilemma was still there.

The 400 men were still coming. Esau was still the same man, and Jacob went forward. How? Strongly? Read what happened.

He went forward in a different way completely. He went bowing seven times. That's what he had never done.

His neck bowed, and every bow brought him nearer to Esau. You want to come anywhere near your brother? Bow tonight. Bow at the cross of Jesus, and you'll find you are coming nearer every time you are bowing.

Every bow of Jacob was a confession. I am the one who did it. I am the one at fault.

It was not Esau. The problem is not Esau. It is I. It is me, Jacob.

And as soon as he did that, he came near, and after the seventh bow, it says, and he bowed seven times until he came near to his brother, and Esau ran to meet him, and he embraced him, and he fell on his neck, and he kissed him, and they wept. There was revival there. I want you to see this wonderful meeting play.

What has caused this? Because a man has admitted what he was. He admitted he was a Jacob, the cheater. The problem was not with Esau.

The problem was with Jacob himself. Now, many of us think that the problem is with communism, and and these other isms, which I can't name tonight. The problem is not with those things.

It's with us. As soon as you cease to be a problem tonight, as soon as you face up to what Jesus says you are tonight, then you will be surprised. You'll see Esau weeping, running, embracing, kissing.

Wonderful. That was unexpected, and Jacob said that he saw the face of God in the face of Esau. Are you willing tonight to say, I am Jacob? Are you willing tonight to say who you are, say to your neighbor? Then America can see many Israels going from Havana.

Hoping, yes, but full of life and glory. Home, school, colleges, and such Jacobs are wonderful pieces of work in the hands of God. I want to give my brother William this little time.

I'm sorry I've been a bit too long, but I think we have got time. Shall we then bow our heads in a sense action which no one can see save yourself and your Lord as we have heard tonight from the Word of God. Do make this sense action in the quiet of this meeting, not merely for the sake of our time here together, but for the sake of the Church of Christ around the world in our generation.

It's not a matter of our emotions, for they will disappear in a few days as they should. It's not a matter only of our intellect, for we will forget. Our Lord desires our will tonight.

Our loving Father, wilt thou take tonight the message that we have heard and burn it into our hearts and minds, that we may not forget thee. That in the days ahead, no matter what the circumstances may be, whether we see thee or feel thee near, that we may look around us upon a world from which thou dost seem to have departed, and yet we'll trust thee. Grant us, our Father, this night that the words that we have heard may not be forgotten.

Grant that we may be Jacob's in thy sight and be made princes of God for Christ's sake. This message is also part of the book, *Commission, Conflict, Commitment*, published by InterVarsity Press. Full information on this book of the 1961 Urbana Convention can be obtained by writing InterVarsity Press at 1519 North Astor, Chicago 10, Illinois.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/28/SID28063.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/festo-kivengere/revival-urbana-conference-1961/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net