

Question Re Divorce and Remarriage

by G.W. North

The sermon addresses the complexities of divorce and remarriage from a biblical perspective, emphasizing the sanctity of marriage and the importance of reconciliation.

Duration: 1:01:53

Topics: "Divorce"

Description

In this sermon transcript, the speaker begins by addressing the time and his plans for the day. He then acknowledges the sacredness of the ground they are on and the brokenness and suffering that exists in the world. The speaker emphasizes the importance of immersing oneself in the Word of God to gain understanding and transformation. He advises against taking leadership roles if one's life contradicts the teachings of the Bible. The speaker concludes by suggesting that any further questions can be answered by listening to the tape of the sermon.

Transcript

Before I come to the main message of the meeting, that is if I get there, I have a question that I am going to answer, I trust. I hope that it will bring some kind of clarity on a thorny point. Now the question I want to deal with this morning is, as I've already said, one that's a very thorny one, and I don't know why I should be saddled with thorniest questions in the world.

My name is not Solomon, and it wasn't the Queen of Sheba who presented the question. And I hope the man that presented the question has no thoughts in the back of his mind to do the thing about which he's inquiring. It's this, are there any new covenant grounds for divorce and remarriage? Well, what a question.

As you know, I expect you know anyway, this crops up everywhere because in the society in which we are living, it is neither crime nor does it now bring upon you social stigma, as it used to do, and it's not regarded, I feel, in many, many quarters either as being spiritually any more than it is socially wrong. Now, if I may approach the question upon the grounds with which I was, onto which I was brought, if you like, some time ago, in a certain place. A gentleman came to me whose wife had left him.

She had gone off, strangely enough, perversely enough, with another woman. But anyway, he asked me more or less the same kinds of questions, saying he was not the kind of man that could live alone and all this sort of thing. You, I suppose, you've all gone through these kinds of thoughts.

Perhaps you come from a family in which this has already taken place or you're presented with grounds upon which perhaps in a court of law all these things could be countenanced. And he wanted to know whether there was anything in the New Testament that could give him any grounds, if you like, for divorcing this wife who left him and so on and so on and so on. If I may repeat, more or less, the answer that I gave him, you will see at once the way in which I personally approach the question and the way I answered that man and the way in which I feel the Bible speaks.

Before I do so, I would like to say that my wife and I, I suppose, throughout the whole of our life, have spent the most hours discussing this question more than anything else. We've burned the midnight oil, we've set up, we've laid a bed, we've talked until each one of the others dropped to sleep. And I suppose if it was my part, I answered her last questions with a snore.

I wouldn't dare say she did that to me. But this is a very, very thorny question. Well, the answer I gave to this man was this.

The Bible everywhere only sets forth the highest and the best. You cannot expect then for God to set forth an alternative. God sets forth a way to eternal life and eternal and heaven.

Therefore, you don't expect him to set forth a way in which you can have eternal quarter of a life or eternal third of a heaven. He doesn't set forth alternatives. Will you please understand that? Now, if you are a spiritual person, that will at once speak volumes to me.

I only needed to come to that realisation and the whole thing was clear to me, immediately. That's all you really need to see. That's why I couldn't offer him anything from the New Testament in support of what he was contemplating doing, any more than I would hold forth to anybody seeking Christ and fullness of life in Christ any kind of a lower state in which to exist.

Will you please then take this directly basic in all your understanding, whether it be this problem or any other problem, when you turn to your New Testament, you will only find one way set forth, one way and one way only. If you take another way, then you will have to present God with your reasons for it in the end. Now that at least I suppose will show you really in a sentence or two what I may be thought to be saying and perhaps I need not bring forth any supporting scriptures or any supporting ideas, because you know now exactly what I think.

And that's really I suppose what's behind the question. Perhaps the question may have been posed, I don't say with a tongue in a cheek, but let's see what he thinks about it. I've read what somebody else thinks about it, I've heard what somebody else says about it, now let's hear what this Mr. Norton has to say about it you see.

Alright, I'm also aware that in a company like this I may be speaking to people who have already been through the trauma of a marriage state that ended finally in the courts or something like this. I do not know and I am not asking and I please want you to believe me, my beloved friend, that anything I say is not barbed, neither is it pointed directly at you. I may say that I often get caught in this kind of a cleft stick, not wanting to hurt anybody who's been through the tragedy and yet feeling bound as before God, to tell you exactly what the Lord makes plainer and plainer to my heart as I go.

And I'm not only just on this subject, for instance if you come to hear me long enough or you hear tapes long enough, you will find that I say here and there that I am a conscientious objector, and the older I get

the more sure I am that for a Christian to take up arms is sin. I'm sure of it, but that doesn't mean to say that I am accusing people of being in sin. All right then, are there any new covenant grounds for divorce and remarriage? Now you will know that the Lord Jesus himself pronounced on this subject and he said certain things which I trust at least the questioner has read.

And I hope that you don't look upon me as your sort of concordance, that I tell you where to find the scriptures. And I trust that when questions are asked, they're not asked from a sort of a flash in the mind, but because they really are problems, and have been problems, perhaps deeply rooted in the mind for a long time. And since the time has passed, since the problem became, the thing became a problem, you have researched the subject for yourself, and it still remains a problem, then you are at liberty to ask your elders.

Not come with frivolously thought up ideas or something that's flashed into the mind in the last week. I've let Brother Moffat and Brother Offa hook on some things, I should think, that you don't come with sort of new flashing ideas, but that you really get down before God, because it isn't a problem with you till you've got down before God. It's only something that's come to your mind, something you've heard of, something that's come up in discussion with somebody, that's not a problem.

Problem is something that you've wrestled with and can't come up with any answer. Amen. All right then, we'll turn to scripture.

Firstly, in 1 Corinthians and chapter 7, which is the great chapter that Paul wrote by the Spirit concerning these questions, or related subjects. In verse 6, he says he is speaking by permission and not a commandment. All the things that he has said up to that moment in this chapter, is that God gave him permission to answer them, God didn't command him to answer them.

In other words, he asked God if he should write about it. The Lord said yes. When he was under commandment from God, he didn't ask God, the Lord said to him, now Paul you get down and write this.

That's right, he never asked, he just got the thing moved from God. When it was by permission, it moved from Paul, but it doesn't mean to say he was out of order, he got the permission to do so. And it still is inspired and powerful, it only shows where the move comes from.

Now the move on this next section comes from God. Here it is. I would that all men were even as I myself.

Every man hath his proper gift of God. One after this manner, another after that. I say therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I. Paul was an unmarried man.

I am not an unmarried man. Verse 9. If they cannot contain, let them marry. It is better to marry than to burn.

He sets forth alternatives here. And unto the married I command, yet not I. Now if you are married, the Lord is commanding you, let not the wife depart from her husband. And if she depart, let her remain unmarried.

I don't think you want much clearer than that, do you? Well, do you? Or, be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife. And then he says, but to the rest speak I, not the Lord.

If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And if the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. Apparently the thing that moves the heart of either man or woman under these conditions was, if we have children, I'm a believer and he isn't, or we have children, she's a believer and I'm not, or whichever way you want.

Beloved, here it is. The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife. She be a spirit-filled Christian.

And the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband if he be a spirit-filled man. That's the power of sanctification in human relationships. Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.

There's a question that could arise from that. I won't pose it, I don't want to answer it now, that's why. You may put it on paper and submit it if you wish.

I know what your question will be, but I'm not going to answer it now. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace.

For what knoweth thou, O wife, whether thou should save thy husband, or don't you want him saved, leaving him like that, or contemplating leaving him. I've put that in. Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou should save thy wife, and so on.

I want you to turn with me now to Romans 7. I think that apart from the brief comments I have made, the scripture has spoken for itself. Don't you? Verse 1 of chapter 7 of Romans. Know ye not, brethren, for I speak to them that know the law, how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth.

The woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth. Doesn't say until they are divorced, so long as he liveth. But if the husband be dead, not divorced, she is loosed from the law of husband.

So then, if while husband liveth she be married to another man, she should be called an adulteress. Now, he didn't say call her a bigamist, because she's married, you see, it's that she's divorced in this case, and she's remarried. She should be called an adulteress, not a bigamist.

But if her husband be dead, she is free from that law. So that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. I'd like to comment here at this moment on this word bondage.

I want to tell you, beloved, that when you do sing about and shout about being free, you say we're not in any bonds. I tell you, you are. Here, I'm preaching bondage, right bonds.

We're living in an age when too easily we're talking about being free. And ah, beloved, I want to tell you that if you're bound, you understand that. I believe in bonds.

Amen. It's strange that it's in this bondage that your perfect liberty comes to light and what it's all about. Amen.

You must regard marriage as a bond. The sacred bond of marriage. So far as God is concerned, he sets forth the highest and the best.

What if he should regard the bonds wherewith he bound you to himself? Love being the bond of that perfectness. He should regard them as easily breakable as some people regard the bond of marriage. And

not only the bond of marriage, I could take you a lot more bonds wherewith you're bound.

Amen. If you don't know them, ask the question, but not before you've prayed about it and gone through the Bible yourself. That's what you've got a Bible for.

So that you should do this kind of thing. And let the Spirit of God teach you what a holy, quiet, understanding person you'll be then. All the bubbling questions that riot through the mind will have become a placid flowing river of knowledge.

And you will understand what God wants you to understand because you have obediently given yourself to the Word of God. And it has become your new knowledge, your new understanding. You've changed your attitude.

You've changed your thinking. You have become a new person. You have been renewed, transformed.

Blessed be God for the book and the revelation in it. All right then, we've come so far in this great and glorious truth. We're told that we're not to depart.

Now I know that it may be quite impossible to live with a madman. It may be quite impossible to live with a woman, for instance, that throws the butcher's knife at you. I've met all these kinds of situations.

I can assure you, I don't think there's any kind of grounds for divorce that I haven't had to go through with someone in their traumatic background in which they've lived. There is allowance for departure. But you see, God always sets forth the highest and the best.

He does permit other things, but he won't set forth in the scripture anything that goes against the revelation of his love to us in Christ. He will not set forth an alternative way. You will not find it in the Bible, a clearly marked path for you to tread under when this fails, or under these conditions, or under those conditions.

What God sets forth is the way. You will find all the explanations about that. You must grope your way into the other positions, if I may say so.

For the Holy Ghost cannot lead you into anything that's the highest and best. This is where all the problems are. And while all the thorny questions keep rising, the Holy Ghost will only lead you into the highest and the best.

Isn't that right, brother? Oh yes, that's right, I beg your pardon. If I left out or not, that's it then. He will only lead you in these ways.

And that's why you're left with doubts, uncertainties, shall I? Is this right? Is that right? And why these things dog you all the way through? And always will, not only on the question of divorce and remarriage, but on any question. Why you never come to rest about it? Do you not see? You must understand, beloved, that the whole basis of God's dealings with man is reconciliation. You noticed it when Paul wrote in the Corinthian letter.

Did you not notice it? In verse 11, if the woman depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. That's it. Nowhere will you ever find that he says, well, let her marry again.

You'll never find that. Because it's not the highest and the best. The best of all is for a man and woman in total sanctification of life to live together in the sacred bond of marriage.

It's perfectly allowable within that, that if one partner of a marriage gets saved, born again receives the spirit, and the other one immediately becomes sadistic, brutal, murderous, or what it is, then there's departure. That's your second position. It's no higher.

It's no lower than the first position. It's just the result of Christ entering a marriage. And God making it allowable.

That one, if that one wants to depart, we'll let them depart. Don't say, well, goodbye, glad to be rid of you. No, no, no.

It will be with tears or with pleadings and with everything that should go with it. But nevertheless, in the end, if love cannot hold, then let there be a rift. Let there be the departure.

There's nothing gone wrong with the saved person. Nothing. That's tremendous.

And then you can get this very, very same word in verse 27. Are thou bound unto a wife? Please take this word bound, will you? There is no loose idea about marriage in God's thought. Are thou bound to a wife? Seek not to be loosed.

Don't go in for divorce proceedings. That's what he's telling you. Are thou loosed from a wife? Or, conversely, a woman had no power of divorce under the old regime now, then, and they don't now in Eastern countries.

The man can put away his wife, but a wife, unless culture and Western civilization and ideas have come, a woman can't put away her husband. Not under the old way. She couldn't do it.

Are thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife. All right. But if thou marry, thou hast not sinned, and if a virgin marry, she has not sinned.

Nevertheless, such shall have trouble in the flesh, but I spare you. All right. Is marriage, possible after being loosed? It seems that it is, from those scriptures.

It seems that it is. Doesn't it? You read your Bible. That's why you have it.

But what you cannot expect is that God would do the great things for you. There are certain things that you forfeit immediately, if you do that. Certain positions you cannot hold.

Simply because a man or a woman that holds any position in a church must be an example of the highest and the best, so that everybody can look to them, and as it says in the scripture, a bishop then must be blameless. That's what the scripture says. I don't know whether I've been blameless all my life.

I don't think I have. But the tremendous thing about it is that everybody must see that they must hold this glorious position. As you know, a marriage is to set forth the highest.

The marriage between Christ and the church. And if Jesus Christ was to seek as many or find as many excuses as human beings seem to seek and find for divorce, then you and I would be on the road to hell now. The tremendous thing about it is that he gets us into the bond of marriage with himself.

New young people that are contemplating marriage, you see that it's a bond. Of course, if you love one another, then it's the best bond you'll ever find. But nevertheless, you must see that it's a bond and stay within it and enter into it with every intention.

Come ill, come good. You will go through with God within this thing that's sacred so far as he is concerned. You must understand that unions between men and women in the flesh is sacred, very sacred.

And so far as we're concerned on human relationships is the holiest thing. It's more holy than you cooking a meal for a man, you woman. It's more holy than anything else you man providing for her.

You understand that? So far as the flesh can be holy, that's the holiest thing of all, the union with marriage. And that's why children are sanctified in this sense, because they come from the holiest relationship that could ever exist between a male and a female. And your children must be regarded then as a fruit of that holiness.

Amen. Reconciliation. Divorce precludes reconciliation when it is followed by remarriage.

And that is why God will never commend it, because God is always aiming at reconciliation. There may be many factors that prevent reconciliation, even to the person that has the highest intention. That is, each partner may have, having divorced, remarried again, and to be reconciled to the former partner upon the realization of the thing that went wrong in the beginning and trying to put it right, has now become impossible.

This is the way we complicate things. No wonder God aimed at the simplicity. You'll get yourself into such a state, my friend, if you do this kind of thing, that you won't know where you are.

You'll run round in ever-increasing eccentric and concentric circles till you'll not know who or what or where you are, once you depart from the simplicity of the way of the Lord. You only build up trouble upon trouble upon trouble. Always this happens.

And there is apparently no way out. And the thing has to lie there to be met in the mercy of God at a great judgment. There are some things that aren't problems, because once you state that the thing is a problem, you are upon the premise that there is an answer to it.

But it ceases to be a problem. It's now a tragedy. Unresolvable.

It must lie as it lies until you meet Him. We who have obtained mercy of the Lord know how merciful He is. And glory be to His wonderful name.

Amen. Nevertheless, in all the melee of this tremendous thing, we come to that verse where Paul says, it is better to marry than to burn. And you may be interested to know the finalising of the talk that I had with this man.

I take it as a pattern answer. So far as I'm concerned, you'll all know how numb I am up top. I can't carry on very much.

I have to retain the things that God has given me and stay upon them. And so I bring forth the answer. You will never know the man.

So it's all right. When he said, I'm the type of man that cannot live alone, Mr North, and I meet many women that are the same. He said, it isn't just the one side of marriage I want.

I want the companionship. I want all the things that I see so many people have. And I need a mother now for my children, and so on and so on and so on.

And how our hearts go out to these conditions, don't we? If not, you're stoned. They're tragedies. I should hate to think that I've ever been in that position.

I should hate to think that any of my own children after the flesh would ever be in that position. I should hate, I hate to admit the fact that there are many who are in that situation. And I said to this man, well, now you must make a choice.

I have set before you the highest way. I've told you what the scriptures say. For your information, I never went through it step by step as I have with you this morning.

I think I don't know whether I ought to say this. You are greater than some of the most privileged people on earth in that, not because it's me, but I happen to be doing it, letting you into some of the sort of background approaches. The ways I can come into it, I seem to do that in Liverpool quite a bit.

I don't know why, but I do. All right. I said to this man, and you can put yourself in his place, man or woman, if you're listening to me.

If the circumstances prevail in your life, you've got to make a choice. You've got to face the Lord at the end. If it's better to marry than to burn, then you have an alternative of two lower things now.

You may, if you like, I'm not giving you any permission, and I'm not giving you any commandment, and I'm not letting out any loopholes to you, but I would be a false man if when talking to a man, I did not tell him the knowledge that I have. That's why a man in my position and your position, brother, or anybody else who's in this whole wide world that stands in this position of being counsellor, if you want to be a really wonderful counsellor, not to take the place of the Lord, but to follow in his steps, you must open up from the basic honesty of truth, and not give a facile explanation across the surface of a thing like thin ice over forty fathoms of water. I said this to him, you may make a choice in your position whether you will marry or whether you will burn.

If you say, I shall only burn if I remain unmarried, and you'd rather take the chance of remarrying and standing before the Lord and answering him on this score better than burning for the next thirty, forty years while you're on the earth, you must take your choice between the two alternatives. Perhaps you think you'd be in greater tragedy and greater sin by burning in lust. You may think it might be better for you to marry and fall on God's mercy at the end, as did David who said, the Lord is merciful, let me fall into the hands of the Lord.

Now for that, you may decide never to come and hear me preach again. You might say, oh well, I don't agree with him, that's that. Well, you may do that, beloved, but at least I've been honest, and I believe I have the mind of the Lord.

I don't think that it is answerable, Pat. I know I haven't answered every alternative, and I could sit down and say I've answered the question. In fact, I could have sat down a bit, I think probably a half an hour ago, I don't know how long I think, and said I've answered the question.

But perhaps that wouldn't be completely honest, and there comes a time when you have to say exactly all that you've been exercised about in your heart before God on things. There is the other position that a man will divorce, or a woman will divorce, perhaps both will, before they've heard the gospel, and then remarry before they've heard the gospel. I know you're interested in this one, I can see you've sat there wondering, haven't you? I saw his grey head nodding.

I assure you there's nothing between you and me. It's rather an academic interest, except more than that, it does become a heart interest when it concerns people and the church. And I would advise you, all you young men on this basis, don't seek for eldership, will you? You're put up and shy there once you become an elder.

Don't seek for it, let God promote you to it. If you can possibly keep out of office in the church, do so. My advice to you, on the other hand, get into it.

If you say, well what a contradiction, yeah that's right. The cross has to come in it, as we were saying last night. Everything meets there, the contradictions, and unless you're a cross man, stay out of eldership.

I used cross in the strictest sense. I didn't say a cross pet. Yes, the couple, I know one such.

It's nowhere near Liverpool, so don't start thinking and looking round the same way as there's some secret skeleton in the cupboard I don't know anything about, in connection with this or that. Whatever do you do under these circumstances, whatever do you do, well I suggest you treat it like every other sin that you've sinned. I think that's the only way that you can treat it.

And then Paul said that he obtained mercy because he did things ignorantly in unbelief. Obtaining mercy is a wonderful thing from God. Didn't you want to? Oh yes I did.

Well I am. I'm sorry you switched off. He thought I'd gone past it, no I haven't got there yet.

I've mentioned it, it's an objective. I wonder, I always come this way, I think it's better for you to see the heart feeling about it and the thought processes. I don't believe any man's answering honestly unless he has that.

I say it's better as with regard any other sin or something that you did ignorantly in unbelief to believe that God extends mercy and forgiveness to you. It's rather different than being, as you might say, a newborn, spirit-filled Christian and then coming up to divorce from that position. That's rather different.

And of course Paul and those of his contemporaries who held apostolic and eldership offices, they had to approach a world in which men probably when they first heard the gospel might even have five wives. A great problem of polygamy. We would call it bigamy.

But you see it's amazing isn't it? You get into a different culture and it ceases to be bigamy as it would be called in England. It would be called polygamy. This is the way it's done.

This is the facile deceptions of the human mind. This is the way it treats one subject, it takes another look at it and says, oh no it's not that, oh no it's not that. And thus men deceive themselves and bless God for the book that never varies.

Amen. But you see it's just a cultural pattern. He has in their culture four or five wives.

David, I don't know how many David had. And Solomon, seeing that he was such a great king, had a great number of wives. But he wouldn't be able to do it in the church today.

This is why the new covenant is so much superior to the old. The new covenant does not permit polygamy. The new covenant does not permit bigamy.

It wasn't called bigamy. It's just that Christianity reached England so many years ago that we called it bigamy. There used to be polygamy in England.

Then it was renamed bigamy, as if he was already married, and so on and so on and so on. But how did these people manage? I don't know how they managed, except this, that God comes along, he sets the high standard that we were talking about last night. A deacon and an elder must be blameless, husband of one wife.

Then everybody aimed at being a deacon and an elder, and so they only ever had one wife. That's the way God does it. If you want to get to the top, and everybody wants to get to the top, which with one consent the true church in the beginning did, polygamy was soon eliminated from the church.

And you'll find that wherever things go wrong on these lines, spiritually, you'll find that polygamy, divorce, bigamy, all sorts of things come cluttering in, always. They flock in. Mormonism, for instance, and all this sort of thing.

Now, praise God for his wonderful love. If you then have been the victim of this social system, this legal system into which you were born, being a Britisher, and these things went on in your life before you came to know the Lord Jesus, you are in an irreparable situation, aren't you? But one thing I would beg of you, seeing that the highest and the best is one person, one wife for life, one wife, one husband for life, until death do you part, don't come to take leadership in any place when your life proclaims something different from what the book does. Keep your hands off leadership.

Keep your heart away from it. Men may accept it. Men may think it's all right, but the book will never change its message.

That's my advice to you. I think I've more or less exhausted all I want to say at this time anyway, and I hope I've answered the question. And so nobody will need to come and have any private interviews from the company that's gathered here this morning, will they? Because I'll say, listen to the tape.

Buy the tape. There it is. It's better than having a parrot, isn't it? And the Lord be praised.

There are other questions. What says my clock, the enemy? Twelve o'clock. What do you think of that? And how long have I taken to answer that question? Three quarters.

Dismiss him. Well, I'm going home to lunch. Not now.

So don't anybody expect me to see them, will you, after this morning's meeting. It isn't I'm going home to sleep. I've got people to interview where I'm going.

That seems to be my lot. Besides interviewing people at the lunch table, or they interview me, I don't know. But we'll pass on.

Now let's pray, shall we? Oh, Father, we're on holy ground. We take our shoes off. We dare not trample all over this ground.

Broken hearts lie here. Bleeding lives. Shattered men and women, children, babes who know nothing of the wicked, lustful ways of the world, nor of its laws, lie here, the innocents.

And in the blood, in the skirts of thy people, thou didst look for the blood of the innocents. Thou didst tell Israel of old, O God, deliver us from blood guiltiness, for thy heart doesn't change. Systems of men come and go.

Emotions rise and fall. The wisdom of the ages is gathered around us in laws and philosophies, and none of them answer the deepest cries and perplexities of the human heart. O God, our Father, our only Savior, our truest lover, we come unto thee, who for love cried out, show me the bill of thy mother's divorcement.

There wasn't one. For thou hast not cast off thy people whom thou didst foreknow. Thou hast not divorced thyself from them, Lord.

And we thank thee that the remnant of them is still here in the church. And now, Lord, we come to thee whose heart is bound to us by more than blood, by thy spirit, by thy truest self, by a marriage that thou wilt never break. O faithful Lord, keep us faithful, we pray thee.

Keep us moving on, for we have no wisdom, and we are not thy counselors. No one has ever first given to thee that it should be recompensed to them again from thee. Lord, Lord, who by thy spirit doth bring our carping hearts down to silence, and our quibbling minds to nothing, raise up, we pray thee, a compassionate people full of love and understanding, who will sacrifice nothing of spiritual principle, nor loose their hold on righteousness, but will live in holiness and sanctification of body, and will give themselves up unto thee, that by example they may set forth the mystery of a union that cannot be broken.

And each home, Lord, that is the home of thy loved ones, shall set forth that which heaven itself declares in giving Jesus. Lord, we love thee. We bless thee.

We praise thy name. Hallelujah. So then let reconciliation be the sweetest thing, that we may move into it with glory.

And let no one this day, Lord, who has heard this word this morning through my lips, feel that they are now ostracized, or without the pale, or left alone high and dry. Sweet Lord, who has given the word and raised the standard by thy known blessed spirit, in the mystery of inward consolations, come and pour in oil and wine. Come, Lord, we pray thee, and bind up every wound.

Come. Come, Lord, pour in more than human beings know, or than another can minister. Sweet Lord, who does place upon men the onus of pure speech and true utterance, support every man who has in the hardest positions to state thy truth as it is, for which men may never vary if they wish to hold their place with thee.

Comfort every heart of every man who in a position of responsibility has often had to say the thing that he knows will wound and hurt. Sustain them with this thy word that thou has said that faithful are the wounds of a friend, and thou dost not wound that thou shouldst not heal. Thou dost bring to naught the infections, and dost heal and bind up.

Glory be to God. Thank you for every humble spirit that though the words seem against their best desires, yet takes it. Knowing that with the wounding comes the healing.

Thank you, Father. Bind us all together now in love. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/29/SID29185.mp3>

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