

Roadblock to Revival

by Harold Vaughan

Pride is the roadblock to revival, and the solution is true self-knowledge and openness.

Duration: 51:48

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 51:17, Proverbs 16:18, Isaiah 57:15, Matthew 6:33, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares two stories to illustrate the root problem and roadblock to revival. The first story involves a man swinging on a swing near a lion cage, seeking the crowd's approval and worshiping himself. The second story is about a father and son duck hunting, where the father fails to shoot any ducks but claims it as a miracle. The preacher then references 2 Chronicles 7:14 and emphasizes the importance of humility, prayer, seeking God's face, and turning from wicked ways as the order for revival. He also shares a personal experience of resolving a conflict with his best friend before preaching about revival.

Transcript

I feel impressed tonight to speak to you on the subject of what I'm calling the roadblock to revival. The roadblock to revival. You say, Brother Harold, tonight are you speaking on hatred and bitterness? Is that the roadblock? No, I'm not speaking on hatred or bitterness.

You say, Brother Harold, are you speaking on rebellion and stubbornness? No, I'm speaking on the roadblock to revival. You say, well, Brother Harold, are you speaking tonight on disobedience and hypocrisy? No, I'm speaking on the roadblock to revival. You say, Brother Harold, are you speaking on gossip? No.

Lack of gratitude? No. You say, are you speaking on prowess? Is that it? No, I'm speaking on the roadblock to revival. Now folks, all of these sins that I just mentioned and a host of others, they are the effect of the roadblock, but the roadblock itself is pride.

That is the root problem. That is the roadblock to revival. And tonight I want us to quote a verse, a very common verse of scripture.

I dare say tonight, most of us could quote it from memory. It's a very common text tonight, but perhaps we're going to make a very uncommon application this evening. Second Chronicles chapter seven and

verse 14.

Why don't we tonight just read this verse of scripture out loud together this evening. Let's read it together tonight. If my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.

Now I want you to notice tonight the order in the divinely inspired word of God. I know here that God is talking to his covenant people, Israel. I understand that tonight, but I believe the principle is there.

An application is made to us tonight under the covenant of grace. If my people, he's not talking about the pagan. He's not talking about the heathen.

He's not talking about the agnostic or the atheist. If my people, which are called by my name, that's us. Now notice what he says of this crowd.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall do what they shall pray and humble themselves. If my people, which are called by my name will turn from their wicked ways and repent and humble themselves. No, if my people, which are called by my name will seek my face and humble themselves.

No, no, the order is not like that at all. God said, if my people, which are called by my name, shall number one, humble themselves. Notice tonight, humility precedes prayer.

Humility precedes seeking the very face of God. Humility tonight precedes turning from wicked ways tonight. I want to ask you a question.

Why do you imagine tonight? Why do you imagine tonight that pride is so detrimental that God said before you can even pray before you can, before you can repent, before you can seek God's face, you have to, first of all, humble your cell. Why tonight is pride so detrimental that God said, this is the very first thing you have to deal with as you approach a holy God. Now I want us to look at it tonight for just a moment.

God's attitude toward pride from the Bible. Look in Proverbs tonight, chapter six, to get God's attitude toward pride, Proverbs chapter six and verse 16. Why does humility precede prayer? I looked up the word pride in the Bible and found at least 49 references to the word pride, no less than 48 references to the word proud.

And do you realize tonight that everything in the Bible about pride and the proud, it's all negative. God doesn't have one good thing to say about the pride of man. Notice the night in Proverbs chapter six and verse 16, these six things that the Lord hate, yay.

Seven are an abomination under him. That's about the highest negative. You can get seven things that God hates tonight.

Look at the very top of the list in verse 17, a proud look. You can read on and find that God hates a lying tongue. He hates hands that shed innocent blood.

Those that are swift in running to mischief, those that so discord among the brethren. But I want you to notice tonight at the very top of the list, at the very top of the stack of the things that our God hates is that God hates pride. He hates a proud look.

Look, if you would tonight in Proverbs chapter 16, you get a better understanding of God's attitude toward pride. Proverbs 16 in verse five, everyone that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord. Look quickly tonight in Proverbs chapter 21 and verse four.

One other reference tonight concerning God's attitude toward pride, Proverbs 21 and verse four, a high look and high look and a proud heart and a plowing of the wicked is seen by brethren tonight. God hates pride. God even hates a proud look.

A proud heart is an abomination to the Lord, a proud heart, a high look in the plowing, plowing of the wicked. The Bible says it is nothing less than seeing. I want to ask you tonight.

Why do you imagine that our God so hates fraud? Why do you imagine tonight that the God of the Bible so detest and it's so unalterably opposed to the proud in heart and this thing called pride? Well, I did a study on this and I found no less than 30 reasons. I quit looking after I found 30, 30 reasons why God hates pride. But tonight I boiled it down and I'm only going to give you three of them.

All God's people say it on that point right there. There it is. Amen.

All right. Three reasons tonight. Why God hates pride.

Number one, God hates pride because pride is so deceitful. God hates pride because pride is so deceitful. Obediah one, three says the pride of my own heart have to see the pride of my own heart have to see the.

I believe tonight that one reason God hates pride is because it's so deceitful, true humility. Someone said it's right. Thinking about God and true humility is right.

Thinking about ourselves, correct. Thinking about God and correct. Thinking about ourselves.

I looked at the word pride in Webster's dictionary and he defined pride as an ordinance, self-esteem, conceit. One man defined pride is believing we have accomplished what God and others have accomplished in us. Trying to take credit for things that we cannot take any credit for.

Charles Finney said a pride that it's the disposition to exalt myself, to get above others, to hide my defects and to pass for more than what I really am. All my brethren tonight, I believe that God hates pride because pride is so deceitful. It's so deceitful.

It can cause you to put on a false front. Pride is so deceitful. It can cause people to pretend to be something other than what they really are.

It can cause a person to put on a false face. I heard one time of a fellow that was out of employment. He was desperately seeking work, been all over town, couldn't find a job to save his life.

Well, in our last ditch effort, he went down to the local zoo to try to get employment only to be informed by the zookeeper. No positions were available. Well, the guy was sad and dejected about the walk out of the office when all of a sudden the zookeeper spoke up and said, wait a minute, wait a minute.

There is a possibility here. He said, presently, we do not have a gorilla and we do have a gorilla suit. You're about the right size.

If you would like to come in, dress up in this gorilla suit and pretend to be the gorilla until we get a real one. He said, you've got a job. Obviously the man was desperate.

He leaped right on this job. He would come in every day, put on this suit, get in the gorilla cage, sit on it, settle next swing. People would feed him peanuts and bananas.

And this is the way he spent his day. Well, one day he was in there dressed up in his gorilla suit and he was swinging back and forth. And right next to the gorilla cage was the lion cage.

Now that was a fence separating bars, separating the two, but it was quite open at the top. Nothing there. And this fellow was sitting there on his swing, swinging back and forth.

And he noticed that the closer he would get over towards the lion cage, the more the crowd would begin to cheer. And they were egging him on. Of course, he could understand he was a human being.

So he began to swing harder and harder and go closer and closer. And the crowd really got excited. He got to the point where he was actually swinging out over top of those bars, separating those two cages.

And the crowd was going wild, literally going ape. And they were really, really, really doing it upright. Well, this guy was swinging faster and harder and harder.

And he got to where he was actually going out over top of the lion cage. Well, he gave it all he had and he swung as hard as he could. And he went about halfway out over onto the lion side of the, uh, in the lion cage.

And about the time to get about halfway over the rope snap down, the guy goes right in the middle of the lion cage. Immediately. He reached, reached up, jerked off that gorilla mask, started yelling out, help me, help me.

You've got to let me out of here. He ran over and grabbed hold of the bars. The lion was coming closer and closer all the time.

He was screaming, help me, help me. You've got to let me out of here. And the line was coming closer and closer.

And he was screaming, help me, help me. You've got to let me out of here. And about that time, the lion nudged the guy in the back, the lion ripped off his mask and said, buddy, if you don't shut up, we're both going to lose our job.

He wasn't the only phony there. He wasn't the only phony in town on that occasion. But brethren, tonight, isn't it great that we don't have to pretend to be anything other than what we are with God.

There is a trauma of transparency tonight. I think the most difficult thing in the world is true self-knowledge, but I'm here to tell you tonight that when you get converted, you don't have anybody to impress. You've only got somebody to please.

And the way you please God is by being yourself. You don't have to pretend to be something other than what you really are. Roy Hession said, openness, true openness.

Number one is a willingness to know the truth about myself. It's a willingness to know the truth about me. And then openness number two is a willingness to let other people know me like I really am.

That just simply means we pull off the mask of pretense and we are just who we are by the grace of God. My brethren tonight, it's pride. It's so deceitful.

It causes people to put on a false front. I'll tell you number two pride is so deceitful that it can cause us to blame other people for our problems. Pride is so deceitful it can cause you to blame other people for your problems.

I want to tell you that it's what Brother Roberts calls the blame game. It began in the beginning with Adam blaming Eve for his sin. Eve blamed the devil for her sin.

And we've generally been blaming others ever since. You know how it goes. Well, if it wasn't for my husband, I'd be able to make a go of it in the Christian life.

Or if it wasn't for my wife, I could really be a Victorian. Or if it wasn't for my parents, or it wasn't for my children, it's like the students had said, well, if it wasn't for my teacher, I'd be able to make it to the next grade. All the time blaming somebody else for our own difficulties.

May I say it to you tonight that it's pride that causes us to blame other people. Modern counseling by and large will tell you it's always somebody else's fault, but I'm here to tell you tonight we are not responsible for what happens to us, but we are responsible for how we respond to what happens to us. And my brethren tonight, it's pride that causes us to blame other people for our own wrong actions and reactions.

Pride is so deceitful. Number three, pride is so deceitful. It can cause you to be critical of other people.

Pride is so deceitful. It can cause you to be critical of other people. Cowper said the proud are always most provoked by pride.

One fellow said, tell me what kicks you off and I'll tell you what makes you tick. Do you just despise proud people? I mean, can you just spot them a mile away? Have you ever noticed? Have you ever noticed tonight that the things that bother you about other people are things that are true about yourself many times, but it's a whole lot easier to crucify the other man than to admit you get the only, you know, it says in Romans chapter two, why do you judge somebody else's servant for the things that you judge him up? You're guilty of yourself. Have you ever noticed that the things that bother you about other people are things that are true about your own heart? I want to tell you pride is so deceitful.

It can cause us to be critical of others. I heard of a Sunday school teacher. She was teaching her class on the Pharisee and the publican.

You heard that story and you may not be aware of it, but that Pharisee, he is the founder of the modern self-esteem cult. You may not be aware of this, but he is the founder of the modern self-esteem cult. And you know what this, this Pharisee was doing in that story that Jesus told he was thanking God.

He wasn't like everybody else. You were, he was really beating up his own self-image. He said, Lord, I want to thank you.

I'm not like other men. God, I thank you. I'm not like this adulterers.

And God, I thank you. I'm not like these extortioners. And I'm really thankful.

I'm not like this old dirty tax collector down here. I asked man, God, I thank you. I'm not like him.

And he went on and on talking to God in this way, thanking God that he wasn't like all these people and thanking God that he fasted twice in the week and all this kind of stuff. Well, the whole idea of the lesson was the awfulness of being a Pharisee. Well, it came to time for the end of the Sunday school lesson.

The Sunday school teacher said to students, let's bow our heads together now. And let's thank the Lord that we're not like that Pharisee. Have you ever noticed there's a little Pharisee in all of us? Have you ever seen that? Do you realize tonight that a proud man is suspicious of other people, but a truly humble man is more suspicious, more suspicious of his own heart than he is of anybody else.

I want to tell you tonight. The only way in the world you can look down on somebody else is to think that you're better than them. And that is the spirit of the Pharisee.

And that is the very essence of pride in that when we, when we despise and other people and look down on them, you know, sometimes when you go out of the auditorium, people come up and say, well, I want to tell you, brother, that was a great message. They really needed it here. They really needed that message.

Boy, if my wife could have been here tonight, I'm telling you, she really, that really applied to her. And so-and-so could have been here and all the time, reeling off this great list of people that the message applies. You listen to me tonight.

When you hear preaching, if all you can do is think about who it applies to in the church and never think how it applies to your own heart, I want to suggest tonight, you have a problem with the deceitfulness of pride. Pride causes us to be critical. You know, the Bible says that the, the proud they're encompassed as with a chain.

I'll tell you a person in bondage to pride. He might not know it, but everybody else can hear the clanking of those chains that he's dragging around. You see, when we're full of pride, we can spot a splinter and somebody else's eye a mile away, but can't even see the beam in our own eye.

When we look into the mirror of the word of God, let me give you a little test tonight for pride. A little test here. Is there anyone, is there anyone in this church, in this town, in this world? Is there anyone that you can think of right now that you consider yourself to be better than that? Is there anyone that you can think of right now that you consider yourself to be better than that? You said, well, yes, certainly I'm better than those streetwalkers downtown in Kansas city.

I'm a whole lot better than that. That bunch. Well, I'll tell you, I'm a whole lot better than these, uh, God deniers.

Yeah. A whole lot better than those atheists. A whole lot better than those perverts.

Yeah. Folks, I want to pay you tonight. If you ever get a good, clear vision and a grasp of God's holiness and who God really is, you'll know that within your own breast lies the potential for every iniquity known to the human race.

And I want to tell you something. When you really meet God, you're going to have a hard time looking down on anybody else. It's not woe is them, but it's rather woe is me.

When you really see God, all my brethren tonight, pride is so deceitful. It can cause us to be critical of other people. And I'll tell you, pride is so deceitful.

It can cause us to water down sin. Pride is so deceitful. It will cause us to deal with the respectable rather than the real, because this is the deal with the general rather than the specifics.

And there'll never be revival. As long as we're blame shifting or rationalizing, we were in a meeting one time, Roy Hessian was there from England. He was the speaker.

God was moving. There was some young women in the church that decided they needed to confront an elderly lady in the church. And they did it with the right spirit, with an intent to restore.

I mean, everything was right because here was the situation where this woman was so abrasive and so abrupt with her tongue that people would come in, they would be offended and they'd never come back again. So they decided they need to lovingly confront this woman about this. And here was a blind spot.

Well, they went to this woman and confronted her about that abrasive tongue. Well, when they confronted her, you know what she said? She said, well, that's just my personality. As if that was a let off for the whole thing.

That's just my personality. Have you ever read first John one, nine, it says, if we confess our personality, God is faithful and just to forgive us our personality and to cleanse us from all character defects. There it is.

It's a new Bible. It'll be out before long, a new translation. Brethren, listen tonight.

God cannot forgive you for your personality. I mean, some of us ought to be forgiven for our personality. I mean, really, but, but the truth of the matter is God cannot forgive personality.

God cannot forgive an inherited trait. God cannot forgive a shortcoming or mistake. God cannot forgive a temperament.

The only thing God can forgive is sin. And I'm here to tell you tonight that we have so redefined and redefined things that God opposes and give it a new name. It is nothing less, nothing less than our pride, causing us to water down.

We were in a meeting in single mountain, Tennessee. God got in the meeting. I'll tell you, it's always good to be in town when God is.

And God was in town in this meeting. Things were happening. Unbelievable.

Things were happening. Such a spirit of prayer on that crowd. There was a man in the church, Mr. Johnson, sit on the back row, came in late, left early, never said anything, never did anything.

So backwards, so timid, so shy pastor said he would often come to him and say, preacher, you know, I'd like to do more in the church, but I'm just so timid. It's just my personality. I'm just so shy.

I'm afraid to do anything. And you know, he wouldn't, he wouldn't give a witness for Christ. You know why he was afraid somebody would laugh at it.

He couldn't give a testimony to pray out loud. You know why? Because he was afraid he'd make a mistake. Well, I want to tell you the pastor, he was a merciful man, had to get the mercy.

And he would all the time, pat him on the back and say, Oh brother, that's just the way it is. But you know, God didn't pat him on the back. God showed this man that his shyness was nothing less than pride in reverse.

So concerned about what people would think more concerned about what people would think than what God knew. And God convicted this man of his pride. He came forward one night in this meeting.

He came and stood at a microphone. The church couldn't believe Mr. Johnson was in front of him. He'd never done it.

Said anything, never done anything. He stood before that crowd. He was shaking.

He was crying. He said, you know, I can't believe I'm up here. And he was just weeping.

He said, I've hid behind my community for so long. I've used it as a self-protection device and God gave him this composure. And he shared how that he quit shaking.

He quit crying. He shared how God convicted him of his pride, how he confessed it, how he'd been set free. The people couldn't believe that this man was so articulate and so free in sharing this testimony.

And when God set that man free, it set other people in the church free that had the same, same problem. And I would say it was a mad dash for the prayer room in those days. And pastor told me that from that point to the day of death, Mr. Johnson became the boldest witness in that church for Jesus Christ.

Aren't you glad tonight? You're not locked in to your inheritance. Aren't you glad about that tonight that you're not locked into what you are by nature. Thank God tonight.

We don't have to stay melancholy. We don't have to stay the way we are by nature, but when God fills us with his spirit, we can be exactly what God wants us to be. All my brethren tonight is pride that causes us to water down sin and call by another name.

God hates it tonight because pride is so deceitful, but let me give you another reason tonight. God hates pride because pride is the greatest of all sins. Pride is the greatest of all sins.

Humility is the foundation of all virtue. Humility is the foundation of all virtue and pride is the essence of all sin behind every other sin. My friend is pride.

First John two 16. God says all that's in the world, all within the cosmos, all within the world system is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life. God says there's only two things in the whole entire world system, lust and pride.

Do we see tonight that lust and pride are the root sin from which all other sins spring. And out of that highest root called pride will come all kinds of evil and wickedness. Pride tonight is the greatest of all sin, because it's the essence of all sin.

I'll tell you how severe it is. Pride is so terrible that pride will eliminate God from a person's thoughts. It will eliminate God from a person's thinking.

The Bible says in the book of Psalms, chapter 10, that the wicked through the pride of his countenance does not seek God and God is not in all his thoughts. The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not see God and God is not in all his thoughts. How is it tonight that men can go for years, some of them decades and never give adequate thought to their creator? How is it tonight that you and I can go for hours, sometimes days and never give due consideration to God? I want to tell you tonight.

It's pride that drives God out of a person's mind. It's pride tonight that keeps the person's mind off of the most important thing in the world, their relationship with almighty God. I'll tell you what else tonight.

Pride will stop Jesus from being Lord in a person's life. It's pride. You see tonight, God and pride are just like oil and water.

They just don't mix. And I'm here to tell you tonight that God will never compromise with humanistic pride. Diatrophies, Paul said, love to have the preeminence.

He loved to have the preeminence. And my brethren, there is a diatrophies called the flesh, called the self that loves to have the preeminence. They just love to take the main show.

They just love to take that place of being the boss. A little chorus says, save me from myself, dear father, from each subtle form of pride. Leave me now with Christ to Calvary.

Show me I with him have died. Hold my brethren tonight. That cross of Jesus, it not only delivers us from the penalty of sin, it delivers us from the very power and the very source of seeing that old flesh nature pride is the greatest of all seeing number two, because pride is the very nature of Satan.

The greatest of all sin, because pride is the very nature of Satan. The Bible teaches that pride was the very first sin to destroy the calm of eternity. Think of it in the book of Ezekiel, when God says of that original sinner, Satan, listen to what he says.

He says, I was perfect in all my ways in the day in which that was created. I want to tell you that God created Lucifer, son of the morning and anointed intelligent, beautiful, majestic, cherub. That was perfect in all my ways in the day in which that was created.

My friend, God didn't make the devil. The devil made himself. Listen to what it says.

That was perfect in all my ways in the day in which that was created till iniquity was found in the dying heart was lifted up because of thy beauty. There it is. His own heart was lifted up because of his beauty.

And we read in Isaiah chapter 14, the I wills of Satan. You know what he said? He said, I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the throne of God.

I will be like the most high. I will sit upon the Mount of the congregation five times. He said, I will, my brothers and my sisters tonight, man is never more like the devil than when he's full of self-will and the essence of self-will is power.

When a person is no longer content to be what God made them to be, as Satan was not content to be subservient to the creator. He didn't want to be like God. He wanted to overtake God.

He wanted to run his own life, set his own agenda, do his own standards. There he was. And he was in rebellion.

And that is the essence of sin. And that is the essence of the fall and pride caused it all. I'm here to tell you tonight that pride is the very nature of Satan.

That's why it's the greatest of all sin. Let me give you a third reason tonight. Pride is the greatest of all sin because pride is the very worship of ourselves.

It's a very worship of self. I heard one time of a guy, this man was boasting to his son. What a great duck hunter.

He was great marksman decided to take his little boy out. One Saturday duck hunting really boasted it up, really did it up. Right.

Told his son. Now, when we get out there, son, and those ducks come flying over, he said, just watch them drop one after the other son, just watch them drop. Well, this little boy was impressionable.

Thought his father was the greatest thing since William Tell got out there in that blind ducks came flying over. The man stood up, began to shoot unloaded his shotgun and the ducks kept on sailing. The kid was sitting there looked over at his father thinking he would be mildly embarrassed and ashamed at being such a lousy shot, but his father didn't look embarrassed at all.

In fact, he looked a little surprised. And in length, the father spoke up and said, son, we've just witnessed a miracle son. We've just witnessed a miracle.

He said, there flies a dead duck. Brethren, some people will never back down. Do you realize tonight that pride is a very worship of self.

You know, the Bible says in the last days, men will be lovers of their own and will be proud and bolsters in the last day. You know, what's coming to church humanistic. If you don't love yourself, you can't love anybody else.

So what you need to do is try to concentrate on loving yourself. I'm here to tell you tonight, my brethren, the Bible gives no commandment to love yourself. The Bible assumes you love yourself.

And the Bible tells you to deny yourself and take up the cross and follow him. You know, you know the word ego. You know what that means? E G O is the acrostic.

You know what it is edging God out. There it is. And it's coming to the church and we've swallowed it hook, line and sinker to where in these days we are so consumed with ourselves and our own needs and our own felt and perceived needs that we've lost sight of God.

And I'm telling you, we've created a God that's no longer worthy of worship. And that's why our music has degenerated to such a low ebb in these latter days. Oh, my brethren pride is the very worship.

It's a very worship of self. CS Lewis said that pride is an anti-God state of mind, an anti-God state of mind. I'll tell you the man that's in the grip of pride.

He worships at the shrine of self. Otto Koenig said of Romans chapter 12 and verse one, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that she presents your bodies, a living sacrifice. He said, the problem with a living sacrifice is it keeps wanting to hop off the altar.

Amen. There it is. I'm here to tell you tonight that pride is the refusal to give our life over to God.

And when we do that, that is the very essence of worshiping self. It's a very essence of pride. And that's why humility is the first prerequisite for revival.

God hates it tonight because pride is the greatest of all sin. God hates it tonight because pride is so deceitful. And then God hates pride tonight because it's so destructive.

I might say it's soul destructive. The Bible says pride goes before destruction and a Holy spirit before a fall pride goes before destruction. You remember when Herod got up and gave that speech and the crowd began to praise him and said, it's the voice of a God.

He lapped up that praise. He didn't give any credit to God. And the Bible says he was smitten by an angel of God and eaten of words.

Pride goes before destruction and a Holy spirit before a fall. Andrew Murray said, welcome everything that helps you on towards humility. You don't write that one down.

Welcome everything that helps you on towards humility. Amen. I'm talking about friction in relationships.

I'm talking about mechanics. We can't get that thing straight now that you've taken in five times. Amen.

Welcome everything that helps you on towards humility, misunderstanding, demotions, adversity, conflict. Welcome everything that helps you on towards humility. I think pride is so destructive tonight.

It will destroy your relationship with God. It will destroy your relationship with God. The Bible says that God resists the proud.

You know what that means? He stiff arms, the proud, he keeps them at arm's length. God resists the proud, but he gives grace to the who, who are the humble. They're the most unworthy.

They're the most unlikely. These are the most undeserving. God resists the proud, the proud, he knows the far off.

He resists the proud, but he gives grace to the humble. I want to tell you tonight that pride will keep a person from being saved. It's pride.

We were in a meeting in West Virginia. There's a fellow in the church. He'd been there.

He was a good man. Outwardly we're respected, but he was lost. He knew he'd never been converted.

He stood in that meeting one night and here's what he said to that congregation. He said, you know, I'm lost. He said, I've known for years.

I'm lost. But he said, I've been afraid. I've been afraid to admit it because I was afraid what you people would think.

But he said, I finally realized tonight that at the judgment seat, not only, you know, I'm lost, the whole universe will know I'm lost. And if you're going to know it then he said, you might as well know it now I'm lost and I need to be saved and got saved right there, right on the spot there. That night, you know what it kept that man from being saved.

You know what it was his pride, more concerned about what people thought about him than what God knew about his old heart. All my brethren tonight, pride will send you straight to hell. If you'll let it do it.

And I'm here to tell you tonight, I believe the Bible teaches that what salvation is, it is lining up with a new master and being submitted to a new King, even the Lord Jesus Christ. That is salvation. It's gotten so pathetic in America.

If you even make that statement and even talk about repentance, somebody will hop up and call you a heretic and say, brother, you're preaching work salvation. I'm here to tell you tonight that Jesus said that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name. Paul said, preach repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

We've gotten so man centered. Listen to me. So man centered.

So, so humanistic in the church that anybody that believes in living a holy life is labeled as being a legalist or work salvationist. Oh God, help us tonight. We need a spirit of repentance to fall on the church in America.

We're a proud bunch tonight, folks, strutting around, entertaining one another. God help us tonight. We would get back when we come to church, not to be entertained, not for what we could get out of it, but for what we could give God in the midst of the whole thing.

All my brethren tonight, it's pride tonight. It's pride tonight. It destroys the person's relationship with God.

And I'll tell you something else tonight. It'll not only keep a person being saved. It'll destroy a person's relationship with God after they saved.

If a person persistent, if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves. Do you realize tonight, God said, you got to humble yourself before you can pray. I'll tell you why some of you have no prayer life is because you're proud.

You say, how do you know that? I've spent enough prayerless days to know folks. I know I'm here to tell you that prayerlessness is one of the very first signs of pride. And I'm telling you a person that's full of pride.

They don't pray. They don't feel a keen need to pray. They don't know they got anything to confess.

They don't even think they need to go to a prayer room. Why? Self-sufficiency, self-glory, self-effort, self-will. All brethren tonight, if my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, God said, then they'll be able to pray.

I think we had a pretty good prayer meeting tonight at 630. You know why? Because we're desperate folks. We need God.

We know we need God. I can't even pray by myself, but I can't even pray on my own without the spirit of God making intercession in me. I don't know how to pray as I ought.

All brethren tonight, if my people, which are called by my name, will humble themselves and then pray and then seek my face. You know something tonight? Those longings after holiness that some of us used to have those longings and thirstings after righteousness. You know, we lose them when we lose our humility before God.

He said of my people, which are called by my name will humble themselves and then they can pray. Then they can seek my face and then they can turn from their wicked ways. We don't even know what our wicked ways are until we get out in the light.

Oh, my brethren and I pride is so destructive. God hates it. It'll destroy your relationship with God.

You should have got a little handout tonight. See if Lewis called this the great sin. I can't do any better than read this to you and with you tonight.

Notice here on the front page, what Lewis said about pride. He said, there's one vice of which no man in the world is free. Just follow along.

If you would, which every man in the world loathes hates when he sees it in someone else and of which hardly any people except Christians ever imagined that they are guilty themselves. The more we have of it ourselves, the more we dislike it in others. The center of Christian morals, the essential vice, the utmost evil is pride.

Pride leads to every other bite. It is the complete anti-God state of mind. Each person's pride is in competition with everyone else's pride.

Pride gets no pleasure out of having something only out of having more of it than the next man. It is a comparison that makes you proud. The pleasure of being above the rest.

It is pride, which has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began. In God, you come up against something which is in every respect immeasurably superior to yourself. As long as you are proud, you cannot know God.

Whenever we find that our religious life is making us feel that we are good above all that we are better than someone else. I think we may be sure that we are being acted on, not by God, but by the devil. Pride comes direct from hell.

It is purely spiritual and thus far more subtle and deadly. It can often be used to beat down the simpler vices. Pride is spiritual cancer.

It eats up the very possibility of love or contentment or even common sense. If you really get into any kind of touch with God, you will, in fact, be humble, delightedly humble, feeling the infinite belief of having once for all got rid of all that silly nonsense about your own dignity, which has made you restless and unhappy all your life. A really humble man will not be thinking about humility.

He will not be thinking about himself at all. If anyone would like to acquire humility, the first step is to realize that one is proud. Jonathan Edwards said that pride is the Saint's hardest conflict.

You realize tonight that when you come to the Lord Jesus Christ, there is a temptation when God frees you of certain external sins to become satisfied with your present level of spiritual attainment and lose your heart to go on with God and to be satisfied at that meager state of entrance into the kingdom without making advances into the kingdom. And I say to you tonight, it is pride that that ceases our Christian life to stop at that point. It's the Saint's hardest conflict.

I'll tell you, folks, pride will destroy your relationship with God. I'll tell you, pride is so destructive. It'll destroy your relationship with other people.

Pride defiles everything that it touches. The Bible says in Proverbs 13, only by pride cometh contention. Listen to this.

Only by pride cometh contention. You see, pride will keep a man from apologizing when he ought to. Pride will cause a person to defend himself.

Pride will cause a person to look down on others. Only by pride cometh contention. You know the reason there's so many splintered relationships, broken homes and divided churches.

You know why? Only by pride cometh contention. You know, years ago, years ago, God gave me what I call my upfront policy. Upfront.

Let me explain it to you. You know, after you've been out there for a while, you just flat out get tired of getting lied to. You know what I'm saying? You get tired of being taken advantage of.

You get tired of trying to be a Christian and to have love for people who's really misusing you when you really don't have an ounce of love in your heart. You know what I'm talking about? Well, through a series of circumstances, God gave me and brought me to the place where I decided I was going to live my life, not with all this pent-up hostility, but I was just going to put my cards on the table by the grace of God and be upfront. If I offend somebody, I'll try to go to them.

If they offend me, I'll approach them and try to get restoration. Let me tell you how it happened. I had a friend.

Let me define that. This man was a man that I could tell him what I was really like, and he still liked me. I could tell him the truth.

You know, there's not many people in life that you can really bear your soul to. And when you tell them what a jerk you are, they still like you anyway. He was a friend.

I could tell him the truth. He told me the truth about himself. I mean, we, this was an unusual thing.

I never had a friend like this. And you know, I don't know about you, but I'd always hoped that out there somewhere, there would be somebody that had it all together. And I could finally meet this person.

They really walked with God. They loved God with all their heart and they never made any mistakes. Have you ever hoped that there was a person like that? Well, I hope that this, I thought this was, this was the person, but you know, I began to see after a while, the closer we got that he had some glaring inconsistencies and you know what happened? I got critical of it.

And you know what? There came a contention between us. I didn't say anything. He didn't say anything, but there's a wall of division.

There's something was wrong. It just wasn't like it used to be. And he came to my apartment one night and he said, brother, Harold, I sense there's something wrong in our relationship and I'm here.

I'm here to make it right in here to listen. What do you have to say? And you know what I did? I put on a great big mask. I'll tell you pride is so deceitful.

I put on a mask. I said, brother, there's nothing wrong. Oh yeah.

Everything's all right. I was lying through my teeth. He probed, he pressed on.

He finally left. And he, before he walked out of the door, he said, how we're good friends. Now he said, Harold, I think you're lying.

And when you get ready to get honest, I'm ready to listen, close the door and walk out. Oh, I felt about that big sit on a dime and swing my legs. You know, I felt really small.

Well, I, I kind of stuck in the old gut and went on for a couple of more months. All the time. The division was getting wider and wider.

The contention was getting sharper and sharper. And here I was scheduled to preach at a conference. He was there.

And here I am going to try to get up and tell these people how to be revived when I'm not even getting along with my best friend. So I got a minute and I said, brother, I need to talk to you. We went back behind the auditorium.

I said, brother, you know, when you came to my apartment two months ago and you, you told me you felt like something was wrong and you didn't know what it was. And you asked me if there's anything wrong. And I told you there was nothing wrong.

And he said, yeah, I remember. I said, brother, I want to tell you there was something wrong. And I lied to you.

And I said, God spoke to my heart today and showed me that only by pride come with contention. And I said, brother, the reason we've got a division in our relationship is because my pride has brought this contention. I said, let me tell you what it is.

Number one, I saw inconsistencies in your life. And I want to tell you what I saw. I was afraid to confront you about it because I was, I was afraid if I confronted you and told you what I saw, I was afraid you would reject me.

I said, you're the best friend I've got. I didn't want to be rejected folks. I used to think that true friendships couldn't withstand total honesty.

I've since learned that's the only way they can survive is with total honesty. I said, number two, God spoke to my heart and showed me that when I saw these inconsistencies, I didn't get concerned for you. I didn't pray for you.

I didn't fast and ask God to help you. I didn't come and share with you. I got critical.

I said, only by pride comes contention. I said, number three, when I saw these inconsistencies, I was really afraid to be honest and confront you with them. Because if I did, it would expose my own needs.

And if I shared with you, what I saw in your life, I didn't want you to know that it would take such a little trivial thing to get me all bent out of shape and all stirred up. And I said, brother, I want to tell you only by pride comes contention. I said, I take all the responsibility for the friction in our relationship.

And I humble myself before God and before you. And I ask you to forgive me. I want to tell you, he forgave me.

He forgave me right off the bat. And we're friends. We were restored at that very moment.

My brothers and my sisters tonight, pride is so destructive. God hates it. Pride is the greatest of all sins.

God hates it. And pride is so deceitful. God hates it.

And God said, if my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves, you know, some people say they pray and ask God to humble them. You don't want to do that. God can do it, but that's not his place.

He said, if my people, which are called by my name shall humble themselves. Humility is a choice. It's like everything else.

Brokenness is a choice. It's a choice. And I'm here to tell you that the way to deal with the roadblock to revival is on your knees because you can never get over the roadblock of pride.

You can't ever go around it. You've got to go under it. And the only way to deal with pride is on your face, on your knees before God.

Let's say it's a high and lofty one that inhabited the eternity. I dwell with him. I dwell with him.

I dwell in the high and holy place with him. Also, that is of a contrite and a humble spirit to revive the heart and the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. William Long said, Pride must die.

Pride must die or nothing of heaven can live in you. Brothers and sisters, when we sing that song, when I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, my riches gain, I count the loss and poor contempt on all my pride. My brethren, tonight, God hates pride.

Pride is the thing. Pride is the roadblock to the blessing of God. It's the roadblock to revival.

And humility is the threshold through which every good gift and grace from God comes our way. If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves. God said, I'll give them a spirit of prayer.

I'll give them a heart to seek me. I'll give them a place of repentance to turn from their wicked ways. Pride is the roadblock.

Humility is the way to remove the roadblock. And humility is a choice. If my people.

Let's talk to the Lord tonight. We at Christ Life Ministries know that you want to continue growing toward maturity in your Christian life, and we want to continue helping you grow in your knowledge of God through our publications and ministry. It is our prayer that you will be a stronger, more inspired Christian as a result of having listened to this tape.

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