

# Atonement

by J. Edwin Orr

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*J. Edwin Orr's sermon on atonement emphasizes the necessity of Christ's sacrifice for forgiveness and the importance of confession and repentance for believers to maintain fellowship with God.*

**Duration:** 1:24:25

**Scripture:** Leviticus 5:5, 1 John 1:5, 1 John 1:7-10

**Topics:** "Atonement"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of walking in the light and maintaining fellowship with God. He uses the analogy of a father disciplining his son to illustrate how God may withdraw fellowship when we sin, but still cares for us. The speaker highlights the need for confession and forgiveness in order to restore fellowship with God. He also emphasizes the importance of being truthful about our fellowship with God and not deceiving ourselves. The sermon is based on the message that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.

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## Transcript

Thirty years ago, in the Hollywood Christian group, Roy Rogers brought one of his cowboy friends who said to me, how does God forgive sins? A verse of scripture came to my mind and I said, in Christ we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of his grace. He said, what you're trying to tell me is that Jesus died for me. I said, that's right.

But he said, how could that happen? I said, what do you mean? How could anyone die for me? Look, he said, the Los Angeles police are holding a man for murder. If I go to the chief of police and say, look, I'm sorry for this fellow, let me take his place, would they let me take his place? They would not. They would say, you didn't commit the crime and you will not take the punishment.

It wouldn't be right. Well, I said, you have raised a difficult doctrine, the doctrine of the atonement. It's not an easy doctrine to explain.

In fact, in theological seminary, we study 13 major theories of the atonement. For instance, there's the moral influence theory, where the whole realm of nature mind, that we're an offering far too small, love so amazing, so divine, demands my life, my soul, my all. That's moral influence.

But it's not the whole truth, not even a great deal of the truth. There are all sorts of theories of the atonement. The one that's most popular among evangelicals is what we call the substitutionary view, that Christ died for me.

I said, now, maybe I could illustrate rather than explain. When I was a boy of seven, I used to play ball out the back. Diagonally across the lot from our house was the house of a fellow called Albert Mann on Burma Street.

But his house was in the way. Every time we hit the ball hard, we should have break one of his windows. One day he rushed out and shook his fist.

He says, the next one of you brats breaks my window, I'll break your ear. Who do you think was the next brat to break his window? I didn't stop running until I got home, but my longer-legged sister got home ahead of me and she told mother what I had done. I didn't mind that.

Most seven-year-old boys have learned how to manage mama. But for some reason or other, my father was in the kitchen. I didn't even stop to ask him why he was there, not at work.

I decided under the circumstances what I needed was fresh air. So I headed for the back door. My father grabbed me by the wrist.

He said, you're coming with me, young man. But I said, daddy, that man will hit me, that man. He said, you're coming with me.

I went most reluctantly. My father knocked the door. Mr. Mann came to the door, still looking upset.

My father said, this is the boy that broke your window. Now, Mr. Mann didn't waste any time with me. He turned to my father and he said, now look here, or I know that boys can't help breaking windows.

I broke windows when I was a boy. But why is it that every time there's a window broken in this neighborhood, it has to be my window? Now, I thought I could explain. His house was just in the wrong place.

But I kept my counsel. I was a little scared of what might happen. The man went on schooling.

He said, I'm willing to forgive the kids. But he said, somebody has to pay for it. Somebody has to pay for it.

Somebody has to pay for it. My father paid for it, and I was forgiven. I learned the first principle of forgiveness.

When you're forgiven, somebody must pay. I made that statement once in the mayor's parlor in Los Angeles City Hall. An attorney came to me after and said, but is that always the case? I said, what do you mean? He said, well, does somebody have to pay for it? And he wanted to argue.

He said, supposing, for instance, you slander me and I forgive you, do I have to pay? I said, I think you as a lawyer ought to understand that one, because you could sue me for so much damage. That's what you forgive me. Because I said to my friend, the car boy, 20 years after that broken window incident, my sister's husband borrowed some money from me.

I think it was \$500. I said to him, and by the way, there are different marriage customs in different countries. In South Africa, a Zulu will save up enough money to buy a wife.

In India, the girl's family will pay you for taking one of the girls away. But in Ireland, where I was born, as soon as a man marries your sister, he feels entitled to apply for a loan. Now, he offered to pay back \$5 a week for two years.

He never paid me a penny. I bore him a grudge for a couple of years. Then when I saw it was hopeless, I finally forgave him.

But which of the two of us suffered, the sinner or the sinned against? Not the sinner. He went free. I could have taken him to court.

I could have seized his furniture by injunction, and then he would have suffered. But the moment I forgave him, I suffered. That taught me the second principle of forgiveness.

The one that forgives is the one that suffers. Moses couldn't have died for me, nor Joshua, nor Peter, nor Paul. It had to be Christ, because God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

In a Presbyterian church, a man came to me and said, I don't follow this. If God makes the rules, why can't God just break the rules and forgive you? That's the common impression, that God will be generous, he'll forgive you. But you see, God is a God of justice, as well as a God of love.

And that's why the atonement was necessary, as an expression of God's love, yet meeting God's justice. Now, this is only preliminarily what I want to talk about. I want to talk to you about forgiveness and confession.

My real object in talking to you is the place of confession in Revival, because if Revival breaks out anywhere, there will be confession of sin. Do any of you remember reading about the Asbury College Revival of 1970? Well, what did the students do? At first, the chapel was filled night and day with students confessing their sins. This always happens in Revival, yet confession is a very delicate subject, and some movements have gone astray at this very point.

So, I'm going to ask a series of questions. I'll use the overhead projector, and I'm asking questions, not rhetorically, I want you to make suggestions. Just raise your hand to get my attention before you speak.

And if you want to ask a question, if it deals with a subject, you raise your hand to get my attention. And if I know the answer, I'll give it to you. If not, maybe you'll help me to find the answer.

So, I'll put this, first of all, on the screen. On what basis does God forgive the sins of a sinner? One word would do. Would you raise your hand? Now, remember what the word basis means.

It means on what grounds. Ah, you hit the nail right in the head. I'll use one word.

I'm sure you'll accept it. On the basis of the cross. In Christ we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins.

That man who said, God makes the rules, why can't God just break the rules and forgive us? He missed the significant doctrine of the Christian faith. It was necessary for Christ to die. If Christ had not died on the cross, we couldn't be forgiven.

Because God wouldn't be God if he just broke the rules and forgave us. So, the answer is the word cross. I think I'll put it on the screen right away.

I told you that Mickey Cohen attended one of our meetings at the Hollywood Christian Group. Supposing he were here, he's dead and gone now, and he were to raise his hand and say, how can God forgive my sins? I'd say on the basis of the cross. Then if he said, well, how much do I have to pay to be forgiven? What do you mean? Well, I have \$350,000 stashed away where the government can't get it, and if you could arrange for me to be forgiven, I'll make quite a substantial contribution.

How much does a sinner pay to be forgiven? Anyone. Nothing. I preached all over Latin America, and I liked the answer, nada.

Nada. That sounds like nothing, doesn't it? Then Mickey Cohen says, is there any catch to this? What do you mean? Well, is there anything I'm supposed to do? I don't follow you. Well, can I go on shooting police and robbing banks and running my rackets when you say there's nothing to pay? Is there any condition of forgiveness? Yeah.

Repent, but it's a special repentance. Repent and be converted. Now, in plain English, I wish we had it in plain English, it means change and turn.

It's not only enough to change, but change and turn. Repentance expressed in conversion. You turn right around.

Mickey Cohen never did that. He wouldn't change. He wouldn't turn.

He just wanted God to forgive him, that was all. So, the condition of forgiveness, I'll put down as a word, conversion. Remember, it's repent and be converted.

Now, what's the object of all this? What do you want to be forgiven for? You might be saved. The object is salvation. Now, let's examine this carefully.

The sinner is forgiven on the basis of the cross. The price is nothing. You don't buy it.

You don't earn it. You don't bargain for it. It's free.

But there is a condition attached. Repent and be converted, without which you will not be forgiven. And what's the object? The object is salvation.

Now, this is elementary doctrine. This is basic Baptist doctrine, Methodist doctrine, Presbyterian doctrine, Pentecostal doctrine, Roman Catholic doctrine. It's basic.

But it's not my purpose in talking to you. I'm setting up a framework so we can analyze forgiveness of believers. How does God forgive the sins of believers who are already converted? Most Christians have the foggiest idea.

I was speaking at Mount Hermon when an inter-varsity girl came to me and said, I don't understand your teaching. She said, I was converted 10 years ago. And all my sins, past, present, and future, were forgiven.

Now, said she, I cheated at the last examinations at Berkeley. But I'm not going to let a little thing like that worry me. She said, that was forgiven 10 years ago.

I said to her, are you going to cheat in the next examinations? She was nothing if not frank, so she said, well, I hope it won't be necessary. I said, you mean if you get behind with your work, you do too much dating instead of study, you're prepared to cheat again? Well, she said, are my sins forgiven or are they not forgiven? I said, young lady, you're in great darkness. You're suggesting to me that a Christian is free to sin, is assured of automatic forgiveness.

That's a dangerous thing to say. Well, are you trying to tell me that my salvation depends upon my confessing? She said, isn't that a Roman Catholic doctrine? Oh, I said, now I see why you're in darkness. I said, what do you make of the verse that says, if we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins? She said, that's the unbeliever, obviously.

Oh, I said, quite the contrary. The first epistle of John was written to believers. You can prove it from salutations alone, my little children.

See what love the father bestowed on us, we should be called sons of God. It uses the pronoun we. By the way, Campbell Morgan said a very true word, a text without the context is only a pretext.

The first epistle of John was written to believers. And it's not written about salvation. It's written to people who are saved.

Or if there's a Methodist here, to people who are being saved. Oh, yes, let's be fair. The word occurs in all three tenses.

We have been saved. We are being saved. We shall be saved.

It's in all three tenses. But it's not an instruction on how to be saved. Not at all.

If the pastor were to ask me to speak to the teenagers on love, courtship and marriage, I think I'd give a fair talk. But if he asked me to speak to the young marrieds, I wouldn't speak on love, courtship and marriage. I might speak decisively on how to be happy though married or something like that.

You don't speak to married people on courtship in the teenage sense of the word, do you? Now, the first epistle of John was not written to tell people how to be saved, but it's written to people who are saved. So, the girl said, then what was it written about? The key word is fellowship. It's how to maintain fellowship with God.

You'll find the word fellowship occurring again and again. All right then, I'm going to quote some verses for you and then I'm going to ask you four parallel questions. This is the message we have heard from Christ and proclaim to you that God is light and in him is no darkness at all.

If we say we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we're telling lies, not living according to the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship the one with the other and the blood of Jesus Christ his son continues to cleanse us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make God a liar and his word is not in us. Now, those verses, 1 John 1,

5 to 10, are well known.

Now, with those six verses in your mind, first question is, on what basis does God forgive the sins of a believer? That is what we're required to do, but how is God able to do it? On what grounds? On the basis of the cross. When you pray that God will forgive you, you say, for Jesus' sake. You don't say because I'm a member in good standing or because I tithe or because I'm willing to go to the mission field or whatever.

No, no. You just simply say, for Jesus' sake. You plead the blood of the cross.

Every time you say, Lord, forgive me. Now, how much do we pay to be forgiven? The answer again is nothing. I will heal your backsliding.

I will love you, really. We don't earn it. We don't buy it.

We don't bargain for it. We don't plea bargain for it. It's free.

Now, our Roman Catholic friends have a doctrine called the doctrine of indulgences. I'm not sure that I understand it fully. I think the idea is this, that the death of Jesus Christ and the merits of the saints are built up in a great treasury for us.

And because of their merits, we can draw on that bank to shorten our time in purgatory or something of that nature. It's wonderful that since John XXIII and the Catholic charismatic movement, you hear very little about this anymore. I hope they'll change the doctrine officially.

It's not a scriptural doctrine. But having masses said doesn't make a bit of difference. God forgives his child freely.

Ah, but is there any catch to it? Any condition? What is a believer supposed to do to be forgiven? Yes, walk in the light. But how does he get into the light in the first place if he's walking in darkness? But how does he do that? Confession. If we confess.

Now, that's pretty straight. If we do not confess, he withholds forgiveness. Some people say, what then? You mean my soul is lost? I told you it's written to people who are saved.

And it's in reference to fellowship, not salvation. Now let's, yes? Explain what? All that I've said or? No, I say, the scripture says, if we confess our sins, he will, is just, is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. If we confess, he forgives.

But if we do not confess, he withholds forgiveness. And we remain out of fellowship. For instance, supposing God speaks to you and says, you must put that right and you don't do it.

You'll find it hard to pray. You'll find it hard to tell you, in fact, you lose your desire to testify. But I'm trying to put it this way.

If we confess, he has promised to forgive us. Now, keep this clearly in mind. We're dealing with a believer.

We're dealing with a person who is saved, but we're talking about his fellowship. Now, let's look at this verse, what it says. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, continues to cleanse us from all sin.

But it says before that, if we, if we say we're in fellowship, we're telling lies. I illustrate in a very simple way. My son, David, when he was a little fellow, about five, was rude to his mother at table.

I said to him sharply, David, go to the bedroom. Don't come back until you're ready to say you're sorry to your mother. Off he went, a little too cheerfully, I thought.

He came back five minutes later and he looked up and he says, well, everybody, I'm sorry now. I said, all right, David, if you're sorry, tell your mommy. But he wouldn't.

I said, if you're sorry, tell your mama. He wouldn't. I said, David, did you hear what I said? Now, you know how stubborn a little five-year-old can get sometimes.

I said, go back to the bedroom. You're not sorry. You're just hungry.

So, he went back to the bedroom, but it doesn't take a five-year-old long to repent. He came straight back and he went straight to his mother. He says, mama, I'm sorry I was a naughty boy.

I said, now you can go on with your dinner. Instead of climbing on his stool, he climbed on her lap. She reached for his plate and they yet turned about the way mothers and children sometimes do.

Fellowship was restored. But here's the point, and I hope it answers what's in your mind. While he was in the bedroom, he was still my son.

He was still in my house. He was still in my care. But if during his rebellion in the bedroom, he'd come to me and said, daddy, what are you going to give me for Christmas? I would have said, get out of my sight.

I wasn't speaking to him. Now, God cannot approve of sin. And if we defy him, if we do things against our light, he has to withdraw fellowship.

That doesn't mean he won't take care of us, that he won't show providential grace. He may protect us in an accident, yet still be grieved at the hardness of our hearts. So there's that first verse.

Let's take it. This is the message we've heard from Christ and proclaim to you that God is light and in him is no darkness at all. What does that really mean? Our God is a holy God.

He cannot approve of sin anywhere. If Leonid Brezhnev tells a lie in Moscow, that's abhorrent to the holiness of God. But if a member of a Baptist church in Pasadena tells a lie, God doesn't like that any better, even though it's told by one of his children.

God does not approve of sin. Then the next verse, if we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie. We're not living according to the truth.

When a believer does something that he knows to be wrong, he breaks fellowship with God. But then the next verse says, if we walk in the light as he is in the light, what light? Well, I would say the light of conscience, the light of scripture, the light of prayer, the light of godly counsel. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with the other.

Our fellowship is in the light, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his son, continues to cleanse us from all sin. Then the three verses, if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. If we confess our sins, he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

And then if we say we have not sinned, we make God a liar. Now we can answer the third question. What's the condition of forgiveness for the believer? It's confession.

And the object is fellowship. Now, this is elementary. I don't want to, in this particular hour, to get into an involved discussion of the security of the believer and the security of the regenerate.

I'm a Baptist, by the way, and if somebody asks me, do you believe in the eternal security of the believer? I have to say, well, the Lord Jesus himself said, these are they that believe for a while. Obviously, you can be a temporary believer. But the word born again is a different word.

I'm inclined to believe in the security of the regenerate, but who am I to say that so and so is regenerate? I don't know. I could have said last night, the only evidence of the new birth is a new life. I believe that strongly.

Now, I have heard of cases where a man facing the issue of salvation said, well, I'm willing to accept Christ as my Savior, but I'll never, never, never forgive so and so. And that hardness of heart kept him from becoming a Christian. So, I can't quite answer your question.

I'll say this, certainly, if you refuse to forgive your brother and bear him a grudge after God has forgiven you so much, you're certainly going to with him. I'll say that at least. You had a question.

Well, I'm coming to that in just a moment. You've anticipated me. But let's deal with these four points first of all.

Do you see the parallel? The unbeliever is forgiven on the basis of the cross. The price is nothing. The condition is conversion.

The object is salvation. The believer is forgiven on the basis of the cross. We're forgiven on exactly the same basis.

If Christ hadn't died on the cross, we couldn't be forgiven. The price is nothing. The condition is confession.

Why is it not conversion? Because we are already converted. We've turned. We're still headed in the right direction, but we've offended God.

So, it's confession. And the object is fellowship, to walk in fellowship with him. Now, I want to establish those parallels because I'm coming to your question in a moment.

Here's where the important thing comes in. The unbeliever can do nothing about the cross. Christ has already died.

He can't establish his own system of forgiveness. This is ordained of God. He can't change the price.

He can't buy it, can't bargain for it. But there's one thing he can do. He can repent and be converted.

That's something God expects him to do. Now, in the same way, the believer can do nothing about the cross. He can't establish some new system of forgiveness.

He can't change the price. He can't say, Lord, if I tithe, will you forgive me? No, no. He can't bargain at all.

He must do what the scripture says, repent and confess. I'll stroke out these two. If the unbeliever wants to be saved, he must repent and be converted.

If he refuses to, he will not be saved. If the believer wants to be restored to fellowship, he must repent and confess. Otherwise, his fellowship will be either limited or restricted.

Some people walk in darkness the rest of their days, in a kind of Christian twilight, because they've refused to obey God. Now, let me put something else to you. Conversion is the key to salvation.

Confession is the key to fellowship. Conversion is the climax of evangelism. We heard fine talk this morning on homiletics.

Brother Van Cleave stressed, you've got to get to the point in your message. Could you imagine Billy Graham preaching on salvation and never getting to the point? No. Billy preaches with the object in mind of getting people to repent and become converted.

That's his objective. So, you could say that conversion is the climax of evangelism. But in the same way, confession is the climax of revival.

Then why don't pastors preach to this end? Well, some of them are too scared. Some pastors have told me, I'm glad it's you that's saying this, because I wouldn't dare tell my congregation these things. Because a pastor sometimes, you know, he knows too much of what's going on in the congregation, and he's afraid if he says something, someone will come and say, you said that because so-and-so, and then he's involved in some kind of discussion or controversy.

But I would say this, if you want to see revival, a reviving of the work of God, a renewal of fellowship with the Spirit of God in your congregation, you've got to remember that there will be confession. And you better remember that's an objective, that anyone who is not right with God must come to the place of confession to God. Now we're going to turn to the practical questions.

One was raised already. I was speaking at Forrest's home when a girl came to me and said, I've confessed and I just don't feel forgiven. What can you say to that? I said, the scripture says, if we confess, he is faithful and just forgive.

I said, I'm more sure of God doing his part than you doing your part. Which is, I've confessed, but I still don't feel forgiven. That was baffling, stymied there.

Well, I said, God says he'll forgive if you confess. I said, look, I don't mean to pry, but I said, I do want to help you. But what was the situation, what was the circumstance? Well, she says, I told a lie about my roommate.

And you've confessed? Yes. But you don't feel forgiven? No. I said, what did you say when you told her? Oh, she says, I didn't tell her.

She says, I confessed to the Lord. But I said, you told a lie about the girl, not about the Lord. Why didn't you confess to her? She says, I don't want her to hold it against me.

Now, can you understand why she didn't feel forgiven? The scripture teaches pretty plainly the necessity of putting things right with one another. And that's something we've got to deal with. But before we deal with it, let's, first of all, tackle an even more important practical issue.

What does it mean to confess? Now, the Greek word for confess is three elements, ek homo logos. And that's literally out of the same word. It's not a strange thing to confess is out of the same word.

What does that mean? Well, I can illustrate when the Lord Jesus said to his disciples, who do men say that I am? One said, some say you're a prophet. Another said, some say you're the prophet Elijah. But who do you say I am? And Peter spoke up and said, you are the Christ, the son of the living God.

And the Lord Jesus immediately commanded him. He said, flesh and blood. Human beings didn't tell you that.

That was revealed to you. In other words, Peter expressed outwardly what the Holy Spirit had shown him inwardly about the deity of Christ. And we call that the confession of Peter.

I don't know how you use the word in Calvary Chapel, but I've often heard people say so-and-so confessed Christ in baptism. We confess outwardly what we feel inwardly. I don't know what formula you use in Calvary Chapel, but where I've been used to say, do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, or do you confess your faith in Christ as your Savior? If you say I do, then I baptize you in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

We call that confession. We say outwardly what the Holy Spirit shows us inwardly about the deity of Christ, about the way of salvation. Now in the same way, negatively, confession of sin means to express outwardly what the Spirit shows us inwardly about our sin.

This is very important. In other words, it's what he convinces us. It's not just something we say to go along with people, or I'll agree with you just to make peace.

No, no. We've got to confess. Ec Homo Logos.

Now it's seldom I mention a book or an author. I don't need to mention the author. I mention the book.

There's a little book published some years ago called Love Is Now, published by Zonderman. Excellent, but one chapter disturbed me. I like the title of the chapter.

It was called Obsession with Confession. I expected treaties on movements like the moral rearmament and other movements that make a psychological use of confession. It becomes almost an exhibitionism.

I have known of people who wake up in the morning and think, now what should I start to confess? I've known of evangelists who have gone to a congregation and try to trigger revival by confessing something themselves. I remember when I was in India, a lady getting up, not in my meeting, but getting up and saying, I would like to confess that I committed adultery with the chairman of the meeting. The chairman of the meeting was an Englishman.

He stood up and he spluttered. He could hardly speak. He said, I would like to assure this congregation I have never been alone with this lady in my life.

And she got up again. She said, oh, it's just adultery in thought, she said. But what misconceptions.

Now, I expected this book to deal with abuses like that. There are people, for instance, who just love to go around confessing. I knew a missionary who used to make tape recordings of people's confessions.

I was shocked. I thought when the things confessed and under the blood, we ought to forget about it as quickly as we can, knowing that God's forgotten about it already. But this chapter took a different attitude.

He said the word confess means to agree. And you just agree that it's wrong, you're forgiven. That's all.

I said, I can't mean this. And I read his illustration. He said he was driving from Ann Arbor to Toledo.

And the word he used was feasting his mind on wrong thoughts. I don't know what the wrong thoughts were. The word feasting, it could have been gluttony, could have been impurity.

But he said then it suddenly struck him, isn't it wonderful to be a Christian? All you need to do is admit that it's wrong and you're forgiven automatically. A young people's group in Covina got a hold of this and thought, isn't this great? You can shack up for the weekend so long as you admit that it's wrong. This is the sheerest antinomianism.

Confessing means to repent as well as confess. You've got to hate the thing. No good saying, well, I'm going to confess and I'm going to do it tomorrow.

No, no. So the word confess means to express outwardly what the Holy Spirit has shown you inwardly about your sin. But that doesn't mean you tell everybody everything.

I've always given this as a maxim. For instance, we saw a great revival throughout Brazil in 1952. And to my knowledge, I became fairly proficient in Portuguese.

I never heard an improper confession in public. One reason was because we taught the scripture in a series of Bible teaching conferences before these revivals broke out. And I always gave a maxim, let the circle of the sin be the circle of the confession.

If you have sinned secretly, only God knows about it, you tell God about it. But if you've sinned privately and hurt somebody else by word or example or any other way, put it right with the person concerned. And if you've sinned openly, put it right with as many as know about it.

I give that as a maxim. Now, some of you may say, well, that's just a maxim. Do you have any scriptural authority? Well, I think I'll give you some verses from the scripture dealing with the subject of confession.

Leviticus 5 and 5. He shall confess that he has sinned in that thing. In Old Testament days, when a believer wanted to get right with God, he brought a lamb or a dove as his offering. He laid his hand upon the head of the offering.

This was a type of Christ. Then it says, he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing. In other words, we commit specific sins and we must make specific confessions.

Now, it's true in a public service, for instance, in the Episcopal Church, in the Lutheran Church, there's what we call the general confession. It's a beautiful prayer. You know it, don't you? Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep.

We've followed too much of the devices and desires of our own hearts. We've offended against thy holy laws. We have done those things we ought not to have done.

We have not done the things we ought to have done. There's no health in us. A beautiful prayer, but it's not enough.

We've got to be specific. We should name what we know to be wrong when we confess to God. During that revival movement in Brazil, we used to see churches packed at six o'clock in the morning for prayer.

You say, what went on? It was a free meeting. A man would stand up and say in Portuguese, of course, I've just had a telegram from Goiania in the interior saying that revival has broken out in six of the seven churches of Goiania, and my own brother-in-law that I thought was too hard ever to be converted has just been converted to God. Gracias a Dios.

And people would give thanks, and then somebody would get up and say, oh God, I have a brother-in-law that I thought was too hard to be saved. Now perhaps you can save him. People would pray.

Then a woman would get up and say, oh Lord, my son, ever since he's gone to Rio, he hasn't written to me. He keeps such bad company. I'm afraid when there's a knock at the door, it's the police.

Then somebody would pray for her son. Then a woman got up and said, very sweetly, please pray for me. I need to love people more.

I said to her as gently as I could in Portuguese, Sister, that's not a confession. Who doesn't need to love people more? John XXIII needs to love people more, and Billy Graham needs to love people more. Who doesn't need to love people more? When you say I need to love people more, are you saying anything? No.

The lady sat down again, and I said it gently to her. The meeting went on, but then she got up again, and she said in Portuguese, please pray for me. What I should have said is that God has shown me that my tongue has caused a lot of trouble in this congregation.

Now her pastor was sitting beside me on the platform. Did you know that pastors can talk out of the side of their mouth just like gangsters? And the pastor said to me, now she's talking. This was a troublemaker of the congregation.

When she said I need to love people more, that was true, but she wasn't confessing anything that anybody couldn't say. But when she said my tongues caused a lot of trouble, she had named it. Do you see the point? You say, but supposing I feel out of touch with God and I don't know what's wrong, how can I confess? Well, search me, O God, know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, see if there be any wicked way in me.

Say, Lord, what is wrong with me? And he'll show you. And if he doesn't show you, then there's nothing to bother about. But if he shows you, don't beat around the bush.

So many Christians pray if he prays. O Lord, if I have done anything wrong, please forgive me. That's not a confession.

Imagine going to the chief of police and saying, if I have committed a murder or if I have robbed a bank or if I have cheated my income tax, arrest me. What would the chief of police say? He'd say, Sergeant, bring your notebook. Now, what did you say you'd done? You said, no, I didn't say I've done anything.

I just said, if I've committed a murder. The police would simply say, you're wasting our time. Imagine stopping somebody in the street and saying, if I've done anything to offend you, will you forgive me? There's a way to cure that.

You say, oh, it was you that broke into our house and burglarized it. They say, oh, no, I didn't mean that. Well, then what are you confessing? The teaching of scripture is specific confession.

If you've done something wrong, you know what it is, confess it. If you don't know what it is, ask God to show you. Now, Proverbs 28, 13 teaches another aspect.

Thorough confession. He that covereth his sin shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. You've got to have done with the thing that you confess.

You must forsake it. When I was charged clerk of an engineering shop in Ireland, two of the men came to blows. I don't remember what it was really.

But then they wouldn't speak to each other for two or three days until the other men ganged up on them. They said, look, you're spoiling the whole atmosphere of this shop, acting like kids. Come on now, apologize, both of you.

Last the worst thing before you. So the two of them apologized and shook hands. When William Buick turned away, Joe Kelly said to me, boy, I apologize, but if he ever says a thing like that to me again, I'll punch him right in the nose again.

Well, you see, he hadn't forsaken his sin. He still was full of resentment. In recent times, I've had to deal with some troubles in an oriental society, a third world society where, you know, in Japan and China and Korea and India, people are so concerned about saving face.

A Chinese minister in Los Angeles told me, oh, it's a Chinese custom, never apologize to your wife. Never. But I said, supposing you know you've been wrong, you've hurt her feelings.

He said, buy her a box of chocolates, but never say you were wrong. Well now, among orientals, saving face is very important. And I find that so often among Chinese and Japanese and Korean and Indian Christians and so forth, what they want to do is sweep the dirt under the carpet.

Everybody shake hands. But boy, do they bear grudges. And then the next time trouble, a volcano erupts.

No, no, we've got to forsake the sin. And the only way to forsake it is to name it and ask forgiveness. You say, but supposing you confess and the other party won't forgive you, then he's committing a worse sin.

You referred to it of withholding forgiveness. If God's forgiven you, who are you to withhold forgiveness to somebody else? Now, I don't know what things are like in Calvary Chapel, but among the Baptists in California, I would say when we do have trouble, 90% of the time it's what you call friction between believers. Believers who can get along with the Lord can't always get along with each other.

They irritate each other. Is there any teaching in Scripture how to deal with social confession where it concerns other people? All right, let's take the word of the Lord Jesus himself. Matthew 5, 23, 24.

So if you're offering your gift at the altar and there, remember your brother has something against you, leave your gift before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, then come and offer your gift.

What gift? I used to think it was like a gift to the ministry.

You know the way in a country parish, a farmer will drop by the parsonage and say, I brought you two dozen eggs. That's his gift to the ministry. But no, no.

Actually, the words of the Lord Jesus here refer back to Leviticus 5 and 5, to the Old Testament dispensation. When a believer wanted to get right with God, he brought the offering. That offering was a symbol of Christ.

Now, we don't do that today. Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. The Lord Jesus is our offering.

So when you come to the altar of God asking forgiveness, you say, Lord, forgive me for Jesus' sake. We've said that before. But when you're at God's altar seeking forgiveness, and you remember your brother has something against you, leave the business with God and go and put it right with your brother first of all.

Now, is it more important to be right with God or with man? I would say with God. With whom should we put things right first, with God or with man? The Lord Jesus says with man. Why? When you think it through, it's very simple.

God knows whether or not you have sinned. You can't fool him. But your brother doesn't know until you confess it.

God knows whether or not you've repented. Your brother doesn't know until you say so. So the Lord says, if you mean this, put it right with him first.

So there's clear teaching in Scripture. If, for instance, you want revival in your Christian experience, you want renewed fellowship with God, and now the Lord says, yes, but you're not in speaking terms with so-and-so. If you realize you did somebody an injury, you go and confess it.

That's the teaching of Scripture. Ask for forgiveness. Supposing, on the other hand, it's the other way around.

Somebody's done you an injury and you're not in speaking terms. Well, the Scripture takes care of that too. And again, in the words of the Lord Jesus, Matthew 18, 15 to 17, I believe it is, says very plainly, if your brother sins against you, you go and tell him his fault between you and him alone.

If he listens to you, you've gained your brother. Now, who's the innocent party? You are. Who's the more spiritual party? You are.

Who takes initiative? You do. You say, that's not fair. If I know I've done something wrong, it's my job to take the initiative and apologize for it.

If somebody does me an ill turn, it's his responsibility to come to me. That's not what the Lord says. You see, any quarrel among Christians is a wound in the body of Christ.

And for his sake, you ought to be willing, even though it wasn't your fault, to take the initiative. I could illustrate, on one occasion, we had two house guests. Now, I've lived in the same house for 30 years, and I think I could say, as her, the discouraging word, and the skies are not cloudy all day.

We have a happy home. But on this occasion, we had two guests, both relatives. One, a relation of my wife, and the other, a relation of mine.

Both feminine gender, by the way, but that's not important. And they had a quarrel, what my son, a teenager, called a big deal. You know what they quarreled over? Whose responsibility it was to put on the potatoes when we went to church.

What a bitter, nasty quarrel. I still remember my daughter, also a teenager, saying when someone said something utterly outrageous, she said, but auntie, that's not true. And she was turned on, said, who are you to talk? Look at the way you treat your younger brothers.

And my little girl was left in tears. Everyone hurt. Now, they were guests in my house.

They were eating my bacon and eggs. They were sleeping on our sheets. They never once said, please, may we have a quarrel in your house.

They just didn't care who got hurt. And how like church work that is. People will have their quarrels in the house of God.

They'll kick out at random. If you excuse the expression, they don't mind if the kick hits Jesus in the shins, so long as they vent their spite or their rage. And then they get miffed and won't come to God's house, never darken that door again, forgetting it's the house of God.

Oh, no, this is a serious thing. If your brother sins against you, you go and tell him it's fault between you and him alone. Why alone? Well, if you go alone without humiliating the person, he may be willing to say, I'm glad you came to see me.

It's about time we straightened this out. And if he listens to you, you've gained your brother. Does this work? It worked wonderfully for me about 30 years ago.

A very famous preacher came to Los Angeles and from the pulpit of the South Hollywood Presbyterian Church, he criticized me. I heard about it six times. It wasn't a matter of character.

It was a matter of doctrine. He said that I taught such and such. It wasn't true.

But after I heard it six times, I thought, well, I better carry out the instruction. I phoned his hotel. He wasn't there.

He had left for San Jose. So I wrote him a letter. Now, I'd like to say in passing, don't write letters if you can help it.

Far better to go see people face to face. But I wrote him a nice, sweet Irish letter. I wrote and said, if you had taken the trouble to read my book, Full Surrender, you'd see that I taught no such thing.

I told him pretty frankly what I thought. And I ended up by saying, I don't expect a big shot like you to apologize to a small fry like me. But please allow me to say you were misquoted or misinformed.

Oh, I was rubbing it in. He wrote back a most gracious letter of apology. He said, indeed, he had criticized me.

But a lady came to him the following night and said, you said Edwin Orr taught this. Here's his book, and it's the very opposite. He said, I've learned to take a man's printed word over hearsay.

So he said, from the pulpit, I withdrew my criticism and apologized. But he said, bad news travels faster than good news, and you never heard about it. He wrote so graciously, I was convicted.

I wrote and apologized to him for not expecting him to apologize to me. By the way, Chuck, that was Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse. Now, it says, if he listens to you, you've gained your brother.

He became my friend. About six months later, he said, I hear you're going to India. I'm sending you \$500 from our Evangelical Foundation.

I know those people don't have much money. Well, anyone that sends me \$500, I think is downright friendly. If he does not listen to you, take one or two others with you, that every word may be established in the mouth of two or three witnesses.

Why? There are some people, if you go to see them alone, they'll twist what you say. They'll even say you came to apologize. They'll twist what you say, so if it's necessary, take a couple of witnesses.

Now, whom should you take? Your wife and your mother-in-law? Well, your friend might think you're a gangie. Open him. If I had a quarrel with Billy Graham, which I've not had, and I wanted to be friends with Billy, who would I take? Bob Jones Jr. and Carl McIntyre? Now, Billy would say, what's going on here? No, I would say, well, Beverly Shea, Paul Reese, and then Billy would listen to them because we're all friends.

So, be careful who you take. And if you won't listen to them, tell it to the church. Now, what does that mean? Could you imagine getting up in the middle of the service at Calvary Chapel saying, Chuck, just a moment, there's something I want to say? No, no, that doesn't mean that.

The word church there is the word ecclesia, which means gathering. If you're both members of the choir, surely there's enough spiritual wisdom in the choir to settle your difficulty. If you're both ministers of the gospel, surely the ministers can get together and pray through with both of you.

Of course, the great trouble is, today, people don't want to be involved. I used to think if a man ever took another Christian to court, there was something wrong with his experience. Because it says, dare any of you go to court before unbelievers? But when you read the rest of the questions, you see the onus is on the believers.

Are you not able to settle this among yourselves? Haven't you anyone wise enough? Don't you know you're going to judge angels? And if you're able to do this, are you not able to settle trouble in the brotherhood? But the trouble today is you find a lot of people say, well, I don't want to be mixed up in this. It's a duty. In other words, to prevent scandal and injustice, Christians should be ready to try and settle trouble between other Christians and do it prayerfully.

But it says, if you won't listen to the church, treat him like a heathen and a tax collector. A big Irishman in Toronto said to me, that means you give one, two, three chances to put it right. And then if he doesn't, you can really go to town on him.

No, no, it doesn't mean that. Supposing you meet a Chinese Buddhist and he says, good morning. Do you say to him, have you had the second blessing? Oh, no.

You ask him what denomination he belongs to? No. He may be a Buddhist, but you treat him like a neighbor, don't you? If someone falls downstairs and breaks his leg, do you stop to inquire about his denominational affiliation? No. You treat him like a neighbor.

I would say, if a believer refused to put things right with you, you've done everything sincerely and honestly that you can, then you're no longer compelled to treat him as a brother, but treat him as a neighbor. Treat him kindly. Perhaps he will come to repentance.

Now, what about public confession? This can be a very ticklish and delicate situation. Yes? Yeah. I would say that, for instance, if you know of two Christians that loggerheads and you have an opportunity to influence them both to come together and put things right, you should do it.

Of course, if one's closely related to you, your judgment may be warped. Take, for instance, a man whose wife perhaps has gossiped about someone and somebody criticizes strongly in return. The man's thought of his wife is of all the sweet things he knows about her, and he's not much of a judge as to whether or not she should have gossiped, if you know what I mean.

So, sometimes if you're too closely involved, you're not a good mediator, but you can surely find a mediator. But I believe when it comes to private confession, we must remember, I was just reading in my reading this morning, God is a God who loves justice. We need to put things right.

One of the troubles I've had, a little bit of trouble we've seen in this missionary society, is people who are not concerned about putting things right. They just say, well, where do we go from here? In other words, let's consider from the point of view of the work so that the Lord's work will not be shamed. I would say the Lord's work is being shamed if we allow injustice to go unsettled.

Now, when it comes to public confession, this is most delicate because some revival movements have gone astray at this very point. And it's the most important thing to consider. It says, confess your faults one to another and pray for one another that you may be healed.

And then it says, the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much. Now, this refers to confession and prayer meetings, chiefly. Confess your faults one to another.

It doesn't say in the Greek, one to one other. It says, among yourselves. There is a place for public confession.

You say, then couldn't that lead to scandal? Indeed, it could, unless you remember what the scripture says. Confess your faults, pray for one another that you may be delivered. What's your objective? To be delivered.

What's your method? Get people to pray for you. How much, then, should you confess? Just enough to get people to pray for you. You see, if a man stood in a meeting and said, I want to confess that I've been very sloppy in making my income tax returns, could you pray for him? Of course, you could.

In fact, it might have a salutary effect on other people who were making up their income tax returns. But if the man said, the trouble is this, I'm so clever, I've worked out a scheme that the government couldn't possibly find me out in, let me tell you how it works. The moment he tells you how it works, he's presented you with a temptation.

And that temptation may outweigh the value of prayer. That's why I say that confession in public should be very discreet regarding matters of sex. If a young fellow got up and said in a prayer meeting, please pray for me, I'm not always pure, who could not pray for him and who could criticize? We've all faced the problem.

But if he mentions some girl's name, now you have a scandal. Not only that, but there are people mean enough to say, there's an easy touch and try and take advantage of the girl. Therefore, I would say that's where it comes in, let the circle of the sin be the circle of the confession.

You confess enough to get people to pray for you. Confess your fault, not the other person's fault. You don't need to give circumstances.

All you need to simply say is, I failed along such and such a line, would you pray for me? And if you do that, you won't have some of the scandals that come in this connection. The pastor of a Tremont temple in Boston told me that when the Oxford group came to Boston, one of his deacons, who he said was a thorough sourpuss, a man who caused him endless trouble, he just objected to everything on principle, went to the Oxford group house party and got straightened out. He was a man who knew Christian doctrine and the Oxford group provided him with a challenge, so he confessed his faults.

He said to the pastor two or three weeks later, I'd love to give my testimony. The pastor said, everybody notices a change, let's arrange for how about next Sunday morning. The man got up and gave a wonderful testimony.

He said, I don't know how you people put up with me. But he said, the Lord straightened me out. I went to this house party, and then he made a blunder.

He said, the first thing the Lord spoke to me about was, and he mentioned a rather ridiculous adolescent sex aberration. He said he preferred to normal relationship in marriage. Immediately the congregation was shocked.

His wife was so ashamed, she never lifted her eyes from the ground. People thought, why did he have to say that? He came next Sunday with his wife, his wife was so embarrassed, she could scarcely see people to greet them. He had obviously dragged her to church.

Finally, they left the church and then they left Boston. Now, here's the point, dear friends, keep it in mind. I believe the Holy Spirit can bring conviction of sin regarding the most personal matter.

The Holy Spirit is the author of conviction, but he's not the author of confession. Confession is our response to that conviction. And that fellow was speaking out of turn.

There are some people enjoy confessing. It's a kind of exhibitionism to them. Just as some people like to attract attention.

For instance, even in charismatic meetings, there's always somebody who loves to stand up and get prominent, you know what I mean, like attract attention. And the same way there are some people who will shock through their confessions. And at some revival movements have gone astray at that point and caused such shock that people have turned away.

And then there are others who say, well, we're going to have none of this in our meetings. But let me tell you this, and this applies to Calvary Chapel or any other congregation of God's saints. When a movement of the Holy Spirit comes to renew the congregation, there will be conviction of sin in the hearts of believers and there will be confession.

Therefore, we ought to be prepared to guide it along scriptural lines, to encourage it, but always discreetly. For instance, there's a whole series of college revivals in 1949 and 50. It began at Bethel College, Minnesota.

But we divided the whole school up into groups. Senior men went to such-and-such a classroom, senior women went to such-and-such a classroom where they could pray freely. The whole thing was done decently in an order.

I believe that if revival comes to the United States, there'll have to be a cleansing of the body of Christ. And it comes through confession of sin. Therefore, we must be careful to follow scriptural injunction.

But we can tie all these verses together. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and judged to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. But there are certain times when a man should confess.

For instance, if you're at a funeral and the widow is weeping as the lower husband's body, you don't go up and confess your sins to her then. Say, I'm sorry that I set my dog on your children. Have a heart.

There's a time for everything. And I would say even between husbands and wives to put things right. There are times when it's most suitable.

But the scripture says, if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who gives liberally without scolding, without upbraiding. He'll guide you if you're willing to put things right. Now, I'll just take a few questions because we want to round this out.

Yes, sir. I would say that I'm glad you bring it to my attention because I remember that I would have mentioned that very point. We must never use confession to accuse.

You see, if you feel you should say to a person, I'm sorry I haven't behaved well with you, that's enough. But when you say, because I said you were conceited, now you've hurt somebody. Like suppose, take somebody with a little physical affliction.

Supposing, for instance, somebody is very self-conscious about casting the eye or something like that. You don't go and apologize and say, I've always criticized you because you're cross-eyed. You hurt a person that way.

I mean, I wouldn't want people to come. I remember a man in New Zealand coming to me and saying, you know, Mr. Orr, it must be a great benefit to your ministry. People are so disappointed when they see you.

Well, I said, really? Well, he said, oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to put it that way. What I mean is, after they read your books or heard about you, they realize that only God could use you.

Well, now, if I weren't Irish with a sense of humor, I could be hurt by a thing like that. But it's rather interesting, what flashed in my mind with your question was this. At Wheaton College once, where there was no direction in the confession of students, 20 or 30 students got up and apologized to one professor.

They really roasted him. Now, they should have gone to him privately. Unless, another thing is this, if the person doesn't know what you thought about them, there's no need to confess.

That person says, I've always hated you. You don't need to say that. That person doesn't know that.

But if you told somebody, I hate so-and-so, it may have got back to that person. That person may pretend he never heard it, but has been hurt by it. Then you should confess.

So, I think it's a very wise question that to be careful when you confess, you don't do bigger damage. And remember, you confess your fault, not the other person's fault. You don't say, I'm sorry I lost my temper, but if you hadn't been so downright mean, I wouldn't have done.

No, no. Now, you're accusing. You confess your fault, not the other person's fault.

If the other person's fault, trust the Spirit of God to make him respond. And he might turn around and say, it was my fault, I provoked you. Well, first of all, let's separate your question.

Supposing, like for instance, I suppose, of course, God made us male and female, we'll never completely understand each other. It says husbands love your wives. I believe that.

But it doesn't say husbands understand your wives. That's impossible. So, we are different that way.

But like, for instance, supposing a fellow has eyes been caught by a pretty girl of the type that appeals to him, maybe the very same type that appealed to him that led him to marry this girl. He doesn't have to go to the girl and say, look, I was casting glad eye at so and so. If the other party knew nothing about it, nobody knows about it, he can say, Lord, forgive me for wandering thoughts.

Help me to be true to my vows. Actually, a husband, well, it's nice now, friends, I've been married over 40 years and my thoughts are for my wife, not other people. But the other thing regarding things that have happened, I could illustrate maybe from two happenings.

The pastor of a very big church on the west coast had me preaching for a week. And one night he said to me, could I talk to you? So, he took me out to lunch. I knew he wanted to ask me about something, but he never got to the point.

So, I figured, well, he never got to the point. I had a funny feeling he wanted to tell me something, but he didn't. And I had an appointment with Dr. Henrietta Mears, and she was called away.

So, I called him, I said, by the way, I'm free for lunch tomorrow. Are you free? So, we met again. Or he said, this is of God.

I wanted to talk to you about something. He said, there's a little coolness between me and my wife. Nothing much, you know, with these little misunderstandings, a little coolness developed.

He said, I made the mistake of confiding in my secretary. He said, that's a dangerous thing to confide in some other woman about your wife. He said, it meant that we had a kind of understanding.

Well, he said, I saw where it was drifting. He said, well, I put a stop to it. Now, he said, do I have to confess this to my wife? I said, does your wife know anything about it? He said, no.

I said, then why do you think you should tell her? Well, he said, he was pleased. He said, well, then I don't have to tell her. I said, what about the girl? Well, he said, I told her, look, this is getting a little dangerous for us.

I'm going to give you a very good letter of recommendation. He said, I'm willing, if you insist, to resign the pastorate. But if you think I have a work here, then perhaps you will resign as secretary.

He said, she's on the other side of the country now, and I know she's a good Christian girl. She said, yes, I feel it's been dangerous. So, he said, I can trust her silence.

Do I have to tell my wife? I said, does anyone else know about it? He hesitated just a minute before he said, no. I said, you hesitated. Well, he said, look, I'm not fooling you, or he said, I'm not sure.

He said, I kissed that girl once. That's when I realized I was doing wrong. But he said, that deacon of mine came to the office a minute later, and I've often wondered whether or not he saw me kiss that secretary.

I said, has he ever said anything to you? No, he said, he hasn't. But sometimes I feel he knows. He said, it may be my bad conscience.

I said, so you're trusting in him to keep quiet? He said, yes. Why is that? He said, because I know a lot worse about him. But I said, listen, pastor, supposing he is found out in his sin, and the church disciplines him, what's he going to say about you? The pastor turned white.

He said, I never thought of that. I said, he'll spill the beans. Well, he said, what are you telling me to do? I said, I'm not going to tell you to do anything.

Just go and pray about it. Wednesday night, I was preaching. I gave an invitation to Christians to come forward.

The pastor was sitting in the back seat. He came forward with tears streaming down his face, knelt at the front. The people were amazed, a man of God.

They all knew him to be a man of God. He left the altar, went back halfway up the church, took a lady by the arm. I hadn't met his wife.

The two of them came forward. I could see that his wife was bewildered. I mean, why is he crying like this? Next day, he called me up.

He said, oh, I told her, I feel clean. He said, what a wonderful woman she is. First thing she did was, well, how did I fail you? I said, honey, you didn't fail me.

It was my own waywardness. Or he said, I'm right with God now. And within a week, he had a call to a national executive position in his denomination.

That's only an illustration. In Whanganui, New Zealand, a man came to me and said, I'm in trouble. I've had an affair.

But if I confess to my wife, she'll leave me. I love my wife and children. I don't want to lose them.

Well, I said, there's a time for everything. But I said, why are you so upset about this? Do you think somebody's going to tell your wife? I saw he was hiding something. So I said, look, who was it that you

had the affair with? He said, my wife's sister.

I said, you are in trouble. Well, he said, what do you advise me to do? He said, if I tell her she'll leave me, I know she will. I wouldn't be surprised.

It'd be humiliation for her. But he said, it's on my soul. Well, I said, look, there's full employment in New Zealand at the moment.

Why don't you go as far as you can get from this town, go to Auckland in the north or Dunedin in the south, get a job, get a house, then send for your wife and children. And once they're installed in the new home and happy, then you could say to your wife, now, I want to tell you why we moved. It was because I loved you.

Because there is something I must tell you. I never did hear the sequel to that. But I feel he was right.

If he had blurted out to her that night that he had an affair with her sister, she would have finished with him. So, I would say there's no fast rule. But the Holy Spirit loves you and the other partner too.

And he'll guide you as to what to do and what to say. I would prefer not to have secrets with my wife. Now, I do have some little secrets.

For instance, if somebody says something that's going to upset my wife and keep her awake all night, I'll wait till next morning to tell her. And for instance, I'll keep secrets about, for instance, birthday surprises and that sort of thing. But generally speaking, I think a husband and wife should have one heart and trust each other completely.

But you need utmost discretion in confessing sins, especially remembering what Scripture said about fornication. It's a sin against the personality. And it's a sin against marriage, of course.

Adultery is a sin against marriage. But I'll say this. If you need advice, go to someone, preferably of your own sex, preferably older, and most important, more spiritual than you are, and ask advice.

Well, you use the word mad. The word mad in the English dictionary means insane, but I take it you mean angry. Well, it does say, don't let the sun go down upon your anger, and so forth.

You can confess that you've been angry if you've been unduly angry. But you go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. You'd say, now, brother, there's something we must discuss, if we can discuss it in a reasonable way.

And then say, you misrepresented me at such and such a meeting. You can do that. And if he said, I'm sorry.

Now, you've won your brother. But if he won't listen to you, that's when you take a couple of witnesses, so that he won't twist your words. But it's true that, for instance, to bear resentment, it means that you're sinning, too, to bear resentment.

Restitution and the like. Well, I feel that, for instance, the story of Zacchaeus shows that we ought to make restitution for things done before we're converted, if it's within our power. I remember one fellow coming to me and saying, well, I murdered a man.

How can I make restitution? That fellow's now a minister of the gospel in Arizona. I said, you can't bring back the dead. That's what's so terrible about murder.

And, for instance, if a man, through adultery, fathers an illegitimate child, there's not much you can do about that, if he's broken into the bonds of some other marriage. I mean, between young couples, they can always marry if they're in love and so forth. But there are some things that are very hard to make restitution for.

But I remember a big, big, tall fellow about the size of Doug Oldham got up in my meeting and says, what about financial debts? I said, I think we ought to pay them back. He was an Irishman. He said, well, he said, if I try to pay back my debts, I'll be working from now until the end of my life and right through the millennium.

I said, how could you get in such difficulty? He said, gambling debts. I said, that's different. A gambling debt is different.

I said, what do you mean? I said, if you owe the bookies money and you don't pay, one dark night, two big men will meet you in a dark alley and threaten to beat you up unless you pay. They may even beat you up and say, we want to do this every night for a week unless you pay up. You know why they do that? Because they can't enforce their debt.

A gambling debt is not legal. So I said, I wouldn't worry too much about that unless you've hurt somebody badly. Like, for instance, borrowing somebody else's money and spending and gambling.

Well, pay their little widow back her money. That's the thing. Well, there are too many questions here, but I see you're interested in the subject.

But I think we better call a halt to this session. And when you see me around campus, I'm glad to talk about things further. But come back to the subject.

What does it mean to you? You're all believers. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. The truth is not in us.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us all our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He not only will forgive the sins we confess, but he'll give us a spring cleaning into the bargain. Thank you.

God bless you.

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