

Restoration Series #6 - the Church in Bondage

by James Robison

The sermon calls believers to recognize their spiritual battle and the necessity of living in obedience to God's word to avoid bondage and experience victory in Christ.

Duration: 1:33:31

Scripture: Micah 6:6-10, Micah 7:12, Micah 7:14-16, Micah 7:18-20

Topics: "Bondage"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that people are intoxicated by the spirit of the world and deception, causing them to be unable to hear the word of God. He criticizes those who engage in mechanical worship and honor God with their lips but have hearts far from Him. The preacher urges the congregation to come to God with their whole hearts in order to truly communicate with Him. He also references biblical figures such as Moses, Aaron, and Miriam as examples of faith, obedience, and love sent by God. The sermon concludes with a warning to the leaders of the town who act selfishly and deceitfully, comparing them to briars and thorn hedges that will harm those who cross them. The preacher promises that God will perform miracles and that nations and denominations will be ashamed and tremble before Him.

Transcript

And he does build his church on the rock of revelation, where he makes alive in our heart and in our spirit what he has written. It is not additional revelation, it's not something he adds to, but rather it is the revelation of what he has already said, which as you well know, many of his own covenant people did not understand what he had written. And so he took what was written in the sacred scrolls and scripture and wrote it in the hearts of his people.

And that is the ministry and the work of the Holy Spirit to guide us to all truth. And we have no need that anyone teach us, we have the unction of the Holy Spirit within us and he will teach us. And that is found in the second chapter of first John, as in the fourth chapter you find the warning that you must discern the spirits, for there are many false prophets who have gone forth.

And so you're going to have to be able to discern the spirit of those who are speaking and teaching. And we have not been trained to do that, we have been trained to simply sit down and listen to men. And when men become our source, then we do not have the protection of the heavenly angels, but rather we become vulnerable to the unholy and evil angels.

And we find ourselves assaulted by the enemy. And he says as Isaiah spoke, lie down, your tormentors have said, lie down that we may run over you. And you have been laying down and you've actually become like a smooth street for them to run on.

You find in the Old Testament that when God's people did not walk in the word, when they did not walk in their covenant relationship in obedience to what he said, and bear in mind that it is the nature of righteousness to heed the word of God. We do not obey the word and thereby become righteous, but because righteous Jesus lives within those of us who have been born again by the word of God, it is the nature of the living and righteous Jesus to fulfill the law. So it is our nature to do the things which he has written and to keep the law.

When we do not do it, we become vulnerable to the enemy. And the enemy not only comes against us, which he always does, even when you walk in righteousness, the enticer and the tempter will come, he will call, he will entice, he will accuse you, he will seek to distract you and to deceive you. But you have a shield of faith that quenches all of these fiery darts of the wicked, if you have put on the whole armor of God.

Now then, when you disregard the need for the armor, when you do not live by the word of God, when you do not do the word, not only hear it, but do it, when you do not live by faith, but rather by sight, then you not only become vulnerable to the fiery darts of the wicked, but God himself will send the enemy against you, for he has appointed him to judge, he has created him to correct, and you will find yourself being overwhelmed by the power of the enemy, whom God himself sends against his people, who do not bring forth fruit. You must bring forth fruit, you must allow the Holy Spirit to live through you, and you are to be abiding in him as one of the branches, bringing forth the fruit of love and joy and peace, all of the aspects of the nature and character of Jesus. You are to be fruitful and multiply.

This is pleasing to the Lord. When you don't do it, then the Lord says, I'll pull down the hedge, I will cause you no longer to be watered, no longer to be pruned, but rather to be trampled ground. I will even cause death to open its jaws, and Jerusalem and all of her splendor will descend into the mouth of Sheol, or the grave, or Hades, into death.

He says, I will whistle to the nations, to the enemies, and call them to come. I will send my army among you, the locusts and the creeping things, and they will devour, they will devour. You will be overgrown with weeds, you will be overtaken by the work of the enemy, and no longer a fertile and fruitful field.

So God is serious about his word, and you and I are to be doers of the word. When we do the word, when we walk in a covenant relationship, we're able to hear God, we have a relationship with him, we have fellowship with him, and the key to you living in faith, the key to you overcoming the enemy, the key to being in a high tower, the key to having the rear guard and the shield of faith, and the armor of God is to abide in Christ, in his word, in his name. That is positional, that is a lifestyle, and when you do it, you not only see the enemy coming, you recognize how he operates, and you stop him in the name of the Lord Jesus, and you live as an overcomer.

Now that's the way God intends for his people to live. That's the way God wants you to live, and you've got to understand that your battle is not with flesh and blood, you're not wrestling with men, you're not wrestling with your own flesh, you are wrestling with powers and principalities of darkness. You are in a battle in the spiritual realm with the powers of deception, destruction, the powers of darkness, and when you recognize where the battle is, and you get in the right fight, you will no longer find yourself struggling

with your flesh, but you will find yourself doing battle with the enemy that Jesus Christ came to equip us to do battle with victoriously.

The battle's already been won, it's a fixed fight folks, and if you'll recognize who you are in Christ, you can do battle and win. Now the Lord wants to capture your thoughts, he wants to move you into a position tonight, and keep you abiding there where every thought is captive obedient to Jesus. He wants his word to prevail in you.

Now this means that you're going to have to overcome a lifetime of living by your senses and living in response to symptoms and sounds or words of men. You're going to have to silence all of that, and you're going to have to tune your spiritual ear to hear the voice of Jesus, and when you hear him say to you, rise and be healed, when you hear him say you're an overcomer, that problem cannot overcome you. I have already overcome it.

I came for this reason, not only to reveal the works of the enemy, but to destroy the works of the devil, and so you can live victoriously, not without a battle. He does not deliver you from the battle, that's heaven. He equips you to fight the battle, he delivers you from the bondage of the enemy, and enables you to fight victoriously, and that's exactly what God wants to do.

Well I want you to open your Bible to the Old Testament, to a book that some of you may not be too familiar with, but we're going to see some beautiful truths that the Lord has for us right now today. Micah chapter 1. M-I-C-A-H. Micah.

It's in the latter part of the Old Testament, right before Nahum, and right before Habakkuk, and Zephaniah, and Zechariah, and Malachi. Micah. Jonah.

Micah. The book of Micah. Now it is a shame that we today so often feel compelled to make very clear that truth is always truth, and that if God spoke to people at any time in history concerning their deeds, and it was sin for them to rebel, and it was sin for them to go into idolatry, even religious idolatry, that it is still sin today.

It seems unnecessary, and yet essential, tragic. It ought to seem unnecessary, but yet it seems essential, that we explain that what God said to Israel, He is also saying to those of us today who are in covenant with Him, and we need to understand that we, the believers, the descendants of Abraham, the children of righteousness, the children of promise, those who are born again by faith, we are Israel. We are the covenant people, and we are the descendants of Abraham, and God has a word for us.

He tells us in 1 Corinthians 10, concerning the Old Testament and Israel, that these things were written for our instruction, and they happened to Israel, even in the Old Testament, as an example for us. In 1 Peter chapter 1, we find Peter referring to the prophets who were inspired, and carried along with the Holy Spirit, and this is a very important statement. He said that these prophets, who prophesied in their own day, knew they were not serving themselves, but us.

They were serving us, the New Testament, the new covenant people, those of us who would enter into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, and so they were writing for us. It is not an exaggeration, it is not improper, it is not improper interpretation to say to you that that which God said to Israel has an application to us today, nor is it an exaggeration or an improper statement to say that much of what God wrote in the Old Testament, which we have perceived to be God speaking only to the nation

Israel, is in itself improper interpretation when in fact God was not even speaking in that instance on numerous occasions to the nation Israel, but rather to the covenant people who entered into the eternal and everlasting covenant, those who are born of the Spirit, the descendants of Abraham, the daughters of Zion, the children of the living God through faith in Jesus Christ. So God is speaking to us.

God is not interested in receiving an award from the Christian body or the Jewish body for having written an accurate history book. He's not interested in being your class historian, although he wrote an historical account that is as accurate as God himself. It is scientifically, geographically, archaeologically, chronologically accurate.

It is the Word of God, the infallible, forever settled, inerrant Word of God, which he always watches over to perform, which will not return to him void, and which God says heaven and earth will pass away, but my Word will not pass away. This Word, my dear friends, is a Word for us today, not simply a history of Israel or God's dealing with the first covenant people Israel. It is a written, recorded, eternal revelation of God's dealings with his people.

It is God expressing his nature and his character, revealing himself to man and desiring to reveal himself through those who believe him. Now, this is a war manual as well as a love story. This is a book telling you how to go to war with the right enemy and always win.

It is a book written to tell you how to always triumph in Jesus Christ, how to overcome the world, because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. You do not have to be overcome. You ought to, in Christ, become overcomers, priests and kings and ambassadors and ministers of his grace, witnesses of his life.

This is the will of God for us. This book was written for your own edification. It was written that you might grow in the grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Jesus and Paul and the apostles taught us concerning Christ himself from the Old Testament, from the Psalms, from the law, from the prophets, both major and minor. So he is revealing himself to us. He is speaking to us today through his word.

And in the book of Micah, we find God speaking to us even today. Beginning in chapter one of Micah, beginning at verse two. Hear, O peoples, all of you.

Listen, O earth, and all it contains. Let the Lord God be a witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple. For behold, the Lord is coming forth from his place.

There are many references in scripture to the enemy coming forth from his place. God sending the enemy in judgment. Now God says, I'm coming forth and I will come down and I will tread on the high places of the earth.

The high places. The mountains will melt under him and the valleys will be split and like wax melting before the fire, like water poured down a steep place. All this is for the rebellion of Jacob, the covenant people, and for the sins of the house of Israel.

What is the rebellion of Jacob? Is it not the world, Samaria? You've become worldly. You've become a harlot. You've gone back to the world.

In Jeremiah chapter two, you find God referring to his people again, being in bondage. And he said to his people, have you not done this to yourselves by forsaking the Lord your God and returning to Egypt to drink the waters of the Euphrates and the waters of Assyria? You've turned back to walk away. I told you not to go.

This is exactly what the church has done today. We have turned our back on God. We no longer depend upon the expression of the supernatural God through his people, but rather we turn back to the manipulated skills of the arm of the flesh.

We are trusting in numerous warriors. We're trusting in our programs. We're trusting in our training, but we do not have the manifestation of the supernatural God that demands to control our lives.

So we have actually brought the defeat and the despair and the depression on ourselves. And God says, I'm going to trample down the high places, the high places, the lifted up places, the mountains and the hills. In other words, God says that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, they're not fleshly, but they're mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, to the tearing down of the high and exalted speculations of men.

God says, I'm going to tear down every high and lofty thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. I'm going to smash your idols. I'm going to level the exalted places of the earth.

God's going to bring them down. We have spent years building high places. We have spent years exalting what we think, exalting our positions.

And we are going to find that everything which can be shaken will be. And only that which cannot be shaken will remain. And that which cannot be shaken is the word of the eternal living God.

God is going to tear down the exalted high places. Verse six, I will make Samaria a heap of ruins in the open country, planting places for a vineyard. I will pour her stones down into the valley and I will lay bare her foundations.

In Ezekiel chapter 13, there is the reference where God says he's going to tear down all of the walls that we built and doctored with untempered mortar, where the prophets had received a vain vision and where they prophesied after vanity and after their own ego. God says, I'm going to tear down the walls and I'm going to reveal the foundation that you built on. It was not me, but you built on your own spirit of divination.

You built on your own ideas. Paul said, for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus. Now, if any man build upon this foundation, what are you building? God says, I'm going to test what you build, how you build.

I'm going to test your method. I'm going to test what you're doing, whether it is wood, hay and stubble or whether it's gold, silver and precious stone. And I'm going to test it with the intensity of the fire of my presence and my judgment.

My dear friend, when persecution, when the release of the adversary comes, those who are walking in the righteousness of Christ will be strengthened and purified by the persecution and by the affliction that comes. Because Paul said to the Thessalonians, you've been destined for it. I told you it would be this way.

Jesus said, all that live godly will suffer persecution, just as Paul did. He said that you're going to be persecuted like the prophets were. But when you are, bless those that curse you.

Leap for joy. They did the same thing to the prophets. You need to expect it.

And this persecution will purify the believer. The more separated you are unto God, the more intense the persecution and the greater the purification of the believer. If you're not suited up in Jesus, if you're not walking in the spirit, then the fury of the fire, the fury of the enemy will burn up and consume the wood, hay and stubble.

God says, all of her idols, verse 7, will be smashed. All of her earnings will be burned with fire. And all of her images I will make desolate.

For she collected them from a harlot's earnings. And to the earnings of a harlot, they will return. This means that we are producing the works of the flesh rather than the works of the spirit.

Many people ask the question, why aren't our prayers answered? Why don't we have power with God? Recently in my own home, we've gone through a tremendous battle with a serious problem as far as we were concerned. Because two years ago, the Lord revealed to us that we have living in us healing, Jesus. Now, if there were no scriptures in the Bible concerning healing, if there were no promises, which there are so many, that it would literally take us hours simply to read them if we did nothing but read the scriptures, both Old and New Testament.

You will find that three of the four Gospels, one half of the passages in the verses in those three Gospels deal with the healing of ministry of Jesus Christ. And Jesus Christ told us to go and in his name to heal the sick. This is the ministry of Jesus through the body of Christ, through you as a believer, not through some special person who may be caught and trapped into merchandising the gifts or the expression of God's power.

This is a tendency the church gets into. But rather, we're all to go and do the works of Jesus. We find that Jesus Christ lives in us, that through his shed blood, we not only have the remission and forgiveness of our sins, but we also find that there is healing.

And if there is ever to be healing, it's in the blood. If it's grace, if it's a gift, if it's a blessing, it's in the blood. If it's not in the blood, it's works.

If it's works, it's flesh. If it's the law, it's death. And my friend, if we return to the flesh, then we're subjecting ourselves as bond slaves again to Satan and not to God.

So if healing is ever to be yours, it is in the atoning finished works of Christ. Whether you receive it now or in heaven, it's still in the blood. And my dear friend, you can appropriate now the finished works of Calvary, and you can have healing right now.

It's yours in Jesus Christ. It is yours right now. Don't get hung up or caught up on why something doesn't happen or why didn't this happen.

The best answer so often is simply, I don't know. I don't know. But we have it.

It's ours. Now that's the facts. You say, but if we don't see it, what's the problem? The problem is still on our end.

God still wants to show us some things we're not yet hearing. I don't understand. I pray for some folks.

They don't get well. I don't know why. But I'm not the judge.

It's not for me to even know the times or seasons which the Father puts in his own power. It's for me to do the ministry of Jesus. It's for me to wait on the Lord.

And I know that God said through Isaiah that the whole land mourns because of the curse. It's like a curse over this entire country. Let me tell you something.

Our nation right now groans because of the curse of a disregard of the very Word of God. We have a disregard of the sanctity and sacredness of life itself. We walk in and wish to be a healthy people when we are murdering millions of little innocent unborn babies in the wombs of their mother.

And then we wonder, why does this nation stagger because of the curse? Because we have disregarded the Word of God. Somebody says, we're not under the effect of the curse anymore. Jesus became a curse for us.

Now, wait a minute. Don't stretch Scripture into non-reality, into untruthfulness. Sure, Jesus became the curse, but he also became sin.

He became sin for you. He became sin. But is there still sin in the world? Can you still sin? You can rebel against God.

You can clench your fist in the face of holy God and say, my will, not yours. And then act upon your own rebellious, self-centered, self-indulgent appetite. But he still became sin for you.

And if you appropriate the finished works of Christ, you can overcome the tempter and overcome sin. You don't have to let sin reign in your mortal body. But it does in many of you.

And so does the curse. You see, only in the revelation do you find that the curse is done away with and that there's no more curse. There is still the effect of the curse.

We walk in covenant and obedience. We receive the blessings of the Lord as a people. Listen, many times, innocent people suffer because of the sin of the community of believers.

When Achan took the accursed thing into his tent, 36 innocent men were killed when they went out against a small nation of Ai, right after they had smashed the walls of Jericho by the word of God. Yet one man in that body of believers took the accursed thing into his tent. 36 widows were made.

36 little families had no more father. 36 women no husband. 36 innocent warriors perished.

Why? Because God is more serious about his word than you ever imagine. It is a fact that your sins and my sins affect others. The sins of parents affect the children.

God said to the third and the fourth generation. We don't believe that. We don't take God serious.

But God said it and God meant it. It's a fact. Well, my friend, many of you are suffering right now.

Many of you are suffering in your own body because of the sins of someone before you. And that's going to have to be dealt with. You may ask how? Through Christ.

Through renouncing the effect. You say, how do you do that? By repenting. How do you repent? You agree with God.

I've been affected by the sins of my ancestors. That's agreeing with God. All repentance is, is agree with God.

Call it what God calls it. Call it sin. Call it the curse.

Call it rebellion. Call it what God calls it. Get it under the blood.

Acknowledge it as sin. Acknowledge the need. Agree with God and deal with it in the name of Jesus.

That's the only way you're going to overcome the effect of it. Obviously, we don't understand all that's entailed. We don't understand all that's involved in leading people through deliverance and walking in victory.

We don't understand what it is oftentimes to not only be filled with the spirit, to experience a work of God in the spirit. We don't know what it is to walk in the spirit. It's one thing to say, I've been filled with the Holy Spirit.

It's another thing to walk in the Holy Spirit. We've got to learn to do it. We've got to learn to live victoriously.

Well, when you fight violence, when you find yourself in a war with a problem, then you must go to the word of God and search the scriptures. If there were nothing in scriptures concerning healing, no promise of healing, there is enough in scripture concerning the power of prayer, concerning the promise of God to answer your prayers and to give you the desires of your heart. If you delight yourself in the Lord to know that if there were no promises concerning healing, the promises concerning prayer would enable you to deal with any disease known to man.

God has given you power in prayer. Jesus Christ said, be it done to you according to your faith. If you can believe nothing, nothing shall be impossible.

My dear friend, the promise of God is absolutely eternal. We don't know what it is to live by faith because we're compelled to live by sight. We found ourselves in a battle.

Our little 11 year old daughter began to go through something that was as significant and would have been devastating to her little character and personality had God not built into a very strong character. She found herself in the same type of battle our son found himself in when he was 12 years old and his entire body was covered with the effects of acne, infectious acne, the severest possible type. It seems to attack the body like cancer attacks the body and yet it's a very visible thing, not as damaging and as destructive in the end result as cancer, but it's as difficult to deal with.

And yet our son in the name of Jesus began to believe God like no one would ever seem to take care of that stuff. I can tell you that after a few months of battling and the Lord changing his own little character and strengthen him as a man of God, he so dealt with that stuff that it was gone. He has typical teenage problems with his complexion, with ordinary pimples and oily skin like any kid has when he's going through that change in his teenage years, but acne is gone and it's a beautiful, beautiful testimony what God did and I thank the Lord for it.

But our little girl had something come up on her lip. We don't know whether it was the beginning, started by an injury, but nevertheless there was a huge growth that came on her lip. And it was a very unsightly thing.

It was cellular, modular in the fact that it appeared to be a rapidly growing little tumor and it got bigger. It became like a cigarette ash actually hanging out of her lip and then ultimately it got to be more like a baub, like a small marble on her lip and it was one of the most unsightly things you've ever seen. She couldn't walk in the room, everybody not stare at her.

I mean she knew that. She's a very pretty little girl and she knew everywhere she went everybody was staring at her. Now this becomes a very, very devastating thing for a little girl and you can imagine what it did to Betty and to me.

So we prayed with her and I mean we really prayed. We had other people pray for her and we spoke death on that little growth and we commanded it to go and we would see changes in it, but it didn't go away. And so she consulted two different doctors and one of them was a medical doctor and the other was a dermatologist and they both said, we won't touch it.

It's got to be removed. It won't go away. The dermatologist said it won't go away.

It's got to be removed, but because of where it is, because of the cosmetic effect, we recommended she go to a plastic surgeon to have it removed and that was set up because the plastic surgeons were so busy she couldn't get in for about three or four weeks and so here she is with this ugly thing on her lip going around her and she finally gets in to see the plastic surgeon and as many doctors, which we just figured he'd take it off right then and she'd come on home and we'd thank the Lord that God used a doctor to help deal with a need in her little life. Well, he didn't take it off. He set the appointment for June the 6th.

So here she comes home with this stinking old ugly growth still on her lip and mother and daddy are just pretty well wiped out. We want it to go away. Well, I was out of town.

I called Betty. I said, did they take the little growth off today? And she said, no, they didn't. I could tell Betty was disappointed and I said, well, why didn't they do it? Why didn't they do it right now? Why didn't you insist that they just do it? And Robin got on the phone and she's 11 and she's just a little girl.

But when she got on the phone, it was like I was talking to a grown woman. Childish things have been put away and she became very mature. She said, Daddy, I want to tell you why I think he didn't do it.

I said, I really believe that God told me that he wanted to do this, that God wants to take this thing away. And I said, well, that's wonderful. That's real tough to say, well, you're a little dingaling, you're a little kid.

You don't know anything about stuff like this. You know, there's something in the Bible about somehow offending a little believer. And I didn't really want to spend the rest of my life going around with a millstone tied around my neck trying to preach.

You'd be surprised how many churches, members and pastors go around with the yoke of oppression on them that was placed there like a millstone because they in fact hindered the faith and the potential faith of little childlike believers. See, we don't really encourage faith. We destroy any possibility of faith.

We tear it down. We build up confidence in the flesh, but we tear down confidence in the Lord. We make a mockery of everything.

We make a mockery of somebody if they prayed for sick people and they didn't get well. Then we make a mockery of them and say, see, it didn't work. They should have been at the doctor.

But have you ever stopped to think how many people died on the operating table and how many people die in the hospitals and how many people die because of improper medication? A whole lot more than dying prayer meetings. Now, are we going to spend the rest of our life scoffing at the medical profession, making a mockery of doctors and accusing all of them of malpractice? Do you know that there is a little preacher right now in West Texas that is being tried for practicing medicine without a license because he prayed for a man that was sick? The man died. And so they are bringing a charge against him.

It's already on. It's already in court. They're bringing in some of the big Baptist professors to testify against the man.

He never told this man not to go to the doctor. To the contrary, after he prayed for the man, he said, and the man said, I believe I'm healed. He said, I really believe you ought to go on and see your doctor and let him confirm it.

And the man died, I believe, that night. And so they're trying this man for practicing medicine without a license. Do you know that in over 20 cities in America right now, that home Bible studies are going to have to get a license from the city council to continue? That came up in Dallas.

Who would not think they would have to have a license to have a Bible study? This is America I'm talking about. In 20 cities, it's already on the docket for vote. What we're doing is we're assaulting any possibility of believing faith coming up.

Well, my little daughter said, I believe God told me. Well, I just said, amen. And when I got home, I told her, I said, Robin, you know, we've been praying about this thing for a long time.

And I know you've been praying about it. I said, God tells us that there's some reasons our prayers don't get answered. And God has prompted me that you and I need to read the book of James and find out when we ask and don't receive why perhaps.

And remember, Robin, it says in the first chapter of James, that a double-minded person does not receive anything from the Lord. I said, Robin, get in the book of James, let God talk to you. And I said, I'm going to do the same thing.

That little girl got in the book of James. Her whole countenance changed. She matured tremendously going through the word of God.

She began to see areas of need in her life that were more important to God than that bump on her lip. She began to see a need to walk according to the word and will of God. Do you know what stuck out the most to her? She noticed that the control of the tongue was important.

She noticed that she was a little bit self-centered sometimes and somewhat double-minded. But do you know what really stuck out in her mind? This astounded me. This would not have been something I thought she would see.

What stuck out in her mind? She said, Daddy, I think it's that part where God said, humble yourself before him and resist the devil. And with mourning and with sorrow, brokenness because of your sin, you'll find yourself in the presence of God. She said, Daddy, I believe that's what God wants me to do.

He wants me to get in his presence. I thought, my goodness, 11 years old. Well, this beautiful little girl continues on.

Last Sunday night, one week from this Sunday night that we just passed, my wife in the middle of the night had a dream. It was so clear, it was like a vision. She dreamed that this huge little tumor, you know, I mean, it's big on your lip, maybe the size of a marble, fell in Robin's hand during the night, and there it was.

My wife got up excited. She had cried and wept and prayed over Robin. I was preaching in Ohio and in Arkansas and St. Louis, and she went in there to see if it was gone, and it wasn't.

As a matter of fact, it looked worse. Well, when I came home, Robin had asked Mama, said, Do you think that might have been a vision? Betty said, I hope so. Well, when I got home on Tuesday morning, it looked worse than it ever looked.

By Thursday morning, it was about three times the size it had ever been. It was hard. I would look at it and cringe, and finally I said, Betty, we're going to go ahead and call that plastic surgeon and tell him that she can't brush her teeth.

She missed two days of school because she couldn't even eat, and it was just terrible. And I said, Well, he's got to see her now. And little Robin said, I still just believe that God's going to take this thing away.

Well, we went to Randy's Little League ball game on Thursday night, and Dudley Hall brought one of our directors over there from Tennessee, and you saw it. And did it look like it was getting well, Dudley? It was so horrible that he and his son could hardly stand to look at Robin. Dudley told me that he went home and got his entire family, and they gathered together to pray for Robin.

Her entire little Christian school was praying for her. They'd been praying for her for weeks. Robin never gave up.

Nobody around her gave up. Mother and Daddy, we're about to throw in the towel. Robin still believe in God.

I leave on Thursday night for a director's meeting. We're up to about one o'clock, getting prepared for the other directors to come in the next day, and I go to sleep. I had told Robin when I came in Tuesday morning, I said, I believe it'll be gone by Thursday night, Robin, so just relax.

Of course, by Thursday morning, I didn't believe it was ever going to be gone. I was totally caught up in unbelief. All I could see was that stinking thing on my little girl's lip.

But my little girl still sees God. Betty can't even see her vision anymore. She's lost sight of that.

All she can see is that stinking thing. And it's getting worse. And here comes Dudley over, and he's no help.

He goes into a state of panic and almost left the ballgame. He goes home, though, and gets his family to pray. At four o'clock in the morning, our little daughter woke up with that tumor in her hand, and her lip was absolutely perfectly healed with no sign of it ever being there.

Absolutely beautiful. When we came home from the director's meeting, Dudley and this other director rode home with me, and they wanted to get out and see the miracle. And they said, let us see.

That's the first thing I want to do. I found myself sitting and staring at my little girl. The doctor said it won't go away.

Well, we consulted another physician, and he said it'll go away. And it did go away in the name of Jesus. But I want to tell you that it is the most difficult thing in all the world to believe what God has said in your heart more than you believe what you see with your eyes.

And I want to tell you that I don't have the preaching potential, I don't have the physical capability of moving you into the realm of faith. Only God can move you there. But he can do it.

And I want to tell you that there's no name name that he's not over. And my friend, if we allow the idols to be smashed and they're ripped out by the roots, and we get in a position that we can hear God, then the word of God will begin to prevail rather than the idols that we've lifted up and the teachings and traditions of man. God wants you to hear him.

We're not talking about the power of the mind. We're not talking about psychic phenomena. We're talking about the power of God.

But you're going to have to stop all the traffic and all the clutter. And you're going to have to hear God. And it won't happen until you tear down all these high places and smash your idols.

All of my idols had to be smashed for me to get into a place that I could even believe God for health in my own body. And I know it may sound trivial to you, but the Lord has allowed me to live with such beautiful health, not without a battle. Sometimes I find myself in some intense battles.

And when I do, I ask for people to pray with me because I don't want to lose. But my Lord said to me that he's not sick. Jesus Christ is not sick.

And he lives in you. If you just let that come home to you, he's not sick. And he's living in you.

It's possible. It's possible. I know it doesn't seem likely, but it's possible to walk in divine health.

I believe it's an appropriated lifestyle. I believe it's a learned lifestyle, just like overcoming the enemy is a learned practice. Resisting the fiery darts of the wicked is a learned practice.

But I'm going to tell you, God's going to tear down every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of truth. Turn to Micah chapter two in verse eight. Micah chapter two in verse eight.

By the way, I'm reading from the New American Standard version of the Bible. If you see a little difference in the wording of your Bible and mine. Recently, my people have arisen as an enemy.

You strip the robe off the garment from the unsuspecting passersby from those returned to war. You see what we're doing to those who really go into the right battle. We want to strip them down.

And that's what we're doing. You let people get serious about God and much of the rest of the church will begin to mock them. And we'll begin to try to expose any mistake.

Do you remember how the Pharisees and the scribes would come to Jesus and try to catch him in something he might say? Do you remember that when Jesus healed on numerous occasions, it just happened to be on the Sabbath? I don't think it happened to be. I think it was on purpose. And they'd never even rejoiced in the miracle.

All they could do was accuse him. This man that picked up his bed and walked after 38 years of illness, they didn't even notice the dude's carrying his bed. They just noticed he was doing it on the Sabbath.

But I want to tell you the New Testament church today is not rejoicing over the healings and the miracles of God. They're griping and complaining because they'd been teaching, they passed away. Amen, brother.

Do you know what they did when Jesus freed people when he just went on doing his ministry? They accused Jesus to cast out demons of being possessed by demons. And now then we've got preachers who've come on the scene to get the devil out of the church and the rest of church says those preachers are possessed by the devil. In one word, they say, we don't even believe in demons and we don't even believe in the devil, but that preacher's got demons in the devil.

Verse 10, arise and go for this is no place of rest. Brother, get out of here. You're not finding rest in this religious place.

You know why? Because the word that's preached is not united in faith with those that hear it and in those that hear it. And unless you live by faith, you can't enter into God's rest, even if you're Moses. Because you only enter into God's rest when you sanctify the Lord and make him holy before the people and you never glory in your flesh.

Moses did. Moses looked in, but never entered in. There are many people in the church today who are going to watch the glory come, but they'll not be in the glory.

I'm telling you, there's some preachers that are standing back waiting to find out whether they're going to get on the bandwagon. When you get ready to get on, it's going to be going so fast, you can't catch it. You're going to wait too long and it's going to pass you by.

Brother, while you speculate and you analyze and you scoff and you mock, God's truth is marching on. You're not going to find rest in this religious idolatry and traditionalism. This is no place of rest because of the uncleanness that brings on destruction, a painful destruction.

Look at this, verse 11. If a man is walking after wind and falsehood and he had told you lies and he said, I'm going to speak out to you concerning wine and liquor, strong drinks, then he would become a spokesman to you. You'd rather somebody come and feed you the wine of deception and speculation and talk to you about the fleshly things and the religious things than you had for someone to come and tell you the truth.

You heap to yourselves teachers having itching ears according to your own fleshly desires. That's why we've got the Pentecostal crowd and the Baptist crowd and the Methodist crowd and we got the stiff-necked crowd and we got the out-of-control bunch but we don't have people under the control of Holy God. But all that's changing.

I'm telling you, the sheep are coming to God if the shepherds don't. There was a man in the Old Testament that said it won't happen. One of the king's men, one of the priests stood at the gate and said it won't happen and when the blessing of God did come, the lepers saw it and the lepers found it and it was the truth and this dude that the king sent to stand at the gate got trampled by the people going out to get the food.

And I want to tell you, when you stand in the way of what God's doing, the sheep will run right over you to get to the truth. Brother, they're not going to be stopped by denominational idols which God is in the process of smashing. They're going to go to God and they're going to live in the truth.

Now, you may want somebody to come and give you the wine of the venom of serpents and somebody to give you the wine of this world. God said through Jeremiah, you stagger and through Isaiah, you stagger but not with strong drink. You're drunk but not with wine.

People are drunk on the spirit of the world and the spirit of deception and they stagger and they read and they can't hear the word of God. When you honor God with your lips and you do service with your mouths but your hearts are far from him and your worship consists of mechanical repetition you can't even hear the word of God. It's nothing but a book.

It's a dead book. You're going to have to come to God with your whole heart in order for God to communicate with you but you'd rather have somebody get up and lecture you on wine. He'll be your spokesman.

Verse 12, I will surely assemble all of you Jacob my chosen people and I will surely gather the remnant of Israel and I will put them together like sheep in the fold. God says, I'm going to do it like a flock in the midst of its pasture. I'll make them lie down in green pastures and it'll be noisy with men.

Look at this, the breaker goes up before them and they break out and they pass through the gate and go by and their king goes before them and the Lord is at their head. God's going to set his people free. He's going to set them free from the temples and the high cornered towers and the fortresses that man made and then which man trusts for false security.

God says he'll tear them down. Hear now you heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel. Hear heads, hear leaders, hear you church leaders, you rulers.

Is it not for you to know justice? Justice is truth. Justice is the word of God. You're supposed to know truth, God says.

You who hate good and love evil, you who tear off their skin from them and their flesh from their bones, you eat the flesh of my people and you strip off the skin from them and you break up their bones and you chop them up for the pot like meat in the kettle. Don't you know you're consuming my people with your own vanity? God said in Ezekiel 34, you've scattered my sheep. You want to keep them apart.

I'll guarantee you any preacher that wants to make sure everybody stays a good old Baptist and wouldn't dare go to another kind of a meeting and wouldn't dare love other people. That man is scaring the flock. He's a false shepherd.

I don't care if he's got the biggest following in Louisville, Kentucky. God's people ought to love one another and they don't know any barrier or boundary to that love. There is no person on this earth you're not

supposed to love with a godly love.

And that does not mean you compromise the word of God. But the fact is none of us have it all figured out. None of us know much.

And as long as we're willing to be divisive and dissenters, we're not going to know the truth because we walk in darkness. If you say you know God and hate your brother, you're in darkness until now. And you can't hear God.

God's going to bring his people together somewhere in the church of Jesus Christ in Louisville, Kentucky, somewhere in this great physical conglomeration of people meeting in the name of Jesus. There is the church of Jesus Christ. They're about to stand up and follow Jesus and walk in love and truth.

They're no longer going to be consumed and destroyed by those who put them like meat in the kettle. Verse four, those who do this will cry out to the Lord but he won't answer them. God doesn't answer the prayers of people like this.

I'll guarantee you they're going to be praying for their reputations to be saved because they're making an idol out of their reputation. Even though Jesus said make of yourself no reputation. Some of the preachers in this town are afraid of a visitation from God because it'll contradict what they've been preaching.

They don't want it to come. Their reputation is more important to them than the work of a sovereign holy God. They feel duty bound to protect the precious golden calves that they have made idols of for years, their own thoughts and their own teachings.

And God's going to tear them down. They'll cry out but he won't answer. They'll say, oh my, my church is falling apart.

Oh God, we're falling off in the budget. Oh God, I'm losing our people. All of that happened to me a year ago.

We were losing several hundred thousand dollars a month when I was here in Louisville a year ago. I knew in my own heart then that the ministries I'd known it was done for. That's when Jesus had told me.

He said he had seen my ministry for 21 years. He wanted to know if I'd like to see his ministry. It's amazing that we agreed it'd be better to see his than mine.

I knew my ministry was dying. As far as I knew, I'd never be on television anymore. We were \$2.2 million in the hole and people were writing us ugly letters and accusing us and preachers.

I never dreamed the very preachers that I had stood by shoulder to shoulder and helped them lead hundreds of people to Jesus Christ would come out as my chief accusers and critics, pick up the telephone and call one another. It's the most amazing thing I preached here in Louisville sometime before I came here. And I remember.

So we're preaching in two of the largest churches and I met with the pastors that night until midnight. They kept me up till past midnight. One of them woke me up before eight o'clock the next morning.

You know what one of them told the other one? He said this morning, James preached in my church. This is what he said. There are many witnesses to it.

Some of them are sitting here. They heard him say it. He said for the first time in my ministry, the word of God made sense.

But the problem was the next day he made a few phone calls to some big shots and all of a sudden what he had heard would make him a laughing stock. So he didn't like it anymore and he became an enemy. I'm going to tell you something.

I haven't seen him. I'd love to. But I want you to know that that man doesn't have much peace right now in his life.

And I want you to know that there is a difficulty in that man's life finding rest or peace or sleep or contentment. And I can assure you that when we begin to refuse what we know in our spirit, God said in order to stay in the good graces of certain men of high esteem, we will not receive from the Lord God and we will walk in misery and darkness. I don't care how good they look on the outside.

The day is going to come when they're going to be crying out for their own reputation. And they're going to say, God, save my church. Let me tell you who's going to leave their churches.

The people they run away with their obnoxious attitudes, not the noisy troublemakers, but the little quiet sheep that go as a lamb before the shepherds, answering not a word. These preachers from the pulpits will drive them from their churches. I'm watching it.

One dear little lady went up to a pastor and said, Preacher, I've got a word from God for you. He said, you haven't heard God. You've got a bad case of indigestion.

You say that's uncommon. That's not uncommon. That's the most typical expression coming from the pulpits of this land toward the people of God who have a heart and an ear to hear God.

They are made fun of. They are intimidated. They are told to sit down and shut up, line up and march to my drumbeat and keep bringing your tithes and offerings.

It doesn't matter that the devil's beating your brains out. Ignore the devil and listen to me. That's what they're saying.

And I want to tell you, my friends, the day is coming that they're going to call on God and God's not going to hear him. He's going to hide his face from them because they use the people of God for their own gain and to feed their own ego. And they didn't feed the people of God, the word of God.

They didn't teach the people of God to be ambassadors, priests and kings and ministers and witnesses for Jesus Christ. Look at verse five. Thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who lead my people astray.

The prophets who lead my people astray when they have something to bite with their teeth. You know what you bite with your teeth? You bite money. You bite money with your teeth.

As long as you give them money, as long as you feed their appetites, as long as you feed their vain vision, they cry, peace, it's peace. We have the most wonderful fellowship. It's peace.

It's so wonderful. As long as you build their program, build their image. But I want to tell you, they use the people to make them look good when they turn in their reports to the association.

They want to look better than anybody else in town. And they're using you like meat for a kettle. But it's about to be over.

The sheep of God's pasture are coming to David and David is going to shepherd his people. Jesus is going to be our shepherd. And Jesus is going to raise up even from the people, those who will speak the truth in love.

When you give them something to bite with their teeth, they cry, peace. But against him who puts nothing in their mouths, you don't come in here and make us look good. You don't come in here and boost our numbers.

You don't come in here and get our budget up. You don't come in here and get our image up. You don't support my program.

You're not dedicated to what we put before you. You're not dedicated to the denominations priorities. Against them who put nothing in their mouth, they declare holy war.

And they'll pass resolutions against you. And they'll have meetings against you to get rid of you. I've heard it rumored that some of the major denominations are going to go this year to pass resolutions against the charismatics.

How sad. The day of denomination passes a resolution against a fresh work of God in the hearts of a few people who got fed up with death and said, come on, Jesus. And Jesus came on and Jesus began to manifest himself to some of these people, not to say that some of them have not been guilty of shallowness and lack of steadfastness and lack of doctrinal stability or even guilty of some excess and some extreme, because that is also true.

But they have come with a perfect and pure heart to say, Lord, show me something. And if any denomination dares to pass a resolution against a fresh breath of God, you might as well nail the coffin lid shut, because I'm going to tell you it's over for that denomination period. Absolutely.

And finally, it is over. And there are those who are doing it even now. And that is not an endorsement of anybody's success.

And I don't wear any label. I refuse to say that I'm a part of anything. But I want to tell you that I've seen the people who've been labeled charismatics.

And I want you to know that some of them have as pure and perfect a heart toward God as anybody on this earth in or out of the public. And it is wrong for us to go and blast our fellow man who has a heart for God, just like it would be wrong to make a blanket indictment against any denomination, because there are those within those denominations that have a perfect and pure heart toward God in all of them. And we need to just thank God for those whose hearts are perfect toward him, because those are the ones that he's working with and working in.

They will declare holy war against you if you don't say what they want you to say. Therefore, those who do this, it will be night for you without vision. It will be darkness for you without divination.

The sun will go down on your prophets and the day will become dark over them and the seers, the visionaries will be ashamed and the diviners will be embarrassed. Indeed, they will cover their mouth

because there's no answer from God. I've watched denomination after denomination, try to get more programs going.

When you don't have the glory of God, you've got to have another program. But I've watched them try. I've watched them in committee.

I've watched them and I've watched them and I've watched them. And I want to tell you, there's no answer from God until the people sanctify themselves before God. Call a solemn assembly, call a fast, repent of your ways and God will reveal himself to you.

You're not going to get enough programs to overcome. God didn't answer you because of your programs. He'll answer you because of the purity of your heart and because you pray and seek his face.

Look at the true prophet of God in verse eight. On the other hand, I'm filled with power with the spirit of the Lord and with the justice and courage that God gives us. What am I filled with courage to do? To make known to Jacob, the church, his rebellious act, even to Israel, the chosen people, his sin.

That's what the prophet does. He comes in and exposes sin. We don't mind exposing sin in the world.

Stay off the church. Talk about the drunks. Talk about all the others.

Well, that's what I'm doing tonight. I'm talking about the drunks. The church is full of people drunk on the spirit of this world, drunk on the spirit of religion, drunk on the flesh.

The sin of the church is the reason this nation is in trouble. The reason we've got the horrible holocaust of abortion is because the pulpit is full of cowards and the pews are full of people who won't act according to righteousness. Absolute cowardice fills the churches of Jesus Christ.

God forgive us. The problem is with us. Again, God says in verse nine, Now hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob and you rulers of the house of Israel leaders.

I'm talking to the leaders. The last people on this earth you can get away with preaching to are the church leaders. They think they're primadonnas living in a glass house.

Don't talk about our sin. Brother, I'll tell you, they put such intimidation on you. They say if you expose our evil deeds, you won't get any more invitations.

You go over there and do that, you won't come back in these churches anymore. They literally browbeat you to death. And there have not been many who have the intestinal God-given fortitude to stand up and plant their feet unshakably on the word of God and say, thus says the Lord God, cry aloud and spare not, preach against the prophets that deal falsely with my people and that scatter my flock.

God says, do it. You hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob and you rulers of the house of Israel, you who abhor justice and you twist everything that's straight. You twist the truth.

You make it your doctrine. You make it your position. You don't say what God says.

You build a church with bloodshed and Jerusalem with violent injustice. Your leaders pronounce judgment for a bride. You will say anything to get an advancement in your position.

To climb up one more ladder or one more rung on the ladder of success. Her priests instruct for a bribe. Her prophets divine for money.

Yet they lean on the Lord saying, is not the Lord in our midst? No, he's not. And it's obvious because you have a lot of farm with no power. And you know it.

And they say calamity will not come upon us. Yes, it will. Therefore, on account of you, the church Zion will be plowed like a field.

Jerusalem will become like a heap of ruins and the mountain of the temple will become like the high places of the forest. In other words, grown up with invaders. Turn over to Jeremiah chapter 5 verse 30.

Look in your Bible at the word of God. Jeremiah chapter 5. Jeremiah 5 verse 30. An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land.

The prophets prophesy falsely and the priests rule on their own authority. And my people love it so. But what will you do at the end of it? They rule by their own authority.

They're not sent by God, they're sent by men. And therefore they have to please men to stay in good standing. Amen.

Jeremiah chapter 8 beginning at verse 10. Jeremiah 8 verse 10. I will give their wives to others and their fields to new owners.

Because from the least even to the greatest, everyone is greedy for gain. From the prophet even to the priest, everyone practices deceit. And they heal the brokenness of the daughter of my people slightly or superficially.

In other words, it's a false healing. They keep telling you everything's great. Everything's great.

Everything's great in our denomination, but it's not because we're not right with God. Were they ashamed because of the abomination they had done? They certainly were not ashamed. They didn't even know how to blush.

Therefore they will fall among those who fall. That means that you will fall, pray to the fallen ones, the fallen angels. That means you fall among the demon powers.

You fall among the fallen. You fall among those condemned. At the time of their punishment, they shall be brought down declares the Lord.

I will surely snatch them away declares the Lord. There'll be no grapes on the vine. There'll be no fruit.

There'll be no figs on the fig tree, and the leaf will wither, and what I've given them will pass away. Why are you sitting still? Assemble yourselves and let us go into fortified cities and let us perish there because the Lord our God has doomed us. He's given us poisoned water to drink because we sinned against the Lord.

We waited for peace, but no good came. We waited for a time of healing, but behold, terror from Dan has heard the snorting of his horses at the sound of his neighing or the neighing of his stallions. The whole land quakes.

They come to devour the land and its fullness, the city and its inhabitants, for behold, I'm sending serpents against you, adders for which there's no charm, and they will bite you declares the Lord. And then you see the lament of Jeremiah. My sorrow is beyond healing.

My heart is faint within me. Behold, listen, the cry of the daughter of my people from a distant land is not the Lord in Zion, is not God in the church, is not her king within her. Why have they provoked me with their graven images and their foreign idols? Harvest has passed and summer has ended and we're not saved for the brokenness of the daughter of my people.

I'm broken, I'm mourned. Dismay has taken hold of me. Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people been restored? And the next chapter tells you why in verse three, they bend their tongue like a bow, lies and not truth prevail in the land.

They proceed from evil to evil. They do not know me declares the Lord. Let everyone be on guard against his neighbor and do not trust any brother because every brother deals craftily and every neighbor goes about as a slanderer.

And that's the way the church treats each other. They slander you. They'll call you any name to make you ineffective if you don't line up and march to their drumbeat.

Everyone deceives his neighbor and does not speak the truth. They talk their tongue to speak lies and they weary themselves committing iniquity. Your dwelling is in the midst of deceit, not truth.

Through deceit, they refuse to know me. Verse eight, their tongue is a deadly arrow. It speaks deceit with his mouth.

One speaks peace to his neighbor, but inwardly he sets an ambush for him. Turn over to Zephaniah chapter one and you will see that the day of the Lord is near. The day of the Lord is the revelation of God in his majesty through judgment, through redemption and through the manifestation of his power and his presence.

The day of the Lord is a day of preparation for the return of the Lord. And we are now in the day of the Lord. I want you to look at Zephaniah.

That's just a couple of books over from Micah and we're going to go back to Micah. But look at Zephaniah chapter one, verse 14. Near is the great day of the Lord.

Near and coming very quickly. Listen, the day of the Lord. In it, the warrior cries out bitterly.

It's a day of wrath. It's a day of trouble and distress. It's a day of destruction and desolation.

It's a day of darkness and gloom. It's a day of clouds and thick darkness. It's a day of trumpet and battle cry against the fortified cities, against what man has built for his security.

And we don't like to hear that. God says, I'll bring distress on men and they'll walk like blind because they've sinned against the Lord. And their blood will be poured out like dust.

Neither their silver, verse 18, nor their gold will be able to deliver them on the day of the Lord's wrath when all the earth will be devoured in the fire of his jealousy. For he will make a complete end to the works of man, to the things that man does in his own name. Back over in Micah, please.

Back over in Micah. I want you to look at Micah chapter six. And I'm not skipping passages because they're not important.

I'm skipping for the sake of time. I hope you'll read the entire book of Micah. There's some passages that God has not yet revealed to me, the application.

And perhaps he will to you. There are many I'm skipping, but he has given me the understanding of. But I want to go on to chapter six and share some things with you, please.

Beginning at verse one, hear now what the Lord is saying, arise and plead your case before the mountains. That's what I'm doing. I'm pleading God's case before the high places.

And let the hills hear your voice. Listen, you mountains to the indictment of the Lord. Listen, all the exalted places of the earth and you enduring foundations of the earth, because the Lord has a case against his people.

Even with Israel, he will dispute my people. What have I done to you? And how have I wearied you? In other words, why do you appear to be so weary and apathetic? You know, last night we left this place. We would gather our most much of our staff.

I guess we must have had about 15 of our staff gather. Do you know what the consensus evaluation of what we saw here last night was? Was a people exhausted and complacent and apathetic. We just sense that spirit all over this place.

Even those of you have a heart for God, you just, you've had the very life beat out of you for trying to walk with God. You get in all you hear is the clamor of men. You go to church to get fed and you get trunked up.

You see truth trampled down in the streets. You see justice made mockery of and exalting denominational position. Men take pride in clobbering each other and devouring one another.

This town hasn't been together. The leaders of this town are not together. I told the preachers today at noon, I spoke to about, I guess there were about 80 or 90 that were there today at noon.

And I said, listen, you can't expect your people to walk together as one when you preachers won't walk together as one. And I shared with them that one of the things God's gonna do in this city, if you hear God, he's gonna raise up a group of people, a body of people who are dead serious about God. And he's gonna tell some preachers to lay down their reputation and lay down their position of leadership and submit to one another in honor, preferring one another.

And some of these preachers or church leaders are gonna have to become the associate of another preacher and not be the leader himself. And they're gonna submit to each other. And if they won't do it, the people of God will never do it.

Some places God's gonna take one little group of people and bring them together across all denominational lines just to form one little body of believers to love everybody. And there'll be two or three or four pastors who'll just come together and say, we're gonna show you it's possible to walk as one. That's exactly what God has led Jim Hilton and Dudley Hall and I to do.

These men have great ministries, but we have all lost our ministry in the ministry of Jesus, in the ministry of restoration to see the whole body restored. And we submit ourselves to one another in the fear of the

Lord. When I leave the service tonight, I will ask them, did I move out of the spirit? Let the spirit of the prophets be subject to the prophets.

I asked them last night when I left, I said, did I miss God? I will ask people, I asked my wife, did I miss God? Why? Because I'm not here Lord? Well, because you can be deceived even when you're preaching. That's why God said, let the spirit of the prophets be subject to the prophets. We don't stand ourselves up here like some infallible big shot.

We just stand up and proclaim, we follow our spirit. But if it's the wrong spirit that gets in control, we can flow right into error and deception ourselves. That's why we need to humble ourselves before one another.

That's exactly what preachers are gonna have to do right here in this town. I wanna tell you, there needs to be a fellowship of preachers who get together and just love one another. And it's gonna get so hot and so heated and so intense that they're gonna have to have fellowship in the body, a fellowship of love.

Because I'm telling you, all hell's gonna break loose in Louisville, Kentucky. You have never seen meanness like you're gonna see when some of these golden calves start coming down and smashing. You let some of the budgets of these big shots and these big churches get threatened and you're gonna see meanness that makes the mafia pay up.

There is no greater meanness on this earth than when you start taking something away from some preacher with a vain vision. You just let him lose a few sheep and he'll call those sheep every dirty name he can think of even though they were the best he had. If they cross him, he'll blast their bones out.

You're gonna see that right here in scripture. The people last night were weary. The people in this town are tired.

God wants to lift that off of you. Look what verse four says. Indeed, I brought you up from the land of Egypt.

God said, I brought you out of the world and I ransomed you from the house of slavery and I sent the word. I sent the law. I sent the truth.

I sent Moses, the lawgiver, Aaron, the priest and I sent Miriam. I sent faith and obedience and love. I sent truth before you.

My people remember now what Balak king of Moab counseled and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him and from Sidon to Gilgal in order that you might know the righteous acts of God. God says, go back and remember what was happening. Verse six.

With what shall I come to the Lord? Shall I bow myself down before God on high? Shall I come to him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? Am I gonna come with sacrifices? Does the Lord take delight in thousands of rams and in 10,000 rivers of oil? Do you think you're gonna please God with all your ritual and with all of these things you go through? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious act? Are you gonna sacrifice your firstborn son for your sin? The fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? No, there's nothing you can do. God's already done it in Christ. God's already done it through the blood.

He has told you, old man, what is good and what does the Lord require of you but for you to do the word, to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God. That's what God wants. The voice of

the Lord will call to the city, to the church, to the gathering of people.

And it is sound wisdom to fear God's name. Hear, O tribe, who has appointed its time. Is there yet, look at this, folks.

Is there yet a man in the wicked house along with treasures of wickedness and a short measure that's cursed? Can I justify wicked scales and a bag of deceptive weights? God says your measuring stick is crooked, it's short. You've got the wrong standard, church. It's not who's the biggest.

It's holiness. It's righteousness. You don't use the world's measuring stick.

I'll guarantee you one of the exciting reports that's already going out about this meeting is they don't have very many down there. If James Robinson would have come with us, we'd have filled every seat. I don't want ever a seat full.

I want every temple filled with the glory of God. That's my heart, tribe. Hear, O tongues wagging, say, that meeting's a flop, nobody went.

God came, that's enough. God's here. You got a crooked measuring stick.

Bigger's not always better. Jesus. You turn Jesus loose in three people's lives and you'll see a new day of restoration in Louisville, Kentucky.

There's some preachers I sat with, a little Southern Baptist pastor, a handsome young man at that lunch table today, graduate of Southern Seminary. He has a heart for God. If he won't let men intimidate him, he'll shake this area for Christ.

Young man. I've met men from all the different walks of life who have a heart for God. They refuse to fear men and be intimidated by men.

Brother, God says that that measuring stick is not comparing yourselves by yourselves and measuring yourselves with yourselves and thereby, Paul said, being void of understanding. And that's how we measure. We have the wrong measuring stick.

Here's the measuring stick. Jesus. The word of God.

The rich men of the city are full of violence and the residents speak lie. Look at this. And their tongue is deceitful in their mouths.

So what does God say in verse 13? I'll make you sick, striking you down, desolating you because of your sins. Friend, don't ever disassociate the possibility of sickness coming from sin. Not always.

Jesus settled that. This man's not blind because of the sins of his parents or his own. This is an opportunity for the glory of God.

Brother, I want to tell you that when you walk in sin and rebellion against God, you become vulnerable to the destroyer. And you better take God serious. When I find my body in a battle, I don't run immediately to the medicine cabinet.

I run immediately to the altar before God to pray. And I say, Lord, what are you trying to show me? Some of you want relief without repentance. That's not a put down of medications.

It's a put down of moving fast before you take time to be still and hear God. I found the Lord on occasion or two when I couldn't seem to speak a headache away that I just went to bed. And, you know, it's one of the most difficult things we do just to lay down.

I'm a very active person. But I found the Lord would say, go to bed. And I'd go to bed.

And I'd awaken at two or three o'clock in the morning. In the next three or four hours, I would just sit at the feet of Jesus and he would teach me. If I had gotten an aspirin and got rid of my headache, I'd have gone on about my business.

And I'd have missed that appointment I had with God in the early morning hours. What I'm saying to you is be careful what you do when this temple of God may be saying something about what's going on in the house of God. Just ask the Lord, what are you saying, Lord? He might be saying something.

Give him an opportunity to get your attention. God says, when you rebel, I'm going to make you sick. You will eat, verse 14, but you won't be satisfied.

And your violence will be in your midst. Verse 15, you will sow, but you won't reap. You will tread the olive, but you won't anoint yourself at all.

You're going to work to be anointed. You're going to work to have power, but you won't have it. And the grapes, but you will not drink wine.

So you're not going to have the fruit of the beautiful fruit of the Spirit. You're just going to labor, but there'll be nothing there. God says in verse 16, that I'm going to give you up to destruction and your inhabitants for derision and you will bear the reproach of my people.

Verse two in the seventh chapter, the godly person is perished from the land. There's no upright person among men All of them lie in wait for bloodshed. Do you know that's what people do? They lie in wait to get on each other.

See, the church doesn't love. Do you think all the churches in this town are praying for this meeting right here? No. Do you know that the great assault that comes against me are the curses that men are speaking against us continuously? Do you know that churches actually organize and really pray against you by speaking evil of you? They speak sicknesses on you.

They call all the evil angels to focus attention on you. That's what happens. You wonder why some men who tell people they can have healing get sick themselves and can't seem to get well.

Because there are very few of us on this earth who don't at some point let our guard down. In other words, maybe we murmur. See, God's not real high on complaining.

Some of you wonder why you get run over. Well, when you go around murmuring and complaining, the Lord sent serpents to destroy them. When they did that, He didn't like complaining.

He didn't like you living that way. But there are not too many of us who won't just sort of complain, you know. Well, if you get caught and everybody else in town is looking, you're going to look.

Solomon said that with the tongue, there's the power of life and death. The power of life and death is in the tongue. What does that mean? That means that you have authority with the spoken word to do what? To

control the heavenlies.

Both the holy and the evil angels are subject to the authority of the believer. And you can call destruction down on people. You remember what Paul said? I'm going to give this one up to the devil for the destruction of his flesh.

How do you do that? How do you give somebody up to the devil for the destruction of his flesh? You withdraw fellowship from them. You withdraw from them. You just pull back from them, see.

And then they become vulnerable. When you give up some brother, you make him vulnerable. Let me tell you something else.

When you give up others, you make yourself vulnerable. That's why you better be sure you're doing it in harmony with the rest of the body of believers. Because when you begin to cut other people off, you cut yourself off from the security of walking in covenant with the whole body of Christ, which is the way we're to walk.

And what happens to some of us who start telling people you can have healing, the people that don't want that and that don't want to hear it, they look at us and they start saying, I hope he gets sick. And let me tell you what happens when they say that. Every spirit of infirmity hears that.

And every destroying angel. That's why Jesus said, if you hate your brother, you've already committed murder. Because when you won't forgive somebody, you're saying, I wish you were dead.

And the destroying angels hear that. And they will focus their attention on that individual. Evil angels lurk.

They watch me. They've been ordered by other Christians to watch me. And if I let my guard down, they come like a flood.

That's why it's so important to have others praying for us. Because there are not many of us who sometime don't stumble. See, they're waiting for me to stumble, the Psalmist said.

They rejoice at my stumbling. They want me to stumble. And they lurk and they attack.

And that's what the body of Christ is doing. The churches in this town, most of them not praying for this meeting. They're hoping nobody comes.

Some of them went up and said, don't go. What causes that? Fear of man. They're afraid.

They live in fear. Because they have an idol of men pleasing. They want to please their peers.

They're afraid we might interfere with what they're doing. They're afraid. See, they talk about it, but they're afraid.

Most of the schools and universities and professors and teachers and pastors, they wouldn't let somebody come in like myself and answer questions even. Answer accusations. Why? Because they know that the people, the sheep will recognize truth.

And they know they're going to say, I heard Jesus there. And they're going to go like sheep to follow. And it scares these insecure men that don't want their people to hear them.

He says, I'm not afraid for you to hear anybody. You've got enough sense to discern. I want you to hear.

And I want you to resist words and receive the Word. I'm not afraid. I'm not afraid of somebody taking away our support.

My support's not people. My support and my source is God. Man, I don't have to have what man does.

I want what God gives. And He'll lead His people. We've got to walk with this peace.

And we've got to walk with this security. They were lying in wait for bloodshed. They want to kill.

They want to slander. Each of them hunts the other with a net. We want to snare them.

We want to catch them. Let me tell you something. I'll make some mistakes.

Don't stone me. Help me. Help me.

Don't kill me. I've preached to 12 million people. I've never yet met the first qualified stone thrower.

Well, I've met a lot of people who throw stones. I will stone. Don't trample me.

Help me get up. Help me see truth. Don't lie in wait to catch me with a net.

Verse 3, concerning evil, both hands do it well. The prince asked also the judge for a bribe. They want to be paid for what they're doing.

A great man speaks the desire of his soul, speaks from his own heart rather than what the word says. So they weave it together. Look at verse 4. The best of them, the choice ones among you is like a briar.

And the most upright person, the most upright leader is like a thorn hedge. You know what that means? You cross them and they'll stick you. Your great leaders in this town will stick it to you if you cross them.

They'll say they love you, but they'll stick you. They're like a briar and they're like a thorn hedge. You can't get close to them.

They'll stick you. They just want to keep you out there doing what they want you to do. And the day when you post a watchman, your punishment will come.

In other words, you're not going to be able to stop the judgment. Then your confusion will occur. They're going to go into confusion, folks.

When you bite and devour one another, you're going to be consumed by one another. I just heard about one of the meanest fighting groups we got in our area. They just split last week and formed them a new group.

Do you know that Baptist people of which I've been a part in fellowship for years, do you know that they're always accusing others and now they're spending most of their time accusing each other? See, they've been biting and devouring, so now they're consuming each other. Do you know that there are identifiably 300 different groups within the Baptist faith? Isn't that precious? Isn't that wonderful? It's an abomination. And then you take the Pentecostals.

My goodness, why have they got so many different factions and fragments? You can't even name all of them. I preached in Cleveland, Tennessee, and they got four world headquarters of the Church of God. Four world headquarters of the Church of God.

Then you got the United Pentecostals and the Pentecostal Holiness, and you got the Assemblies of God, and on and on and on. And we just walk in our own ways. God, help us.

Do not trust a neighbor. Do not have confidence in a friend. From her who lies in your bosom, guard your lips.

You got to be careful what you're saying, man. People use it against you. For the son treats the father contemptuously, and the daughter rises up against her mother, daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's enemies are those of his own household.

Let me tell you something, folks. Look right up here at me for a moment. If you decide to go with God, don't be surprised where you're going to find your critics.

And if you are a man pleaser, you will never please God. Now, that doesn't mean you're to be obstinate. That doesn't mean you're to be rebellious.

But I'll guarantee you, your critic will be the one that you had sweet fellowship with, one that you ate dinner with and broke bread with. They will become your accusers. Because the moment you no longer help them achieve their selfish ends, and they see that heart turn toward God, they'll just jump all over you.

You know what? I am now living what most of my friends prayed I would be. They prayed, I just wish James would just love God with all his heart. They used to say, I wish he'd quit playing golf and quit goofing off all the time, and just get serious about God and get in the Word of God.

And I had gotten in the Word of God until I wear Bibles out, read them and study them and love them. And I don't ever go to the Word to get sermons. I go to the Word to get life and to get bread and to get food.

And that's all I go. And I spend hour after hour after hour. People used to say, I wish you'd get up early in the morning.

I find myself now, I get up at four o'clock in the morning and five o'clock in the morning consistently just to pray. And I live in the Word. I don't even have time to play golf.

I don't do any of that. My heart is turned toward God only, and they hate my guts. I had one of them tell me the other day, he said, you can't just be spiritual all the time, man.

You got to get on down here and have some fun. I said, man, I'm having fun seated in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. I don't want to come back down here and have that kind of fun anymore.

Well, I'm having a wonderful time. I'm telling you, I am consumed by the Word of God and the love of Jesus. I don't have any fear, man.

I'm at peace. Brother, I don't care if they bring bulldozers and bulldoze my buildings off the slab. I don't worship buildings.

I worship God. And I'm telling him at peace. Verse seven, this is where I am.

As for me, I will watch expectantly for the Lord. That's what I'm doing, brother. I'm just watching expectantly for him to do everything he said he'd do.

Brother, I've been believing God I could walk on water. I've been out at night practicing on my pool. I don't feel confident enough yet to practice in the daylight.

I practice at night. Wait till they get that and put it in the Baptist Standard, in the Baptist state paper. James Robinson said he's going to walk on water.

I was out there the other night practicing and I said, Lord, I'm going to walk across this thing and ain't going to be anybody here to see it. And the Lord said, that's the reason you ain't going to walk across it, because you want somebody to see it. Now, I'm just kidding, okay? I didn't even practice yet.

But I'll tell you what God told me. The Lord said, you can read that passage in Matthew and you can read about me walking on the water until you're pickled in that scripture and you can't walk on the water. He said, but if you ever see me and hear me say, come, you can walk on that water.

Brother, I want to get so in touch with Jesus. I want to be so in touch with Jesus that whatever the father wills, I'll just jump out of the boat and act on the word of God. I want to hear Jesus.

Man, I want to hear Jesus. I want to be in tune with him. Boy, I'm having so much fun.

I'm waiting expectantly. Brother, I'm expecting these people to get out of these wheelchairs. I'm expecting those old crippled up limbs to go like that and be whole.

I'm expecting my Lord to come. I'm expecting people to be courageous in the Lord. I'm expecting the cancers to leave and the tumors to go.

I'm expecting people to be filled with the love and the glory of God. I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me.

I know he will. Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I fall, I will rise.

I'll get up. I won't stay down. Though I dwell in darkness, I know I live in darkness, Lord.

The Lord is a light for me. I see you, Jesus. I see you.

There's a light on the horizon. I've seen the glory of the rising sun. I know it's not noonday brightness.

I know I see through a glass dark, but I see the light. I see the glory. I'll never go back to man's way.

I want to see Jesus and follow only Jesus. I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I sinned against him. I know that, Lord.

I know I'm catching a lot because of what I sowed in the past, but I'm forgiven. I know that. But I know that I walked in my own way and I'm having to come out.

I'm coming out. I'm learning. I understand that, Lord.

I do understand. I've sinned against you until you plead my case and you execute justice for me. And you'll bring me out to the light and I will see your righteousness, Lord.

And I'm going to see it in your body. And then my enemy will see and shame will cover her who said to me, where is the Lord your God? I thought you believed in healing. Isn't it a shame how we mock each other? You let somebody say, I'm healed.

And then a few weeks later, they don't feel good. And somebody will say, I thought you believed in healing. I thought you said God healed you.

Why don't you go back to that healing meeting? Why don't you go back down and get them to pray for you? That's how the church acts. The church is mean today. The church is mean because the holy God doesn't control the church.

The unholy devil controls the people in the church. They're mean as sin, folks. Unless you play the game their way, they're mean.

They'll make fun of you. They'll mock you who believe God. You better not stumble.

They'll trample you down. All in the name of Jesus, they'll trample you. God help us.

Shame will cover her who said, where is the Lord your God? My eyes will look at her at the time she'll be trampled down. By who? By God. God's going to trample on the wood, hay, and the stubble in the high, exalted places.

Like mire in the streets, it'll be a day for building your walls. That's right. That's what we're doing, Lord.

We're building a spiritual house with living stones. On that day, your boundary will be extended. You better believe it, Lord.

I'll walk all over the enemy everywhere. I'll walk in a wide place. I'm going to have a big place.

I'll walk in peace. It will be a day when they'll come to you from the world, from Assyria and the cities of Egypt and from Egypt and the Euphrates. They're going to come to you.

Yes, they will. And from the sea and the mountain and the earth will become desolate because of the sins of her inhabitants, because of the inhabitants. And that's what Isaiah chapter 24 says, on account of the fruit of her deeds.

That's the reason you're going to be consumed and desolate. Verse 14, God shepherds your people with your rod and your staff, your scepter, the flock of your possession, which dwells by itself in the woodland in the midst of a fruitful field. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old.

Look at verse 15, folks. As in the days when you came out from the land of Egypt, I will show you miracles. Bless God, we're going to see them.

And Jesus will do them. Nations, the world will see and be ashamed. Denominations will see and be ashamed of their might.

And they'll put their hand on their mouth and their ears will be deaf. And they'll lick the dust like a serpent, like reptiles of the earth. They will come trembling out of their fortresses to the Lord, our God.

They will come in dread. They will be afraid before the people of God, before thee. Who is a God like thee who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of his possession? Oh, my God

does not retain his anger forever because he delights in unchanging love.

He will again have compassion on us. He will tread our iniquities underfoot. Yes, you will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

You will give truth to the church, to Jacob and unchanging love to Abraham, which thou did swear to our forefathers from the days of old. Amen and amen. Thank you, Lord.

I'm ready. I'm just ready to receive whatever God has. I will not turn my back on him.

I will walk in his word according to his will. If none go with me, still I will follow. My eyes are on Jesus.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/29/SID29753.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/james-robison/restoration-series-6-the-church-in-bondage/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

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

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

www.sermonindex.net