

Keeping Every Relationship Right

by Mack Tomlinson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of maintaining healthy relationships within the church, focusing on forgiveness, forbearance, and love as essential elements for spiritual growth and unity. The speaker highlights the need to address and resolve any broken or damaged relationships, comparing it to tending to physical wounds for healing. The message stresses the significance of walking in love, being peacemakers, and actively pursuing reconciliation with fellow believers to avoid quenching the Holy Spirit and hindering the church's spiritual health and effectiveness.

Scripture: Colossians 3:12, Matthew 5:23, Matthew 18:15, Mark 11:25, Psalm 133:1

Topics: "Forgiveness", "Unity in the Church"

Description

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Transcript

You should go watch that Times Square is full of people and I don't know what what Thing was going on a bunch of Christians were but just pull that up and watch him and See the people worshipping it's it's very moving 10,000 reasons live in Times Square, so Well, thank you for having me back. It's good to be home and Glad that Wife of 40 and a half years Linda. It's here for the first time and Brother Jason from from our church and Glenn all the way in from The Paul going back soon God willing and then Mariana Rivas from Monterey well Honore She's trying to get me to say it right and it's a hopeless so Corpus is about halfway from Monterey to Denton for her and So she came into corpus for the first time ever Not from across the border right from North, Texas, so we're glad she's here.

I Thought I'd mention this for those who are interested the second edition new Improved life of Leonard Ravenhill just came out. There's a first edition. I saw back there, but this is It's up.

It's I started say upgraded. That's right in it. I Was mentally uploaded or upgraded so updated that's it and It's there's new chapters in it.

There's new material in it. And so granted ministries in Missouri Published it. So speaking of Leonard Ravenhill, I just grabbed this off and Jason's book table Ravenhills revival God's way You can find his books on Amazon You know used ones.

None of them were hardbacks. So they're all smaller so if you haven't read Leonard Ravenhill, he's a joke a spiritual shock to awake you out of spiritual slumber so Somebody somebody buy this for the nights over Turn with me to Colossians 3 and We're going to Look at a subject that is vitally important in the church. I'm preaching to the church this weekend to build up the church Tonight I'm going to address two things One is horizontal That if you don't have this as a church you won't Have influence as a church if we don't have tonight what I'm going to talk about it as a church in our churches Then we will not prosper Spiritually, we won't be effective The Holy Spirit will be quenched God will be grieved What am I talking about brother Colossians 3 Verse 12 through 14 Put on therefore as the elect of God holy and beloved put on Bowels or the inner possession, you know bowels as a King James Word that has Not good picture connotations for us But it means the the inner man right at the heart of who you are put on Inward Mercies kindness humbleness of mind meekness long-suffering Forbearing with one another now pause Why do we need to be encouraged to forbear with one another? What's implied in that? We're tempted not to I'm tired of her Well, he's irritating me Right So we were told to forbear with one another Forgiving one another why are we? Told to do that Because Because at times we're we wrong each other If anyone has a quarrel against any even as Christ forgave you so do also So also do you and above all these things put on charity love Now pause on that one, too.

If you're walking in love Are you going to forbear with one another? Yes, if you're walking in love, are you going to forgive your brother or sister when they wrong you? Yes Love takes care of that above all these things put on love Which is the bond of peace or the bond of perfectness so What I want you to think about tonight is this in your church Is every relationship that you have with your brothers and sisters currently, right? Or are there things not right Relationally with sisters or brothers or couples with couples I Can say before the Lord tonight with a clear conscience by God's grace When I think of our church in Denton, I can picture the families I can picture our elders and our deacons and I can picture the people have been there the longest 19 years. I Can picture people that have been there a month? I can think of every person and I can say before the Lord. My relationship is right with them There's nothing broken.

There's nothing I Know that I've done that I hadn't made, right? There's nothing as far as I know on their part. That's wrong toward me I can I don't have to avoid them. I Don't have to wonder I know As far as it depends on me that Every relationship that I have as a Christian and as a pastor in my church is right Can you say that about your church? This is an exhortation encouragement to prod you to stir you to remind you to encourage you Just towards something that's really important the brethren in your church The most important and challenging thing a church can face is Weekend and week out month after month year after year to maintain fresh relationships to not get tired of each other The old Poet said To live above with the Saints we love that will be glory glory But to live below with the Saints we know that's a different story It's easy You know to love believers that have gone on before us It's easy to go to the fellowship conference and you see brethren you hadn't seen for a year and you have a love fest Then you come home to those you see all the time You don't love as much I know absence makes the heart grow fonder sometimes but It's more important for you to love each other here that you worship God with That's more important than the love you show in a sense once a year at a conference That's important.

But this is Is more important why because these are the brethren God's put you with to walk with To strengthen you to build you up for you to pray together And for you to walk with arm-in-arm spiritually

Glenn was telling us in the car this hadn't and I heard he and Jason talking about how in Nepal the men will walk down the street holding hands or Or Arm around each other and it's a normal thing to do. It's not weird Well spiritually, that's the way we ought to be with each other Are you harboring Any ill will or unforgiveness or grudge or bitterness Or Withholding love toward anybody in in the body Because of something that's offended you hurt you or you've misinterpreted or misunderstood Not made right that will Quench your walk with Christ and it will quench the Holy Spirit even in The assembly and in the meetings that can quench the Holy Spirit So let's think about this because in our own churches How many years is a churchman here been meeting Okay, ten years the honeymoon's over or is it Okay But you know a church starts and then it's excitement and and there's joy and excitement and then you hit a year two years five years and ten years and It is what it is and relationships are established and you we drew do grow used to each other and that can become Problematic if we don't cherish each other and maintain the relationships and who's that depend on You not mark depends on you It depends on the Holy Spirit, but he's depending on you to maintain the relationships and keep them, right And why does this become difficult? Because We rub one another the wrong way at times We offend We neglect and people get their feelings hurt We can show favoritism and we don't realize we're doing it clicks can develop and So At times we fail one another and we sin against one another we disappoint one another We hurt one another we can even hit it at a bad moment Be judgmental or neglect the relationship or be unfriendly Towards somebody and hurts their feelings. We didn't even know we were doing it and we we can settle in to Relational Mediocrity And we treat each other worse than Christ treats us and We get we can get into I've seen it happen.

We can get into a Culture of well these brethren. I'm especially close to but I'm not close to them You know why you might not be close to them because you never pursue them you don't spend time with them you hang out with those you're comfortable with and That's the sin of schism or schism both Both way you can say it either way. It means you're being divisive in the body because you're showing preference towards some and so Here's the deal if we're called to love all That means no one excluded in my heart.

I'm to be loving toward all and I'm to be loving Individually as I relate to you to care about you in the moment to receive you to be gracious to not neglect each other If we're called to love all question How can I know if I'm loving someone or not? What Shows me if real love is absent Here's the answer how self-test How is my relationship with every brother and every sister in the church? I think about them her things right with him her with them Am I actively showing them love Do I ever try to be with them? Or are there people in my church I've never been with ever in fellowship How is my relationship now, I'm not talking about the fact that We won't have deeper friendships somehow at times or more of a connection with some than others that does happen and God gives Relationships sometimes it's closer. Why? Because that relationship they may need each other For a period or someone really is able to minister to someone with their gifts and their Abilities and God uses somebody to really help a brother or a sister So I'm not talking about that The issue is not am I equally close to everybody The issue is is my relationship With everybody right and fresh and okay, or is it damaged? Is there anyone in my church that I can think about them and say my relationship with them is damaged Is my relationship with the brethren current right good clear conscience Unbroken and ongoing or is it damaged? Alienated broken Wounded So which of those two did you pass or fail that test My testimony that I shared early earlier about As far as I know no relationship being wrong This but this becomes real to me for several reasons number one is I read the epistles of the New Testament Paul and Peter and the authors major on this and Our Lord Jesus Christ majored on it. If you come to the altar to offer your gift and there what? Remember what? that your brother Stopped your worship.

Stop the praise music Go get right then come worship Relationships in the New Testament are supreme Paul over and over and over again Was admonishing bear with one another Forgive one another be patient with one another So You Know you're walking in love when the relationship as much as you know is really right And if another person has a problem with you, and you don't know it then that's their problem they have to Make things right, but you and I must be at peace as much as it depends on us with all the brethren Do we have to agree on everything? No, we don't Some opinions or preferences some homeschool others don't I have a friend He's kind of old-school I Mean, I'm kind of old-school too, by the way But this this guy's really old-school He will not go to church Without a suit in town because that's what he's always been and you know He doesn't think That that pleases God more, but it's just him and so He doesn't judge others though for how they dress in church and He's able to walk in love with every Difference that there is I was looking one Sunday at a church lunch table that we were having and there was this very conservative Older godly lady She wears a head covering on on Sunday and She was setting Fellowshiping with and loving on a young woman who had brought purple hair And I it was a pause moment. I said that is wonderful Can you love on people that are different than you Can you accept them and not judge them the kingdom of God is not meat or drink? but what righteousness peace and joy in the Holy Spirit To truly be walking in love we have to have a current right relationship with the brethren And it starts with our wife and her husband Linda and I went and had a Valentine's date Thursday night. That was Valentine's Day, right? Earlier did I call it Thanksgiving Valentine's Day We went out to dinner and There was something I needed to make right with her that I hadn't made right it was wrong and it was symptomatic of Kind of how I was in an area of my life.

There was a there was a defect and The Lord had been dealing with me about it and I Had to make it right and Do you ever if you have to make something right with your husband your life you ever have fear of bringing it up They're gonna be mad at me they're gonna be upset and I had to face my fear and overcome it so we talked and She didn't get mad at me She was sweet forgiving and we had a tremendous time there I Because I knew I had to be right with her Every relationship, right You with your pastor. Is it right? Or do you harbor? Thoughts You with your deacons Church leaders Toward you We're just as responsible for relationships being right not broken not alienated not damaged because if we know any wrong relationships Christ says Leave your gift at the altar meaning Go now and fix it Mend it if you don't if you won't then if I'm not right with my brother and I'm not willing to be right. I can't be right with my Heavenly Father Now that'll push in a corner What are you gonna do you gonna be real me a real believer? You're gonna be a real follower of Christ or you can have the moral courage and the humility to go Because You do God will give grace and favor and you'll come away with a clear conscience and with freedom That you didn't have before So get relationships, right Because you're not loving your brother if you won't do that.

And what do we do? We rationalize often We say we think Well, it'll take care of itself, it's really nothing I don't need to bother with that They'll they'll think I'm weird. They'll get offended. They'll get hurt.

They'll misinterpret it It'll make it worse. It'll create more problems than it'll solve Did I touch on your excuse What's your excuse? You would have for not making a relationship, right? It's been damaged The Reason some true Christians won't get relationships, right? It's too scary or it's too painful Or they're too proud 11 years ago On a Sunday night. I think it was in December Sunday night.

We have a family tradition We don't do as much we used to We were gonna have popcorn and those little sausages That's our Sunday night meal. So I put some Pot to cook the popcorn on the stove Put the oil in started heating it up phone call comes in on the phone turn around There's a stove fire flames flames. Just so I Did what you're not supposed to do My son opened the back door.

I said son open the door. I grabbed two hot pads and I kind of Hurried it was burning. I hurried toward the back door and I and I threw it Don't do that don't do this at home.

I Mean I went like this what happened the flames instantly burned my hands my forearm and And By that night I had I had quarter-inch half-inch Bubbles Encircling my fingers and up here and and it started hurting so long story short I Didn't go the doctor. I just used LOS. I said well, it'll get better.

It didn't get better and so Linda said You got to go the doctor. I went to the doctor doctor said Why didn't you why didn't you go the doctor before now? I got to send you to Parkland Hospital Biggest burn unit in the country. Now.

It wasn't I don't guess it was third-degree burns, but was it Anyway, it was hurting so I'll go to Parkland And it's the biggest burn unit in the country So they put me on a They put me in the hall and this young surgeon. He looked like he could have been 14 Comes out there. So let me see these he said well, we can treat these right here.

So He gets out scissors and he cuts all the dead skin off down to the and then he pulls out these little brushes and a dish of soap and I said is he going to do what I think he's going to do They gave me morphine and then he begins to scrub every burn And I gritted my teeth and I had to take it and Right after that he they put the burn ointment on the open wounds Immediately from then on no pain. The pain was gone They wrapped them Linda and I went and I had a nice dinner and no more pain after that And what I learned was this I had to face it and deal with it and I had to go to one who could treat it because the The pain and seriousness of not dealing with it became greater Than facing it and dealing with it Do you have relationships that need healing and you've not deal with it and there's this nagging Conscience issue I Know that's not right It's not going away It's not going to heal until you face the pain and the humiliation or the humility of going Cutting that thing out and letting the grace and the love of Christ wash that deal and Heal that relationship. How serious important is this if loving Christ and Loving as Christ love is important It's important if a clear conscience is important if a good testimony is important if the health of your church Did you know that your? Withholding forgiveness can spoil the whole Atmosphere of the church a little leaven can leaven the whole lump Your sin relationally can keep the Holy Spirit from moving How important is this Every relationship, right? None wrong as much as it depends on you and The question we must ask is this how serious do I view? my relationship Within the body It's not only mark That has to walk loving toward all of you All of you have to walk loving toward your leaders and toward one another do not neglect each other Do not ignore one another do not pretend like things will go away.

They won't Several years ago. We had two families come to our church and They were reformed in their theology and they were strongly a part of the family integrated church movement They show up and from the first Sunday after the service. They're talking to young couples about You know, are you aware of the family integrated church the family integrated? Movement, oh, it's so good.

You should really go to their conferences conversations over the Now pastor Tom Winston. Why are y'all not a part of the integrated church movement? It was a soapbox And That came two weeks three weeks four weeks every Sunday. That was their hobby horse Philip Neeley one of He was our only other elder time we said This is not going away We called the man one of the man the older man had breakfast with him and we said We're glad that you've come to visit but We want you to know what we're about.

We're not about The family primarily we're about the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and the full counsel of God and What was weird is we didn't have our children out of the worship. I don't know what they

wanted but we said we're not a part of the family integrated movement, we're not going to be and so You're welcome to keep coming, but don't bring the topic up ever again if you do come And he said I understand they never came back If we had not dealt with it then we probably would had six months of confusion among members of the body and then some some Discouragement on well, maybe you know, why aren't our pastors leading us toward family integration? My point is this Things will not get better if you leave them undealt with Relationally, that's true as well If you know, there's something wrong in a relationship May the Spirit of God Make you uncomfortable and uneasy Till you make it right and I'm not talking about you drumming up something and try to think of something There was ten years ago That is fine And I'm not talking about trying to find something that doesn't exist. I'm talking about the real deal be real Do I know of a tangible relationship? It's not right.

Are they good or Unresolved am I holding grudges my holding on to some offense offense Am I judging someone secretly and not loving them when relationships are not right? Then we are not walking in love and we're not obeying Christ We're hurting ourselves we're hurting our church and we're not honoring the Lord and we're grieving the Holy Spirit We are quenching the Spirit when we leave the unhealed relationship Unfixed When we're not doing that which makes for peace So here's a question That I have asked myself and ask you tonight. Do you really want to leave? Unhealed any relationship Do you are you willing to neglect a broken relationship and you not be the peacemaker if? Anything is meant by blessing of the peacemakers. It's right here.

Are you a peacemaker? Do You really want more weeks days weeks or months to pass and there's still no Change look back at Colossians 3 Put on if you're one of the elect Colossians 3 12 put this stuff on Inner Reality right down at the core of your being put on mercy Put on Kindness put on humility Put on meekness and long-suffering and always walk in being patient with those who irritate you and Always be forgiving of those When you know someone has offended you Because when we're where there's nothing between my soul and any of the brethren When when things are right love is real and it's active and it's fresh no barriers Sometimes I've asked it this way Can I on a Sunday morning? Could I ask any family in the church or any brethren to say hey come over Tuesday night We'll cook dinner for you and we'll watch a movie together or do I say oh We're kind of I'm not too close to them We've always been too different or or can I do that in a loving and healthy way? What are we to do if we know our relationships wrong If someone's wronged you go and tell them Matthew 18 15 you go if they listen you've gained your brother Mark 11 when you stand praying forgive from the heart You can forgive even if there's not Reconciliation or restoration you can forgive from the heart Matthew 5 If You're up Mike if you're offering your gift and there you remember your brother has something against you go and be Reconciled don't fear it face it People true Christians are forgiving If they don't have a forgiving heart, they've not been forgiven and they're not a true Christian So I close with this brethren. I may not have hit 30 minutes Is every relationship you have with your brethren and other Christians that you're close to right Or do you have homework to do Homework the Holy Spirit assigns you and says this is this is homework Go Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and he will lift you up. He will help you Brethren, let's make sure We are Maintaining every relationship as much as it depends on us in a right way Some 133 says What How How what How wonderful this just look at it someone 33 how wonderful how sweet how blessed how right? How God-pleasing Behold how good and how pleasant now those phrases good means it's morally, right? It's the will of God To dwell together in unity with your brothers How pleasant that means sweetness its freshness its perfume It's its freshness How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity It's like precious ointment on the hair the rent down the beard It's like the dew of Hermon As the dude descended upon the mountains of Zion for there There where What's there referring back to Where

brethren dwell together in unity for there the Lord Commands the blessing you as a church maintain unity by loving each other and keeping relationships, right there On your church.

God's going to bring blessing But he can withhold it If we're not right with each other And if you don't have unity and love and right relationship it doesn't matter how good your doctrine is You're you're grieving the Spirit of God It matter how great your preacher is you're grieving the Holy Spirit Doesn't matter how much you know Or what you've read The single most important thing within a local church Right along with Orthodox sound doctrine is the love of the brethren and relationships being right Every relationship, right? Let's pray Father we thank you that this is the standard your word has It's simple. It's not complex, but it's not easy We pray That you would help us to love each other we pray you'd help us to walk in love to walk in forgiveness to maintain right relationships we pray Lord that You'd so work in our hearts and every relationship we have within the body would be right Give us grace and give us help in Jesus name. Amen

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