

You Shall See but Not Eat

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the necessity of confessing sins to avoid spiritual stagnation and to embrace true hope in the new year.

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Scripture: Joshua 7:19, 2 Kings 7:19, Proverbs 28:13, Haggai 1:2-9, Matthew 7:7, Mark 11:24, John 15:7, James 5:16, 1 John 1:5-9, 1 John 5:14-15

Topics: "General", "Faith in Action", "Confession"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the critical importance of responding to God's word with faith and confession, using the story from 2 Kings 7 to illustrate how one's response can determine their fate. He warns against the dangers of unconfessed sin and self-deception, urging the congregation to enter the new year with a clean slate and a commitment to God's will. Beach highlights the necessity of taking risks in faith, as exemplified by the four lepers who ventured into the enemy camp, leading to the end of a devastating famine. He cautions that those who doubt God's promises may witness His work but miss out on the blessings. The sermon concludes with a call to action for the congregation to confess their sins, consider their ways, and be prepared for God's movement in the coming year.

Transcript

I'm going to read one scripture in 2 Kings 7 and we're going to go back to this scripture in a short while. But I want to read this scripture because it's going to be the title of this message from the scriptures this morning. The text is found in 2 Kings 7. Verse 19, 2 Kings 7. Now, 2 Kings is after 1 Kings.

2 Kings 7, verse number 19. Listen carefully. And the Lord answered the man of God.

Beloved, be very careful what you answer. Now, the man of God was speaking the word of God. So I'm not going to say be careful how you answer the man of God, but careful how you answer the word of God.

Be careful. Be careful what your response is to the word of God because your response to the word of God is going to determine your fate this morning. It's going to determine where you go, where you don't go.

It's going to determine how successful you are, how you are, how you're going to stand on the day of judgment. And that Lord answered the man of God and said, Now behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, the man of God said, Behold, thou shalt see with

thine eyes, but shall not eat thereof. The name, the title of this message this morning is, You Shall See But Not Eat.

You shall see but not eat. We will go back to this story. We will rehearse this story and we will bring us right to the point where we read this morning as our opening text.

But before we go there, I want to deal with two other issues. I want to deal with two other issues. First of all, beloved, I want to deal with the issue of confession.

1998 is on the horizon. We stand at the eve of 1998 and we are closing the books to 1997. I'd like to invite you to please open your Bibles.

Go with me through the Scriptures. First of all, go to the New Testament, James chapter 5. James chapter 5. I believe it is imperative that we would understand that it would be very, very unprofitable. It would be very, very disappointing.

It would be very, very destructive. And it would most definitely hinder our ability to accomplish God's will in 1998 if we do not get a grip of a particular truth that we must come to grips with. This is a truth that we neglect very many times.

Frequently we neglect it and it results in much harm and much damage that is incurred in our own lives and in the lives of our loved ones and in the lives of the body of Christ. It's neglecting this truth. James chapter 5 beginning in verse number 14.

Particularly we're going to deal with verse 16. Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over them, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick and the Lord shall raise him up.

And if he hath committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another and pray one for another that you may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

Proverbs chapter 28 verse number 13. Proverbs chapter 28 verse number 13. He that covers, the Hebrew word for cover is to keep secret or to hide, to conceal something.

He that covers his sins shall not prosper. But whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. Joshua chapter 7. Joshua chapter 7. This has to do with the story of the Israelites after having gone into the land of Canaan, came to the city of Ai and was instructed by God that they were not to take any of the things in the city for themselves.

But Achan was tempted to steal some Babylonian garments and some silver and he coveted them and hid them in his tent. And that brings us to Joshua chapter 7 verse number 17. Actually, verse number 19.

And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel and make confession unto Him and tell me now what thou hast done. Hide it not from me. And Achan answered Joshua and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel and thus and thus have I done.

When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonian garment and two hundred shekels of gold and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them and took them. And behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent and the silver under it. Confession.

1998 is right around the corner. Today is December 28th. Only a few more days and we're coming into the year 1998.

And I'm telling you right now, beloved, by the authority of the Word of God and by the Spirit of God, that if the devil had his way, he would want you to bring into 1998 all of those sins that you have failed to confess to God in 1997. Because along with those sins comes all of the guilt that you're struggling with, all of the condemnation that you're struggling with, all of the fear that you're struggling with, all of the confusion that you may be struggling with. And if you begin the year 1998 still bound to those sins that have tormented you, that you have not been able to get the victory over in 1997, then 1998 is not going to be a new year for you with a new beginning and new hope, but it's only going to be a repeat of 1997 and most likely you're going to get yourself deeper into deep water and you're going to dig a hole deeper and you're going to end up at the end of 1998 worse off than you were at the end of 1997.

All because there has been a failure to understand the need to confess your sins. It is a false hope to believe. And let me tell you, beloved, every single year there is a hope, there is expectations that come within the hearts of people regarding the new year.

Everybody begins to make new year resolutions. Everyone begins to make commitments to themselves. They make commitments to others.

They make promises to themselves. They have goals, they have visions, they have dreams. But it is a false hope to suppose that you are going to prosper, that you are going to be successful, that you are going to be able to accomplish what God wants you to do in the coming year if, in fact, sin is not dealt with in our life.

It is a false hope. We must close our ears and close our minds and resist the feelings that come to us at this time of the year that is perpetuated by the children of this world and by the spirit that is in this world that 1998 brings great hopes for everybody, that we have a new beginning when we awake, 1998, January 1st. The slate is clean, hallelujah.

We've got a new beginning. I say to you, that's bonkers. That's not true.

You do not have a new beginning. Everything is not peachy keen in 1998 if, in fact, you are bringing along with you unconfessed sin. Sin that you've not dealt with.

Sin that you have not prayed about. That you have not wept over. That you are not standing against on the basis of Romans chapter 6 that I am crucified with Christ and this sin is not to have dominion over me and God, I confess it.

I confess it to the one that it has manifested itself to and I'm standing against it with all the power of grace. There is no success. There is no prosperity.

There is no real, genuine, free hope when there is unconfessed sin in our lives. And God invites us this morning to consider confessing our sin to Him and to one another that we might be healed, that we might be restored, that we might be strengthened, that we might be able to go into the year 1998 with true hope, with true vision and with a true confession of this year is going to be better for God's work in my life than 1997 was. 1 John chapter 1. 1 John chapter 1. We've read it many, many times.

Beginning in verse number 5. Listen carefully to the word this morning. Last night, before we read this, I'd like to tell you what we did as a family in the living room. We all gathered together and first we listened to Dr. James Kennedy.

Blessed man, I love him. And he preached and he gave a very challenging message. And I like what Norman shared this morning because it was along the lines of what Norman talked about.

Although, he had asked a question at the end which is very thought provoking. He didn't ask the congregation and the television audience, are you saved? He said, are you lost? Because the Son of Man has only come to seek and to save that which is lost. He said, or rather I might say, you are lost but do you know it? Have you come to realize the hopelessness of your condition apart from Jesus Christ? And he said that if you have not come to a despairing recognition that you are a lost soul standing under the judgment of God's fury, then you can't be saved.

You can't be saved. He said it's foolish to think that a man can be saved if he doesn't first come to realize he's lost. So we watched that and I was shouting hallelujah, yes.

How true, how true. Have you come to see how lost you are without Jesus Christ? But after that the Lord had put it on my heart. And he said, gather the family together Phil.

And we gathered the family together and we read several Scriptures in the New Testament, all having one theme. And the theme was the fact that God asks us to come to Him and make requests. And if we make requests, we know that we have the things that we ask for.

If we ask according to His will because we do those things that are pleasing in His eyes. And we read many, many Scriptures. Mark chapter 11, 1 John chapter 5, 1 John chapter 3. We read John 15.

We read Matthew chapter 7. All of these Scriptures that would indicate that God is asking us to come to Him in prayer. But then after that we had a time of prayer. And I know my kids are probably laughing now because I did most of the praying.

But you know, Joe prayed for his family. He prayed for his children. And he asked God to forgive them for sin.

He asked God to forgive his own sin. So it's true, I did do most of the praying. But what we did is we prayed and we confessed our sins.

But we didn't do it in a vague way. One of the tricks of the devil is to get us to deal with sin in a very impersonal way. Oh Lord, I'm sorry I've sinned.

Forgive me. Oh, that's cheap. That's cheap.

When we read in Joshua chapter 7, we find that first of all, it is to God's glory that we confess our sin. It gives God glory when we confess our sin and we acknowledge what we have done. But you'll notice that when Achan confessed his sin, he wasn't vague.

He was very specific. He said, first of all, I've sinned against the Lord. He said, then he went on and he gave great detail that he saw with his eyes the Babylonish things.

He saw the gold and the shekels of silver. And then he said, I coveted them in my heart. He confessed his sin very specifically.

We have to come to the place, beloved, where we are able to confess our sin very specifically. So what we did last night is we prayed. And I asked all the girls if they would be willing to pray aloud and to confess specific sins that they wanted the Lord to deal with them about, that they wanted forgiveness for, that they wanted victory over, so that they could enter into the new year with a clean slate.

Beloved, please, hear the Spirit of God this morning. God wants us to go into 1998 having confessed our sins to one another, having confessed our sins to God, having received a clear conscience, and having a mindset that we are determined by the Word of God and by the grace of God that we are going to stand against those sins that have had us bound in 1997, and we are going to believe that God is going to deliver us and set us free so that we can go into 1998 with a clean slate determined to find victory over those sins that have had us captive in 1997. But the devil doesn't want it to happen because he knows that he that covereth his sin shall not prosper.

There is no prosperity with God or with anything else if there is sin in our life that we are not willing to confess to God. So what we did is we confessed specific sins and named them and asked God to forgive. As the father, as the priest, as the head of my home, I confess the sins of my family to God.

And we confessed our sins one to another. And we prayed for healing. We prayed for forgiveness.

We prayed for cleansing. 1 John chapter 1 beginning in verse 5. This then is the message which we have heard of him and declare unto you. God is light and in him is no darkness.

God is light and in him is no darkness. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. God is light and in him is no darkness.

The light here is referring not simply to brightness, not simply to a characteristic of God that would necessitate us putting sunglasses on, but the light here indicates moral perfection. In God is light. In God is moral perfection.

In God is that which is right. And in him is no darkness that is, in God there is no moral fault. There is nothing in God that is contrary to moral excellence.

So therefore, if we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth. One of the characteristics of walking with God, one of the fruits of having fellowship with Christ is, in fact, clinging to the light, clinging to moral perfection, doing what is right. And if we do sin, we are immediately troubled by it and we are immediately inclined to confess our sin and deal with it.

And when that stops, that is, when we do sin and we fail to deal with it and we fail to confess it and we fail to forsake it and we fail to go back to the word of God and go for help in the body of Christ and deal with this sin until we overcome it, if we fail to do that, then we are beginning in the process of being deceived. We are deceived. We deceive ourself.

We do not deceive God. And only for a short time do we deceive others. Because eventually the truth will be made known.

So this confession of sin is very, very, very important. Let's read on. So if we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.

To walk in darkness simply means to engage, to be a part of that which is contrary to God. Sin. If we lie, if we gossip, if we're engaged in impurity of any kind, whether it's in our minds or whether it's physical impurity, fornication, adultery, pornography.

If we are engaged in these things, if we are walking in them and say we have fellowship with Him, two things are present. We lie and do not the truth. That's when self-deception comes in.

That's when we become deceived. And being deceived is believing something that is not true. That's what deception is.

Believing something that's not true. And see, when you believe something that's not true, then you have no need to confess. Now watch what the Word says.

But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. So the difference here is this. Walking in light versus walking in darkness.

That's the difference. If we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. One of the characteristics of being a Christian and walking in the light is that we have fellowship one with another.

There is a fellowship that we share as we walk in the light together. There is a fellowship. There is a transparency that occurs in our lives with one another.

When I am walking in the light and you are walking in the light, there is not only a fellowship we have with God, but we have it with one another. There is accountability one with another. There is transparency one with another.

There is a mutual heart sharing one with another. The absence of this fellowship with one another could indicate that somebody is walking in darkness. Because to walk in darkness is that you don't have the fellowship one with another.

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. So you see, beloved, we can't get around this issue of our need to confess. Beloved, don't think that what this means is that you simply have the testimony, oh, I know I'm a sinner.

That's why I've trusted in Jesus Christ. That's not what it's talking about. Nor does it mean that you have a testimony, oh, yes, I know that I have to trust in the Lord every day.

Listen, as long as you keep things vague and impersonal, you're just where the devil wants you. Keep things impersonal. Keep things vague.

But when you allow the Holy Spirit to deal with your heart, like Achan, and you are prepared to go to God and say, Lord, I've sinned against you, and go to the people that you have sinned against, whether it's husband, whether it's wife, whether it's children, whether it's another member of the body of Christ, and say, I have sinned against you, and this is what I have done. Until you're prepared to do that, and to be honest before God, and to deal with these things, then you are going to bring right into 1998 all of those sins that you have not confessed, that you're pretending either do not exist, or you are just hoping someday we'll just go away without confession, or you're just being very vague. Yeah, I've sinned.

The Lord knows, and He knows. God will deal with it. That's not scriptural.

The Bible teaches we are to confess our faults one to another. When was the last time you confessed a fault or a sin to somebody that you needed to tell, and ask them for forgiveness, and pray together? When was the last time? Well, I don't do things that way. I'm sorry.

I don't do things that way, Brother Beach. I mean, it's a question of whether or not you believe the Bible or not. It's really not a question of whether you do things that way or not.

It's not a matter of my way versus your way. It's not a matter of my preference versus yours. It's a matter of what does the Word of God say.

Joshua said to Achan, Give God glory and confess your sin. Give God glory and confess your sin. I want to ask yourself a question right now.

Ask yourself this question. In your heart, say, Am I going to go into 1998 bound by the same unconfessed sins that I've struggled with in 1997? Now, you know what the answer is? It's up to you. God doesn't want you bound.

God wants you free. The Lord Jesus wants you to be free and wants you to go into January 1st, 1998 with a new mindset, a stand against that sin based on the Word of God, a determined will to say no to that sin, a transparency in your life, an honesty in your life, a willingness to make right something that's wrong quickly in your life. Those are qualities that have to be developed in us if we're going to succeed in 1998.

Take all of your plans and all of your hopes and all of your dreams and put them in a paper bag and light the match. If you are not prepared to start, first and foremost, with confessing your sin and dealing with it. Do not be deceived, beloved.

Bob Grant said, The greatest deception a person can be involved in is self-deception. And when he said that, I heard God's voice right to my heart. I said, Yes, Lord, that is so true.

So many people can be deceived about so many things, but all the greatest deception is when you're deceived about yourself. You believe something to be true about yourself when it's not. And self-deception begins when you no longer take the Word of God as your final authority and you no longer allow the Word of God to govern what you do, but you decide you know better than God.

Is there anybody in here that thinks they know better than God? Sarah said, Sometimes. Well, isn't that the truth? Thank you. Nobody here would say, I know better than God.

But yet, when we continue to do things our own way and refuse to come and bow down before what is written in this book and say, Lord, Your authority is here and I must bow to it. When we don't do that, we

are in fact saying, God, I know better than You. What a terrible place to be in.

What an awful place to be in. You know, one of the thoughts that Dr. Kennedy was bringing out last night and he probably is bringing it out because a very, very significant movie that's sweeping the box offices right now is the Titanic. And it's a three hour and 15 minute program and it's an incredible movie.

And he mentioned that one of the statements that was said by some person before the Titanic took off to sail to the United States, they were going to New York, was this, Not even God can sink the Titanic. And Dr. Kennedy after quoting that in the way that only he can do it, goes, If I were you, I would not tell God what he could or could not do. I would not do that and I hope you will not either.

And you know, that's Dr. Kennedy. We all have our own personality but Dr. Kennedy said it in such a way, I can't tell you what happened in my spirit when he said that. I mean, if I ever heard the clear voice of God it was then.

Don't you tell God what he can or cannot do. The Titanic sunk and over 1,200 souls perished within two hours and 20 minutes. Perished.

And met their grave at the bottom of the North Atlantic Ocean. Men, women, and little children perished. Now I say that to say this, you say, Well, we would never tell God what he can or cannot do.

But I tell you, beloved, there is a form of rebellion just as wicked in our hearts when we go about professing to be Christians and followers of Christ but yet we refuse to bow to the authority of God's Word. We refuse to bow to the authority of the words of the prophets, the words of the Psalms, and the words of the apostles which are in fact the words of God to us today. We refuse to bow to it.

We know that it says, Confess your sin. We know that it says, God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. Yet we go in our pride.

We don't confess our sin. We walk in darkness. We think nobody's looking, don't we? We look to the left.

We look to the right. And we say, Nobody's looking. I can do this.

Oh, how foolish we are. How deceived we are. How is it that we can say nobody's looking? God says, I see all things.

God says, My eyes never sleep or slumber. When you think nobody's looking at you, you better look again because there is a God in heaven who sees all things. And the Bible says, One day we will stand before him and we will have to give an account of everything, I say everything, that we have done in this mortal body, whether it be good or whether it be bad.

Now that's the word of God. Now do we believe it? Do we want God's authority in our life? Do we want to be under His authority confessing our sins to the Lord, to the Almighty? Are you prepared to confess and forsake your sin? Is there anybody here that is actually saying, Well, I can't really think of any particular sin that I'm guilty of. If so, I want to pray especially for you.

That's a scary place to be in. I can't think of any particular sin. That's a scary place to be in.

As long as we are in these mortal bodies, though we might not be guilty of any particular sin at the moment, there is always the presence of sin in us and the temptation in the flesh that we must guard

against. I want to go to my next point, but I feel so strong in my spirit, this point of confession our sin. Have you failed to confess your sin to God or to another human being that you've sinned against? Do you continue to walk in darkness? Are there areas in your life that you know have not changed even though you've become a Christian? Strongholds.

You know, there's some things that we learn through years and years of practice. And just because you become a Christian, sometimes those things are not unlearned overnight. And for a while, the devil lets you go.

But after a while, he starts bringing back into your life things that used to be a real problem in your life before you were a Christian. And if you're not careful, you see, he waits until you get all elated spiritually. Boy, I'm doing so well.

Hallelujah. I'm a Christian. I'm filled with the Spirit.

Jesus is everything. Hallelujah. He says to his demons, draw back.

Just let that area in his life that he is so, he's blinded to right now because he's just all thrilled that his sins are forgiven. And that's true. He's just all excited about Jesus.

That's true. He's losing sight of the fact that apart from Jesus, he's still a wretched old man. In his flesh, just draw back.

Let him get cocky. Let him get spiritually proud. Give him about six months and he'll start wanting to put an impression to Christians.

He'll start wanting Christians to think that he's so spiritual. It's at that time when he's so proud because then it'll be almost impossible for him to acknowledge that there's a sin in his life because he's a spiritual Christian. He's overcome sin.

So just wait. So after a little while, the devil comes and starts stirring and fanning into flame those sins, those attitudes, that unruly tongue. And you know what happens? We just let it go on and on and on and on.

And we don't deal with it. And we don't confess it. And we don't acknowledge our sin.

And it becomes a stronghold in our life. And it will ultimately become our spiritual ruin if we don't come to grips with it. Is there a sin that you must confess? Do you want to be free in 1998? Then confess your sins one to another and pray for one another that you might be healed.

Confess your sins. Believe the word of God this morning. Firstly, we looked at you shall see, but you shall not eat.

Certainly, if you fail to confess your sin this morning, you might see what God is going to do. You might see the deliverance that God has planned to bring to His people, but you won't partake in it. You'll see it, but you'll not partake in it.

My second point, after you have confessed your sin, then the word of God admonishes us to consider our ways. Consider our ways. Turn your Bibles into the Old Testament, the book of Haggai.

Now, who knows where Haggai is? Hurry up. Say it out loud so I can find it. Zephaniah and Zechariah.

Zephaniah and Zechariah, the book of Haggai. You shall see, but not partake. Number one, confess your sin.

If you do not confess your sin according to the word of God, you will not prosper. You will not come into the good of what God wants. You will go into 1998 in bondage, and you may end up worse than you are now.

What a terrible thing. Now, the word of God bids us not only to confess, but to consider our way. This is when the temple was being rebuilt.

The foundation had been laid, but because of opposition from the neighboring peoples, the work on the temple stopped, and it was not resumed until God raised up Haggai and a few other prophets to encourage the people of God to go on. So the temple foundation had been laid, but the temple was not complete. And here's what the word of God came to.

Here's what the word of the Lord was saying to the people of God. Verse number two, Haggai chapter one, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O you, to dwell in your sealed houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways.

Here was a people who had seen the foundation of the temple of God built, but then because of opposition it stopped, and now sixteen years later the prophet Haggai was raised up by God, and he was saying, Thus saith the Lord, You people are saying right now, It's not time for the house of God to be built. Why were they saying it's not time for the house of God to be built? They were saying it because they had become so self-centered and so self-relating that all of their energy and all of their time and all of their labor was being spent on themselves, and the fulfilling of their own dreams, and their own plans, and they could care less about the house of God. They had become a self-centered, self-relating people, and because of that they refused to believe that it was time for the house of God to be built.

Now listen carefully. Because they were self-related and self-centered, this is what Haggai said. Verse number six.

You have sown much and bring in little. You eat, but you do not have enough. You drink, but you are not filled with drink.

You clothe you, but there is none warm. He that earneth wages earneth wages to put it in a bag with holes. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways.

The people of God were in a state where their chief interests were not those of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now listen carefully, beloved. In the Old Testament the house of God was understood as a building, but in the New Testament the house of God is not a building made with hands.

In the New Testament the house of God is the church, the temple of God. So if we were to apply these words in the Old Testament to the New Testament, the prophet would say to us that the house of God lays waste, the church lays waste, while all the members are simply going about living their own lives selfishly, unrelated to anybody else. This is what the prophet is saying.

Consider your ways. Number two. 1998.

Number one. We must pray that God will give us the courage to confess our sins. And number two.

Our life. Have we gone wrong? Where in our life have we been found lacking because we are concerned only about our own interests and only about our own desires and as a result of our selfishness we are neglecting others. We are neglecting the house of God.

And therefore the house of God lays waste. That word waste in the Hebrew actually means dry and parched. A condition without water.

That describes so much the body today. And the reason why the body is so parched and so dry and is laid at waste is because the members therein are not really caring one for another the way we should. We must consider our ways.

If in 1998 we are going to come into all that God has intended for us. Verse number seven. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways.

Go up to the mountain and bring wood and build the house of God. And I will take pleasure in it and I will be glorified saith the Lord. There is the command of God.

Instead of going into 1998 with the mindset of how am I going to accomplish my goals and how am I going to be benefited this year and how am I going to succeed and how am I going to prosper and how am I going to get what my heart wants. Instead of going into 1998 with that mindset we must pray that God will change our mind so that we can come into this year saying Lord, what is it that you want to do in your church? What is it that your desire is? What do you want to see in your church? And Lord, I commit myself to that. I commit myself, I devote myself Lord to praying and seeing and acting so that you can be satisfied with your house.

As opposed to committing and devoting myself to my own desires and my own interests and my own goals. The house of God is being neglected today. The members of the church are being neglected today.

The house of God needs to be built but it's built by prayer. It's built by fellowship. It's built by communing with one another.

It's built by the spiritual stuff that Jesus Christ is made of. It's built by the features that are in Christ by righteousness and joy and peace and long suffering growing in us. But those things don't happen when we live our own selfish life.

They only happen when we come before the Lord and bow down before His Word and say, Lord, I renounce this ego, this self-centered drive in me and I want to come back to where You are my head. The Word of God is my authority. And Lord, I want to get back involved in the building up of Your house.

I want to get back involved Lord in prayer and in getting involved in the lives of other people and sharing the Word of God and together moving forward to see the house of God built in our midst. The house of God will not be built as long as the people of God are saying it's not time to build the house of God. Or rather what they're saying is I don't have time.

I'm too involved in my life, my own life, my own things. Verse 9, You looked much and low. It came to little.

And when You brought it home, I blew it away. You know what that's saying? What is that saying? God's saying, listen, you're selfish, self-centered. Everything revolves around you.

And so therefore, all of your efforts are being frustrated. When you hoped to have reaped much, you've reaped little. When you hoped to bring home a lot, somehow it just disappears.

And God says, why is this happening? Why are you frustrated? Why aren't things working out the way you want? Here's what God says. Why, saith the Lord? Because my house, that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. You see that? My house lays at waste, and ye run every man to his own house.

There's great truth here. May God give us ears to hear and a heart to receive His word. Number one, confess your sin.

Number two, consider your ways. And lastly, a word of caution. Confess, consider, and caution.

That brings us to 2 Kings 6. Remember, we took our text from there. We will read our text again. 2 Kings 7, verse 19.

And that Lord answered the man of God and said, Now behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shall not eat thereof. This story begins in 2 Kings 6, verse 24. I'm not going to read the story.

I'm going to give you a brief summary of the story. Alright? I'm going to give you a brief summary of the story. Verse 24.

And it came to pass after this that Ben-Hadad, king of Syria, gathered all his hosts and went up and besieged Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria, and behold, they besieged it until a donkey's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver and the fourth part of a cat of doves dung for five pieces of silver. You're looking at a serious famine here.

Now listen closely. There was a great famine in the city of Samaria. The city was besieged by Syria, which meant that the city was surrounded by the army Syria.

That meant they, the Samaritans, could not go out of the city. They were forced to stay in the city. It was a dreadful condition.

There was such a famine going on in there that you could see what they were selling, donkeys' heads and dove dung. Now think about this. Now listen closely.

Listen closely. The name of this last subtitle is this, a word of caution. This is not just a story in the Old Testament, although it is.

It has an application to where we are at right now today. Number one, I see desperation. I see a situation that is characterized by desperation and by famine.

I see hopelessness in this situation. I like to use these words. Think, desperation, hopelessness, famine.

Now, I want to show you how bad the famine was. Verse 26. Now we're not going to read the whole thing, but I'm bringing out main points so you can follow me through here.

We're going to close in probably 15 minutes, so hold on, 10 minutes. We don't have much more to go. Now, verse number 26.

And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, now this is inside Samaria. Listen closely. There cried a woman to the king, saying, Help my lord, O king.

And he said, If the lord do not help thee, when shall I help thee? Out of the barn floor or out of the winepress? And the king said to her, What aileth thee? Now listen. And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow. So we boiled my son and did eat him.

And I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him, and she hath hid her son. What do we got here? We've got something more than hopelessness. We've got something more than despair.

We've got something more than a difficult situation. It has escalated into a life and death situation now. Now, go down to chapter 7. This is what Elisha said.

Hear the word of the lord, thus saith the lord, Tomorrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel in the gate of Samaria. Then a lord, on whose hand the king leaned, answered the man of God and said, Behold, if the lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? But he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not eat thereof. Now, basically, what's going on now is that this king made his way to the prophet Elisha.

And the prophet Elisha told him, Listen, this time tomorrow, this famine's gonna be over. Basically, that's what he's saying. This famine's gonna be over.

You're gonna have flour and barley, and it's gonna be available to everyone, and it's going to be sold, and everybody's gonna be eating. And the lord, whose hand the king leaned on, answered the man of God and said, Behold, if the lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be? Now, listen closely, beloved. Listen closely.

This lord that we just read in verse number 2 of chapter 7 is the same person that we read about in verse 19, which was the text. And the lord answered the man of God and said, Now, behold, if the lord would make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, and shalt not eat thereof. It's the same person.

So here's the scenario. We've got a desperate famine. We've got a life and death situation.

We've got the word of God coming to a prophet saying, This famine is gonna end tomorrow. And we've got somebody saying basically this, Huh, even if God opens up windows in heaven, is this really gonna happen? Now, go to verse 3 of chapter 7. And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate, and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say we will enter into the city, then the famine in the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit still here, we die also.

Now, therefore, come and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians. If they save us alive, we shall live. And if they kill us, we shall but die.

And they rose up in the twilight to go into the camp of the Assyrians. And when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of the Syrian, behold, there was no man there. For the Lord had made the host

of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host.

And they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to come upon us. Wherefore, they arose and fled in the twilight and left their tents, their horses, their donkeys, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life. And when these lepers came to the utmost part of the camp, they went into one tent, listen, and did eat and drink and carried then silver and gold and raiment and went and hid it and came again and entered into another tent and carried then also and went and hid it.

Then they said one to another, We do not well this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace. If we tarry till the morning, some mischief might come. Now therefore come that we may go and tell the king's household.

What's happening? The four lepers were in a crisis situation. Listen, the city was dying. The city was surrounded by the Syrians who would kill anyone.

They had to make a decision. If we go into Samaria, we're going to die. If we sit here, we're going to die.

If we go into the Syrian camp, we might die or we might not die. Remember, the prophet said this, This time tomorrow, the famine is going to be over. But I want you to see the method that God used to end the famine.

He used four lepers, listen closely, who were willing to take a risk. And it was through them willing to take a risk by saying, Let's go into the Syrian camp. Perhaps they'll keep us alive.

And if they do, we'll probably then get eaten, we'll get food. And if they kill us, they kill us. But they had to take a risk, listen, and they had to put action to their faith.

They had to go forward and they had to go, not knowing what was going to happen, but knowing that if they just sat there, they were going to die. And so in response to the leper's faith, what did God do during the night? He sent the sound of a noise. See, no one ever came to fight against the Syrians, but they thought they heard it.

And it was such a loud noise of chariots and horses that what did they do? They fled for their life and they left all of their camp. They had besieged the city and they left their camp and they fled. And they left everything there, all the food they had, their horses, their tents, their silver, their gold and everything.

So when the lepers went into the camp of the Syrians, thinking maybe we were going to be killed, to their discovery, to their amazement, the enemy, listen, the enemy was driven out. And there all their spoil was there for them. And they took it and they ate and they hid it.

And they said, wow, this is great. And then their conscience smote them. And they said, this isn't a good thing.

We need to go tell the king. We need to go tell the Syrians, hey, we got food. God drove the enemy away.

We don't know what happened, but we decided to go take a risk and look what we got, all this food. It's all right. So they went into the Samaritan village and they told the king.

Verse number 16, chapter 7, And the people went out and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the Lord. What was it that Elisha prophesied the day before? That very thing.

Verse 18, And it came to pass, as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be tomorrow about this time in the gate of Samaria. And the Lord answered the man of God and said, Now behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be. And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

And so it fell out unto him. For the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died. Who died? Who died? The officer upon whom the king leaned.

The one that said the day before, when there was such a terrible famine, and that there was no hope, but the word of God came and said, This time tomorrow this famine is going to be over. He said, If God should open up the windows of heaven, I'm not sure if such a thing could happen. And Elijah looked at him and said, You're going to see it with your eyes, but you're not going to eat.

And the Bible says he died. Number one, confess your sin. 1998 is a year when we must enter in, and we must be willing to confess our sin.

I'm wrapping it up now. All right. I'm summarizing.

And it's only been 11 minutes since I said we were going to close. So we're right on time. Listen, it's December 28th, 2930-31.

Focus on this. Confess your sin. Don't leave here this morning without making a decision.

I'm going to confess my sin. I'm going to humble myself. I'm going to deal with this sin.

I'm going to call sin what it is, sin. And I'm going to stand against it by the authority of God's word through Jesus Christ. I have deliverance over this sin.

And I'm going to confess it to whoever I have to confess it to. Number two, consider your ways. I am determined by the grace of God today is what we should all be saying.

I'm going to consider my ways. I'm going to let God deal with my selfishness, all of my selfish plans, all of the things that I'm doing that have nothing to do with the house of God and the building up of the house of God. I am determined by the grace of God to go into 1998 with a new mindset.

It is not going to be me, I, me, I, all 1998. But it's going to be, Lord, what is your will? What is your plan? How can I help build up the house of God? How can I get involved in people's lives more? How can I open up my home? Not so it's a place where I can just go and indulge in my pleasures, but how can I open up my home to the saints and have them come over and bless them and feed them and cook meals for them and share the word of God with them? Lord, help me to become a person that is not selfish in 1998. And lastly, a word of caution.

Lord, now this isn't going to mean much to you unless you've seen the way things really are. If you really open your eyes, you'll see that we're in a situation just like the Samaritans. There's a desperate famine in the land, isn't there? A desperate famine.

There's a desperate situation spiritually in the land. There's no food. And until you see it so bad as to see that people are actually selling their children and boiling their children, then this last point won't mean much to you.

But if you get and you see it, a word of caution in my last point, and that is this. Be careful what you do with what God has said He's going to do. There's a lot of people right now who are looking at the famine, who are looking at the situation, and they're saying, oh, it'll never happen.

God will never save drunks and prostitutes and sinners. God will never bring a harvest. God will never do it.

Look at the way things are. It's so bad, it's so desperate. You're a fool to believe God.

You're a fool. God will never do it. I'm just going to sit here and die.

I'm just going to sit here and wait until something happens. If you do that, then you're going to end up in the pot being boiled. But the word of the Lord came in the midst of a great famine, and God says the famine is going to end.

But take heed. Take heed, beloved. God ended the famine through four men who were willing to take a risk.

They were willing to assess the situation honestly. They were willing to acknowledge that there is a hopeless condition, but they were willing to go forward and to believe that God was able to intervene. And as they moved forward, not until, as they moved forward, God went before them, drove the enemy out, and there they moved forward, and God rewarded their faith by giving them spoil.

And not only were they able to take that spoil and feed themselves, but they went back to the whole city of Samaria, and they were able to get the whole city to come, and the whole city was fed, because four lepers were willing to take a risk and to get off their rears and to go forward in the face of uncertainty, in the face of, I'm not sure what's going to happen, but I've got to do something. But there was a man who said, even if God opened up heaven, I don't think anything could happen. It was that man who died and never saw it.

1998 is a year when we better have our sins confessed, we better confess our ways, and we had better have a word of caution. There is a famine, but God has four lepers who right now are saying, we're going to die if we stay here, we're going to die if we go into Samaria, but there might be hope if we go forward. And I say by the authority of God's word that to those four lepers, God will meet their faith, drive the enemy away, and they will come back with spoil.

They got delivered from themselves, from their own problems, they took a risk and they went forward. And God used them to lead the whole camp out of famine into what? Prosperity. God is going to raise up lepers in our midst who are going to go out in faith and they're going to find bread.

There's also going to be those in our midst who like the officer that the king leaned on is going to mock and say, it'll never happen. I'm believing God to save hundreds of people. I'm believing God to deliver drunks and alcoholics and prostitutes.

I'm believing God to deliver the children of God from the things that are binding them. Some people are saying, it'll never happen. Oh, you have visions of grandeur.

You'll be all right, Phil. Just get a good night's sleep. Get a good night's sleep.

Maybe it'll be gone in the morning. But I'll tell you right now, there's a great famine and people are dying, but God is not going to give me what I'm asking if we just sit around and wait to die. God will raise up lepers and they'll go forward.

Where are you today? I know this was a lot. I'm sorry. What are we going to do with the word of God this morning? I feel so strongly in my spirit that God is challenging us.

If we will pray, listen closely, if we will pray, but if we're willing to take a risk and not criticize, if we're willing to consider our ways and be delivered from our selfish lifestyles, and if we're willing to confess our sins and not allow ourselves to hide our sin, God will bring a harvest that we cannot contain in 1998. He told me last summer that He will if we pray. A harvest that we cannot contain.

Do you believe? Do you believe God is able? Or do you believe the famine is too severe? Well, if you believe, be prepared for God to show you the way of the lepers because you're going to have to take a risk. And if you do, God will meet you. I'm believing God to fill the auditorium.

I'm believing God to do more than that. That's only the beginning. I'm believing God to sweep through cities, plural, towns, plural.

1990, 1989, the Lord spoke to me and said, I want you to believe me for a move of the spirit like they had in Wales in the late 1800s and the early 1900s that came to Azusa Street. That Azusa Street movement started in Wales with Evan Roberts praying. Ever since 1989 and 1991, the Lord spoke it to me.

That has been a groaning in the depths of my spirit. I believe God is going to do it. Do you? Do you? I believe He can do it if He wants.

No, no. He wants to, but He's not going to do it without lepers who are willing to take a risk. And the one who says, the Lord opened up heaven, I don't know if He could do it, that one will die.

You might see it, but you'll not enter in. May the Lord speak to our hearts this morning and show us His heart regarding these matters. Let's bow our hearts and let's be quiet before the Lord and just let Him speak to us.

Father, we thank You for the Holy Spirit whose purpose is to confirm the Word of God. We thank You for the Word of God spoken this morning. I pray, Father, that You would be pleased to confirm the Word by the Spirit.

Help us to confess. Help us to consider and help us to heed a word of caution. Give us the hearts of those lepers who were willing to take a risk, to forget about themselves, to get off their pity pots, to get out of their own world and to go forward.

Help us to believe that as we go forward, You will drive the enemy back and lead us to possess and to inherit a great spoil. Father, I ask You to perform Your Word. I ask You to perform the things that You are desiring to do.

And I ask 1998, Lord, to be a year when we shall see with our eyes the glory of God, that we shall enter in and partake of a great, great, great revelation of Thy Son and that multitudes of people can be delivered and saved and set free. Father, we're asking for great, for large things. And our confidence lies not in ourself, but in the mighty power of Your Word and Your Son, Jesus Christ.

Speak to everyone here, Lord. Everyone listening to this. Deliver us from darkness, from all sin.

Deal with us and get us moving with Your movements. Get us in union with Your heart. Get our hearts breaking over Your house so that we can pour our lives into the building up of Your house.

Give us one heart, one mind, and one soul in 1998. We commit the Word to Your hands, Lord. Perform it, I pray, in Jesus' name.

Hallelujah. Thank You, Lord. Thank You, Lord.

Well, I'm very sorry, beloved. I wish we could sit here for another 15 minutes, but we have to make our way to cleaning up. But just allow the Lord to minister to you as we do.

May God's Word find good hearts.

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