

You Can't Serve Two Gods

by Richard Owen Roberts

Richard Owen Roberts emphasizes the necessity of solemn assemblies for addressing corporate sin and seeking God's healing in the church and nation.

Duration: 1:14:48

Scripture: James 4:7

Topics: "Repentance", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the urgent need for repentance, submission to God, resisting Satan, drawing near to God, cleansing hands, purifying hearts, mourning over sin, and humbling oneself in the presence of the Lord. It calls for a genuine and deep spiritual transformation within individuals and the church to experience God's presence and blessings.

Transcript

Now this evening we're going to look at a New Testament passage and the passage of incredible consequence. It's found in the book of James, chapter 4. But before we read the passage, I want to take some words that someone recited in the season of prayer this morning. Those very familiar words from 2 Chronicles 7.14. And not only are the words themselves familiar to multitudes of Christians, but they have been set to music in at least two or three different ways.

And I have often heard the words sung. 2 Chronicles 7.14. If my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their lap. This morning I gave you an assignment.

I asked you to go over carefully Deuteronomy 28. Because Deuteronomy 28 is the most careful, thorough passage that I know of anywhere in the Old Covenant that makes it clear what is meant when God says, heal your land. But what happened to Israel was that God himself left them.

So all the curses of the last 58 verses, not 58, 54 verses of Deuteronomy 28 constitute the blight upon the land that came because they did not walk in obedience. And so when God says to us, I will heal your land. He is saying, I will come among you again.

I will be your God. You will be my people. You will do things my way.

And my blessing will reign in your land. And I doubt that there was ever a nation on earth that so desperately needed their land healed as our land. Now we all know that we've got these men who call themselves educated, who tell us that America was never a Christian nation.

We even have a scoundrel in the White House who calls himself a Christian and knows nothing about it. His own pastor in Chicago says he has never been anything like a Christian. And that pastor, well, people who know him wonder if he knows even what Christianity is.

But we hear constantly America was never a Christian nation. But I have in my own personal library hundreds and hundreds of books and pamphlets published in the early days of America in which time after time it is stated we are a nation under God. We are under his authority.

We dare not do anything that will offend him. We must indeed constantly whenever we have strayed call for solemn assemblies and plead with God to come among us again. I know that for some of you the concept of a solemn assembly is alien.

You haven't been involved in one. You haven't even known of the existence of such a thing. But understand this.

Just as every individual sins, so every corporate entity sins. Let that sink in. Just as every individual sins, so every corporate entity sins.

If a young man and a woman marry, we then say they are now a couple. That's an entity. If God blesses their marriage with children, it's a larger entity that we call a family.

A church is an entity. A village, a town, a city is an entity. A state is an entity.

A nation is an entity. A business is an entity. A school is an entity.

Just as every individual sins, so every entity sins. And the solemn assembly is God's provision for entities to put away their sin and get right with him. And the history of solemn assemblies both throughout the world and in these United States of America is rich and glorious.

Some of you may not realize but at the time of the Civil War, now I know it's a bit of a dangerous thing for a northerner to come in the South and speak about the Civil War. But I don't have any ax to grind. I'm not seeking to persuade anybody of anything other than the necessity of solemn assembly.

You know that the circumstances were such that our nation may very well have been permanently divided. But at the time of the Civil War, across the northern tier, every school, every business, every factory, every church was called upon to assemble together in a solemn assembly and to seek the face of God that the nation might be spared. Up until that time, solemn assemblies had been held with frequency throughout the nation.

Among those pilgrims in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, solemn assemblies were frequently held. State governments themselves called the state to assemble together in the various places of worship, in fasting, in prayer, in seeking God's face. We have a book entitled Sanctify the Congregation.

The pamphlet that has been mentioned here, which was published separately, appears in that book along with many documents where solemn assemblies were called both by state governments and by national governments, by church leaders and others. Now at the heart of the concept of the solemn assembly, an

individual can't call a solemn assembly. A solemn assembly must be called by the head of that entity.

That's why the pastors have taken this to heart and are calling the congregation to a solemn assembly very much in keeping with God's ways and requirements. I've had the privilege of being involved in numerous of these solemn assemblies. But I remember the very first occasion when indeed I spoke upon the subject.

In the Chicago area where we live, a young pastor had begun attending a prayer meeting, a weekly early morning prayer meeting that I led for a great many years. And he began to open his heart and to speak earnestly about the need of his church and of the nation. And then after a prayer meeting one morning, he said, would you ever have three or four Sundays in the evening free where you could come to a church? And I said, often the itinerant work that I do slows down after the first week of December and doesn't really get going full tilt until the first of February.

I said, I have four Sunday evenings in a row in January where I'm not committed. He said, you must come to our church. We desperately need to hear from the Lord.

I went for three Sundays in a row and my heart was broken because Sunday after Sunday after Sunday it appeared as if I had no real word from the Lord for that congregation. The final Sunday was preceded by a week of very heavy obligations throughout the week. With the exception of one single day, Thursday, when I had no appointments but when our entire small staff had the day off and I was the only one available to be in the office.

So I prayed early on Thursday. Lord, give me a day when the phone doesn't ring and when nobody comes near so that I can seek your face for Sunday night. I had one single disturbance in the course of the day.

The postman came in, plopped a pile of letters on the counter and walked out. And as I was seeking God's face, I was directed to the Book of Joel and the Solemn Assembly. And when I went that Sunday night, I had a word from the Lord.

And immediately when I finished, the pastor jumped to his feet and said, that's exactly what we must do. I declare a Solemn Assembly for Saturday of this week. And the whole congregation came.

It was amazing. With such short notice. And in the course of the day, I had preached a couple of times but then every entity within the church, the ladies and the Sunday school department, the youth department, the elders and the deacons met separately to seek God's face and to inquire of the Lord if there was anything that they needed to care for.

I was meeting with the elders and deacons. It was probably about two in the afternoon. And suddenly, in the midst of the season of prayer, I felt compelled to interrupt.

And I said, is there a sin that the elders of this church are guilty of? Immediately, a man spoke up. And he said, yes. What's that? He said, a few years back, we had an elderly pastor who we dearly loved.

And he had been a wonderfully sweet-spirited and useful servant of Christ. But he began to suffer from dementia. And often, none of us could follow what he was saying.

His sermons just seemed to be a jumble. We didn't want him to leave, but the church began to disintegrate. And so we determined that we needed to pray that he would understand and retire.

But he did not. And then we got the notion, let's offer him a sum of money that will make it easier for him. And so we offered him a sum of money.

And he gladly said, oh, yes, and retired. But he said, while we were praying, the Lord reminded me we had never paid him that sum of money. Immediately, another man spoke up.

He said, now let's get this straight. That was not a sin of the congregation. That was a sin of this elder boy.

I believe it would be wrong to ask the congregation now to reach into their pockets and pay this man and his wife the money we promised plus substantial interest. Immediately, the others concurred and said this is our responsibility. We must deal with this ourselves.

Another man spoke up and he said, Mr. Roberts, is this a matter that needs to be confessed to the congregation? And I asked the obvious question, has the congregation been harmed by your sin? Well, we're sure most of the people don't know what our sin is, but the whole congregation knows that there's a strain in our relationship between this man and ourselves. Then I said, there's only one thing to do. Immediately, the entire congregation was drawn back together and the elder stood weeping and saying, this is what we did.

And this is what God has made it clear we must now do. That congregation broke into a season of true revival. And for months, the presence and the power of God was glorious in that place.

So a solemnist family is an opportunity for a church to deal with those things that have been offensive to God and beset the tone of a whole new season of seeking God's face. And it is of such immense need that the most careful preparation is in order. You have allowed approximately a month for preparation.

That is none too great a time. And as I have suggested to the pastor, a very correct approach is for each entity within the church to meet sometime in the next week or two before the Lord and to say, Lord, we want to do this right. Is there any sin that you will call to our minds that we as a portion of the congregation or the congregation in its entirety is guilty of? And sometimes the sin is merely failing to deal with the things that need to be dealt with.

Now, let me illustrate. A while back, I was preaching for a week in a Lutheran church in one of the northern states. Now, some of you may need to forgive me because I go to Lutheran churches and Methodist and Presbyterian and who cares what else.

The only place I won't go is a place where they won't allow me to speak the truth. But after three or four days of preaching in this Lutheran church, the pastor approached me and he said, we've got a problem among the staff. We're going to meet this afternoon.

I want you to be present because the problem involves you. Well, I had an obvious notion what he was making reference to. But I assembled with the four pastors on the staff in the senior pastor's office.

And then the pastor said to me, now, this fellow here has been saying things against you throughout the congregation. He's been doing it the whole time you've been here. But I was not aware of what he was up to until yesterday.

I have commanded him to apologize to you for what he's doing. So he said to the young man, Mr. Roberts is here. You've done a very wicked thing.

You have talked behind his back. You have never even spoken to him civilly. Now, you tell Mr. Roberts what you've been complaining about.

Well, I don't mind telling you. You've preached here many times and never once have you pronounced absolution. Well, it took me quite by surprise.

I know perfectly well what absolution is. Then the pastor spoke up again. And he said, I've got to make this perfectly plain.

Mr. Roberts is not a Lutheran. We knew that when we invited him here. We didn't expect him to do Lutheran things.

Mr. Roberts knows a great deal about repentance and faith toward God. We hoped he would come here and teach us how to live repentantly and how to walk in faith. And that's precisely what he's been doing.

Now, you apologize to Mr. Roberts. I will not. And the pastor looked very plainly at this young man.

And he said to him, I am commanding you to apologize to Mr. Roberts. I will not. He has never pronounced absolution.

You are saying, what is absolution? Well, it's not something I personally believe in. That is to the extent that I would practice it. But in most Lutheran churches, there's some form of a public confession of sin made by the congregation.

And the pastor then absolves them of sin. He pronounces God's pardon upon them. Personally, I couldn't do that.

Because I know that speaking words of confession may not be meaningful at all for some people. They may know the words and speak them well, and their heart is unchanged. But the pastor knew that when he invited me.

He said, we didn't expect Mr. Roberts to even believe in absolution. We certainly wouldn't require him to engage in it. So again, he turned to the young man.

And he said, I am commanding you now, as the pastor of this church, to apologize to Mr. Roberts. I will not. The pastor said, I give you one more opportunity.

Apologize to Mr. Roberts. I will not. And the pastor said, as of this moment, you are relieved of all responsibilities in this church.

Pack your things immediately and leave. Now that was pretty severe. But the whole congregation had been stirred up by these ungodly words that this man was speaking.

And because the pastor acted decisively, that church entered into a season of joyful victory and the presence of the Lord. But oft times, things are allowed to fester and grievous harm is done. I had on the calendar for a number of months a series of meetings in one of the major cities in the Midwest, in the major downtown church.

And just a couple of weeks before the series was to begin, I was contacted and told the pastor had been forced to resign. They would still like me to come for the Sunday, but the meetings throughout the week

were cancelled. And I was told very plainly, a little group of businessmen in the church believed they know more about Christianity and how to lead the church than the pastoral staff.

And so they led a movement to throw the pastor out. I'd only been there 18 years. Throughout that entire state, he had the reputation of the most earnest, godly man who faithfully proclaimed the word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now that had been festering for quite some time, but no action was taken until it was too late. I went there on the Sunday, on Sunday morning, I spoke as plainly as I knew how on the subject of repentance. At the end of the service, the ringleader of this group of businessmen who forced the pastor out stood in front of me, tears coursing down his face.

I never knew what repentance is. Clearly, I have never repented. I went back to my hotel room full of anticipation that God was going to break through.

But when I arrived back for the evening service, this same man stepped up to me and said, we don't need any preacher to tell us how to run the church. We know better than any of you. In one case, a problem was dealt with immediately when it arose.

In another case, the problem festered until it virtually destroyed the church. That once great Christian center has a bare handful of people in attendance. And its reputation throughout the whole region has given a black eye to Christianity.

A solemn assembly, I repeat, is God's ordained way for our dealing correctly with those sins that can indeed accumulate and destroy the effectiveness of the church. So the most careful preparation is in order. Now with that as an introduction, I want to invite you in your minds to remember that time when Mary and Joseph entered the temple.

And either Mary or Joseph, we're not told which, was carrying the baby Jesus in their arms. And an old man was in the temple who had been there day and night. And when Mary and Joseph entered, he rushed right up to them and reached out his hands.

And the baby was put into Simeon's arms. And Simeon said, Lord, your servant can now depart in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation.

Salvation is not an experience. It's not a prayer. It's not a system of beliefs.

Salvation is a person. The Lord Jesus Christ. And when we offend the Savior, we bring great woe upon ourselves and our community and our nation.

Amen. So let's focus on what it means to truly know the Savior. To cherish as our own the very person that Simeon held in his arms.

Now we're all people, obviously. And all of us know what it's like to be hurt by people who claim to love us. And sometimes the hurts are very deep indeed.

Not long ago, in a church where I had been loved and listened to for years, the very church that had the solemn assembly that I've described to you, one of the leaders didn't like the position I took. And so he declared that I had become senile and that I should no longer be tolerated. And he managed to stir up enough people.

This man, who declared me mentally incompetent, for years has told the people in the congregation virtually everything I know about Christianity Mr. Roberts taught me. Now you can imagine how that hurt. But believe me, it's a lot worse to betray the Savior than it is to betray brothers and sisters in the faith.

And when the presence of Christ, the manifest presence of Christ is withdrawn from a church, it's because the Savior has been offended. It is because something has been tolerated that breaks the Savior's heart. It might be the simple neglect of prayer.

As pastor said this morning, our Savior, when he cleansed the temple on those two occasions said, my house is a house of prayer for all the nations. The church has become so prayerless, the church across America, that we now have men whose biblical understanding is practically nil, saying that God gifts certain people with the gift of prayer and they do the praying for the rest of us. What nonsense.

It is the duty of every believer to be a part of the corporate prayer life of the church. I know personally if I were a young man knowing what by the grace of God I now know, I would not pastor a prayerless church. I would make it absolutely clear.

Either this becomes a house of prayer, or I want nothing to do with it, because there's no hope of the blessing of God upon a prayerless people. I would to God that that were our only sin, that we have incredible capacity to sin against the very Savior that Simeon held in his arms. So let's think now out of James 4 what the Lord wants us to face at this very time.

Turn if you will, perhaps you've already done so at my earlier urging, to chapter 4 of the book of James. Our focus will be upon verses 7, 8, 9 and 10 where there is a list of 7. Now I betrayed you this morning by telling you I had 10 points and then I blurred numbers 6 and 7 so that many of you didn't get them down and you couldn't have possibly gotten them down because I didn't state them clearly. I'll try to atone for that tomorrow night.

But tonight, because the 7 points are drawn straight from the text, it will not merely be the failure of a tired old man if I don't mention the 7, but it will be a terrible treatment of the word of God itself. So I think tonight we're safe for 7. But let's read the chapter and then turn to these precious verses. What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have, so you commit murder.

You are envious and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and you do not receive because you ask with wrong motive so that you may spend it on your pleasure.

Now let's just pause for a moment and let me clarify a matter. In the typical church that still has a prayer meeting, now churches with prayer meetings are not typical. Most churches have done away with official prayer meetings.

But in those that still have them, the focus of the prayers is upon the temporal and the physical. It is so bad in most circles that jokingly they are referred to, that is the prayer meeting itself is referred to as the organ recital. Please pray for Aunt Tilly.

She fell and her wrist is swollen. John Smith is in the hospital for exploratory surgery. My great aunt who lives in Alaska is faced with physical... I mean we go on and on and on with all these physical things.

No, I'm not really speaking against that. But why should we focus on the physical while the world is rushing hell now to hell? This may be disturbing to some of you, but God himself introduces physical difficulty into the life. And God always acts with purpose.

Now why should I ask to be delivered from a physical ailment when I know perfectly well that God allowed the ailment because I needed to learn something? In the tiny bit of praying that we do, we are essentially praying against the will and the purpose of God. Ought we not to pray in regard to every physical difficulty? Lord, don't take that difficulty away until I have learned from it what you intended I should. Thank God that I'm feeling sick.

Maybe feeling physically sick will help me to get spiritually right. But Lord, please don't heal me until I am where you intended me to be. That's so contrary to the life of the church that still has a prayer meeting.

So the apostle says in verse 3 as we noted, you ask and you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives. But verse 4, you adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Have you got that straight? Jesus stated it, you cannot serve God and men.

Either you will love the one and reject the other. But I do want to remind you of the words that God was forced to speak to King Saul through his prophet. You remember God had ordered King Saul to go and utterly destroy the Amalekites.

But Saul preserved the best, the sheep and the goats and he kept alive the king. And when confronted by the prophet Samuel, he lied and said he had obeyed the law. And you remember the humorous line, what then is the meaning of this bleating of the sheep and the goats in my ear? But Samuel was forced to say to the king, stubbornness is as the sin of idolatry and rebellion is as adultery.

Many times we excuse rebellion as if it were of no great consequence. I've had mature men step up to me and say, well I heard what you said about stubbornness, but I'm going to tell you this. If you think I'm stubborn, you should have known my father.

And I say, no, thank you, it's bad enough knowing you. We excuse stubbornness and rebellion as if it were inconsequential, but the first order that the spirit of God gives James to share with us is submit to God. And as I've declared now twice already, if you're having trouble submitting to the authority in your physical life, you're not going to find it possible to submit to God.

So let's ask the Lord. Lord, I don't dare approach this subject of submission merely from my perspective. Will you tell me, Lord, where I'm at? I want to know your heart.

I have been thinking tonight of salvation not as a set of principles or experience, but I have been thinking of salvation as a person. And I know that if I rebel, I am rebelling against the very person of the Savior himself. I want to know what you think about my spirit.

Am I rebellious, Lord? Is there any area of my life where rebellion exists? I don't want it there, Lord. I know I cannot enjoy the outpouring of your spirit. My church cannot enjoy true revival as long as we tolerate the spirit of rebellion.

Now God does have his rights. And most of us have faced already the fact that as the Creator everything that we enjoy was made by that same infant that Simeon held in his arms. He made everything out of

nothing.

Often in a conversation with a young person they speak of sex. And they act as if their parents knew nothing about it. And as if they had discovered something incredible.

But we know perfectly well God created sex. And he created it for our enjoyment. And for the propagation of the race.

But he made certain rules governing it. The church is loaded down with people in rebellion against the law of God. It seems virtually every week there comes to my attention another well known spiritual leader so called who has plunged into sin.

In our newspapers in the Chicago region over the last couple weeks we've had the sordid details of the lifestyle of one of the most prominent pastors in the region who had been taking an underage girl from his church from one state to the other and having sex with her. And now he is being faced with a long jail sentence. And rightly so.

And I have been with pastors who have told me I understand the rules but they apply to ordinary men. I'm special in God's eye. Rebellion.

In any realm whatsoever the first step to true revival based upon New Testament teaching is to submit to God. And I'm asking you are you truly submissive to God? A number of years ago I was able to be a small help to a church in one of the mountain states and at the end of the series they gave me a redwood plaque that had engraved upon it two words Yes Lord. And we have hung that in a prominent place and all the visitors that come see those words.

Yes Lord. I remember reading of a pastor in Scotland who had a very troubled woman come to see him one day. And she sat and poured out her tale of woes upon the pastor and he said quietly and kindly and listened to her.

But he had on his desk a little pad and he picked up his pen he held his hand in front of the pad so she could not see what he was writing and he wrote something on the pad then he pulled the little sheet off, folded it twice and he said to the woman over there under the windows are two comfortable chairs I want you to go over there and sit down and when you've gotten control of yourself then I want you to take this slip of paper and my pen and I want you to cross off that which I've written which doesn't belong she had no idea what he was getting at she took the folded slip and the pen she went and sat under the window when the measure of calm came upon her she opened the little slip and there were only two words on the paper no lord she struggled for some time and finally took the pen

and struck the word no you can never say no to God and be submissive to him it's always yes lord can you honestly say that is the commitment with which you constantly live yes lord yes lord yes lord number two resist the devil and he will flee from you now the book of Genesis is a very troubling book because in the book of Genesis we have a series of incidences in which it is perfectly plain that the persons did not resist the devil did Eve resist Satan in the garden did Cain resist Satan Christ had spoken to him he asked the question why is your countenance fallen and then he said to him sin is crouching at your door it's desire is toward you but you must master it and instead of mastering sin instead of crying out oh God help me Satan is attacking I must have your help instead he went

and voiced his complaint against God to his brother and then in indignation rose up and put his brother to death so Eve did not resist Satan Cain did not resist Satan at the time of Noah and the flood they did not resist Satan at the tower of Babel they did not resist Satan Esau and his mess of pottage did not resist Satan in Laban's treachery he did not resist Satan in that plot of Joseph's brothers to destroy him they did not resist Satan the question is do you can you honestly say I resist Satan and I am constantly imploring the help of God so that my resistance might be successful when we began I showed you this gadget I've got in my pocket and I talked about the necessity of opening the door and pressing the right button submit to God resist Satan look at the third item here on this

incredibly urgent list draw near to God now that's a daily task you can't say well eleven years ago I drew near to God I hear people get up in testimony meetings and say well when I was a lad of thirteen I drew near to God I want to jump up and say so what who cares about your ancient history I want to know if you've drawn near to God today your testimony doesn't sound as if there's anything current in it well let's not deal with them let's deal with ourselves am I drawing near to God on a daily basis could it indeed be said that I perpetually draw near to God now if you've never been born of the spirit of God you can't draw near to Him if you live a hypocritical life you can't draw near to Him if you've got some besetting sin in your life that you will not put away you cannot draw near

to God but what a wonderful arrangement of truth submit to God resist Satan draw near to God and the promise that accompanies this is perfectly glorious draw near to God and He will draw near to you my parents are both in heaven now but a number of years ago a family member who owns a large estate invited the entire extended family to come for a family reunion and they put up a big tent and we had our meals together on this beautiful estate under the tent but on Saturday night a number of the young people in the family slipped up to me and they said Uncle Dick what's the plan for tomorrow well I said I have not been told directly but I'm under the impression that we've been asked to go to the church where my mother and dad attend and the young people oh Uncle Dick we were so hoping that

you would preach well I said listen I'm the younger brother I don't have any authority why don't you go ask my older brother so the group of them went off and found him and they said Uncle Earl what if we have a service under the tent in the morning and he said well I think that would be wonderful if you could get your Uncle Dick to preach but I can't preach on a moment's notice he doesn't even need a second warning so they came back and they said alright he's agreed so we met right under the tent and the verse that impressed upon me is one I have recited to you from Psalm 73 the nearness of God is my good and for an hour or so I talked about what it means to draw near to God and God to draw near to us at the end of the service one of the nieces who had been living a foul life of sin

slipped up to me and standing in front of me with tears coursing down her face she just looked at me and said not a word and eventually I said to her calling her by name isn't it time for you to know for yourself that the nearness of God is your good oh she said I wish I could but I think it's too late for me and again speaking to her by name I said why don't you come out to Chicago and spend a few days with us I said talk to Aunt Maggie learn from her when I'm going to be home for a few days and make arrangements to come oh she said you wouldn't want me oh but I said you're wrong we would love to have you come and she came and she discovered for herself the nearness of God I saw her fairly recently and she was just bubbling with joy drawn near to God that takes an effort as I said

already that's not an incident from the past that's a daily duty but it's much more than a duty it's a glorious privilege to draw near to God and to have him draw near to you next on the list cleanse your hands you

sinner will you respond when I ask you to hold your hands out in front of you and to look at them that's not forbidden by the law of God how do I know whether I have clean hands or not unless I look at them well yes I washed just before we came I shook hands with some of you maybe you haven't washed before you came but we're not really thinking about physical dirt we're thinking about the clean hands of the true Christian Job made a statement of tremendous importance he who has clean hands grows stronger and stronger now Job didn't say this but the opposite is obviously true

he who has dirty hands grows weaker and weaker the church is in the midst of a dreadful slide down way because multitudes in the church have dirty hands hands that are soils with ill gotten gain hands that are made dirty by illegitimate sex and perhaps worst of all and of the greatest danger to seemingly sincere Christians is hands that are soiled by our touching God's glory Maggie and I have our special friends in the world just as you do and among our choiceless friends are a couple of musicians whom we dearly love Ron and Patricia Owens we've worked with them in countless numbers of meetings by preaching their leading the music and often in our meetings together they sing a very touching song that says touch not the glory touch not the glory for the glory belongs to God tragically if

God blesses us sometimes we start to pop up with pride and we start to act as if somehow the blessings were our doing he who has clean hands how clean are your hands have you been earnestly constantly seeing that your hands were clean before God and see what comes next that is so much a part of the same vital issue first cleanse your hands you sinners and second purify your hearts you double minded now we've already spoken to this to a small degree our savior made it crystal clear as I've said already you can't serve two masters do you understand that in the sermon on the mount when Christ says blessed are the pure in heart he's talking about those whose hearts have been united who have indeed a singular heart the plague of multitudes of professed Christians in America today is a divided

heart in some meetings in the mountain state where the touch of the spirit of God was gracious and there were dozens of people waiting for counsel and help and late late in the evening long past my bedtime there were still people there and then the pastor came down the aisle and he said to me Mr.

Roberts there's a woman in the back who is greatly crushed I have been unable to help her do you have enough strength left to speak with her yes I said pastor bring her to me and as the pastor came down the aisle that woman I thought this dear pastor couldn't help her it would be asinine for me to think I could unless God helped me so I cried out oh God help me when she reached me in a flood of tears when we sat down on the front bench she said to me Mr. Roberts this is not my church but I've been the organist in my church for 40 years and I was sure that I was a Christian until tonight but for the first time in my life I'm afraid I don't know the Lord and then she turned to me and she said am I a Christian Mr.

Roberts and I said to her my dear woman where do you disagree with God she looked at me out of pride what an awful thing to say I don't disagree with God so I said I'm sorry I thought you wanted help I'm very tired if you'll excuse me I'm going back to my room oh she said I need help well then I said be honest I can't help a dishonest person I asked you where do you disagree with God oh she said I don't oh but I said you do she said it's not really a disagreement with God but I love the world you see when I called out to God for help that's exactly what the Lord said to me look at her a woman about 65 dolled up to look about 45 she carried the world all over everything about her suggested love of the world and when she said I love the world but I don't disagree with God we opened the

scripture and she saw for herself the passage cited already you cannot love to nasty and she wept her way into the kingdom of God as she abandoned her love of the world purify your hearts oh sinner the undoing of multitudes in the churches this divided loyalty this desire to be accepted in the world and this yearning to be accepted before God have you purified your heart have you said I don't care anything anymore about anything I want to be like Sinion I want to know the person who is truly the Savior of all the world and knowing Him and loving Him and loyalty to Him and serving Him is vastly more important than anything else so I renounce everything and lay hold of Christ who has already laid hold of me clench your hands you sinners purify your heart oh double minded number six be

miserable and mourn and weep let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom now that's not a statement as to how we must live every day of our lives always overcome with gloom and sorrow but when we get into a precarious circumstance like the church is in today the time of mourning has come you know in Ecclesiastes it makes it clear there is a time for everything there is a time to laugh but there is also a time to weep and now at least for the next month every believer in this fellowship would be well to move into the mode of mourning mourning weeping, sorrow oh God we cannot go on without your manifest presence we dare not go on sinning against you we dare not pretend we are having church when you are not present the glorious words already cited today from Isaiah 57 15

God has two dwelling places he dwells in the high and the lofty place but he also chooses to dwell in the heart in the spirit of the broken and the contrite I cannot imagine anything more wonderful than a weeping congregation that God draws near and pours out his spirit upon and that church enters in to a glorious new day of the blessing of God upon it finally number seven humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord and he will exalt you if you come to the solemn assembly without submitting to God if you come to the solemn assembly having failed to resist Satan if you come to the solemn assembly without having personally drawn near to God if you come to the solemn assembly with dirty hands if you come to the solemn assembly with a divided heart if you come without mourning and weeping

you will also come without humility and God hates false solemn assembly the last thing in the world that's needed is a make-believe solemn assembly if God's ear is attentive to the prayer of his people and his eyes are roaming to and fro throughout the whole earth looking for those whose hearts are completely empty God is ready I believe with all my heart to pour out his Holy Spirit afresh upon a church that can be used as an instrument to turn the nation back to God will it be this church?

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/EHPHFYRHMMMA.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/richard-owen-roberts/you-cant-serve-two-gods/>

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