

God and His People - I Chron. 7:13-14

by Vance Havner

The sermon emphasizes the importance of individual transformation and revival, highlighting the need for humility, prayer, repentance, and seeking God's face in order to experience revival.

Duration: 48:33

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:13

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a story about a brand new Christian who had never heard about Jesus before. This highlights the lack of evangelism and preaching in the world. The speaker emphasizes the importance of judging oneself and confessing sins, even if one cannot think of anything specific. The sermon also discusses the need for seeking God's face and shares a story about a mountain missionary and a man named Leonard Lamb who experienced a life-changing conversion. Lastly, the speaker emphasizes the importance of taking action and proceeding when God calls, rather than just praying.

Transcript

Have you ever noticed in 2 Chronicles, the seventh chapter, that familiar passage used by every preacher in a revival at some time or other? How verses 13 and 14 both start with the word, if. If I shut up heaven, that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people. If my people, now notice here, how this verse swings back and forth between God and his people.

If my people, which are called by my name, shall 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 will heal their land. It oscillates, you observe, back and forth between God and his people. We hear a lot of sermons on this great old text.

Some people say it's not a revival text, that it applied only to Israel in the Old Testament, but I'm not interested in that observation. The application is for God's people any time. You're aware of the fact that it's a springboard for revival sermons, and people are so familiar with it that every time I announce it, I can fancy the Saints settle back into the pews and say, well, I've heard all this before.

But I think the thing we need above everything else today is to familiarize ourselves with the familiar, to get better acquainted with what we think we already know. This old verse is just as timely as it ever was in the days of Solomon, and it turns on two phrases, if my people, then will I. Now, there's no secret about that

unless you want to call it an open secret. We sing revive us again every once in a while, and I have a sneaking suspicion that when we sing it, revive us again under our breath, we add, but not now.

And it is rank hypocrisy to ask God to revive us again if we're not willing to do four simple things that he says to do in this text. You notice it starts with his people, if my people. God begins with his people, and they begin with themselves.

This is a personal old book. Search me and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts.

See if there be any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Now, that's not passing the book. That's me.

It's a personal book. After David committed his terrible sin, he needed to do something besides grab a harp and start singing songs. He needed to get right with God.

And he started by saying against thee, thee only have I sinned. I used to wonder why he said that. I thought he'd sinned against just about everybody himself, Uriah, Bathsheba, and the whole country.

But David understood that the worst thing about sin is it's something between us and God. And we don't seem to get through to that today. That's what makes it so bad.

We sometimes sing the little chorus, Lord send a revival and let it begin in me. Well, that's where it'll have to start. It's not the preacher nor the deacon, but it's me, oh Lord, standing in the need of prayer.

You know, it doesn't take much religion to confess other people's sins. I heard of a woman who went to a psychiatrist some time ago and she had a strip of bacon over each ear and a fried egg on top of her head. And she said, I've come to see you about my brother.

She needed a little help herself. Ever hear anybody pray like that? Go all the way around the world, visit all the mission fields and never get around to old number one. You feel like saying, brother, if I were you, I believe I'd back up and start over.

Now it says here, if my people, which are called by my name. Well, you say that's Israel though. Yes, but wait a minute.

We are Christians. We're Christians. I wish we never had started pronouncing it Christian in Christianity because the center of the whole thing is Christ.

We're Christians. Romans 7, 4 says we're married to Christ. Second Corinthians 11, 2 says we've been espoused to him.

We're married to Jesus. When a woman marries a man, she takes the new name. And if she's the woman she ought to be, she'll never do anything to bring reproach on that name.

If you're a Christian, a real one now, you've got a new name and you got it from God. You're a Christian. Some spring times ago, I was in meetings in the Ozarks in Arkansas.

No more beautiful mountain area in this country. I loved it. And an old mountain missionary there took me as far back as we could get in those mountains, as far back as we could get on a jeep.

And he told me about those mountain people, wonderful, wonderful people. And he told me about old Leonard Lamb, who had been a sinner and a drunkard all his life until he was 72 years old. Then he got converted.

And everybody heard about it. It was quite a sensation. One day he said to himself, I need a little money.

If I'd go over to the county seat at the bank, maybe they'd let me have a little. He went over there and the banker had heard about his conversion. So the banker said, tell me about what's happened to you.

And he did. And the banker said, well, sign your name here and we'll let you have a little money. And he came back home and said, this is the first time in my life that my name's ever been worth anything.

You know why? He had a new name. That wasn't the same old Leonard Lamb. In Greensboro, I had a friend who was Dr. Raymond Taylor.

He was the other end of the social spectrum. He was head of the drama department of the University of North Carolina in Greensboro, just across the street from where I live. One of the buildings is named for him.

A graduate of Harvard, a great man in literature. He had read the Bible all his life as literature, but he wasn't a Christian. He was a hard sinner.

And his wife prayed for 45 years that he'd get saved. One night he got saved in the middle of the night all by himself in his room, in his bed. He and I became buddies.

We liked to write and we liked literature. We'd go out and eat about once every week or so. But he died and went to heaven not long ago.

He didn't live so long after he was saved, but I never saw a more remarkable conversion. Made him a deacon in the First Baptist Church. He was a pallbearer at my wife's funeral.

I thought a lot of Raymond Taylor. Oh, what a difference. I said, how'd you get saved? Did you hear a sermon? No, I never heard sermons.

Were you at church? No. God woke me up. He said, in the middle of the night, showed me what a lost old sinner I was.

And I got saved. He came down the steps next morning and said to his wife, I'm going to church with you tonight. And she nearly fainted after praying for him for 45 years.

It was quite a shock. But he was like a child. Matthew 18.3, except you be converted and become his little children.

So now enter the kingdom of heaven. He went everywhere. But he had a chance, bragging on Jesus.

All kinds of churches didn't make any difference to him. He didn't know one from another one. And that's kind of nice anyhow.

You know, the happiest fellow in the world is a brand new Christian before he's met too many Bible scholars. He didn't know any more than just believe the Bible. He never had believed it.

And I said to him, did anybody during all these years that you were a sinner, anybody ever speak to you about Jesus? No. Now that's something to get on our faces about. You mean no preacher? No.

Nobody. No wonder that God visited him in the middle of the night. Nobody else would.

And the Lord made him a special visit by the Holy Spirit. Now, he got a new name. He got a new name all around the neighborhood.

Some of the faculty of the university came over one Wednesday night to hear him and give his testimony. They couldn't understand what in the world had happened to Dr. Taylor. But he was a new man.

He had a new name. Now, there are four things to do in this text. Four notes make a chord.

And I believe we ought to use all of this chord. I don't believe we ought to just settle for a fourth of it. I've heard sermons on this text that gave the impression that all you have to do to have a revival is pray.

Now, you can't have a revival without prayer, but you can have a lot of prayer and not have a revival. I don't minimize prayer because it's the thermometer of any church. What a church is on prayer meeting, that's what it is.

Not what it is on Sunday morning. You can't tell much about a church on Sunday morning. What it is at prayer, what a preacher is when he prays, and what you are when you pray alone, not publicly.

What you are in prayer is what you are. Somebody said what a preacher is. In his prayer closet is what he is.

And that's what you are. Because you can't put on there, you know, you can't pull the wool over God's eyes. You are liable to be honest then and tell the truth.

I've been in some prayer meetings where a waste of time. There were at least two in the Bible. Exodus 14, 15, Moses stood there at the Red Sea with the water in front of him, the Egyptians coming up back of him, and here are all these Israelites around him.

Well, you'd think it is time to pray, and God says, Wherefore cryest thou unto me? Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward. There's a time to pray and a time to proceed. And when it's time to proceed, the thing to do is quit praying and start proceeding.

Some people never do anything but pray. They never do the next thing. God said, Get moving here.

Get in to start out. I'll separate the water. Looks like that you're going to drown, but you won't.

Make a move. And then after the battle of Ai, Joshua lay on his face before God, and that's a good position to be in. God said, Get up.

Wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? No time for a prayer meeting. Israel hath sinned. The church can have a prayer meeting.

It can pray the looms day, but until it confesses its sins, until individual members confess their sins, if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. So that's very important. But he said three other things here.

If my people shall humble themselves. I don't know of anywhere in the Bible you're told to pray for humility. You're told to do that yourself.

Humble yourself. As a little child, Matthew 18, 4, under the mighty hand of God, 1 Peter 5, 6, in the sight of the Lord, James 4, 10, you do it. You don't wait on God to do it.

He'll humiliate you, but he won't humble you in the sense of making yourself humble. We brag a lot. Baptists do.

We're mighty bad at bragging. Sometimes I think we ought to, and I tell them so in their larger meetings, I think we ought to have one of our conventions in Los Angeles. They've got a lot of smoke out there, and I think we could blow it out in three days, the way we like to brag.

The Bible speaks of those who justify themselves. We have lots of them, why I do this and why I don't do that. The Bible says don't do that.

Judge yourself. Now when you judge yourself, that's not so comfortable. Old Mel Trotter was having a prayer meeting, and everybody had prayed but one man.

Mel said, pray brother, and he said, I can't. Mel said, what's the matter with you? Nothing. Just can't pray.

Mel said, confess your sins. He said, I can't think of anything, Mr. Trotter. Mel said, get down there and guess at it.

And he got down on his knees and guessed at it, and guessed it the very first time. I tell people if they could ever turn off TV long enough to get still long enough to hear God speak, they'd think of something, and the first thing would probably be it. And then it says, if my people seek my face.

Now what does that mean? You've heard it all your life. God says in Hosea, I will go and return to my place till they acknowledge their offense, and seek my face. The psalmist said, when thou saidst to seek ye my face, my heart said unto thee thy face, Lord will I seek.

What does it mean? It means to seek God's favor, his approval, so that he makes his face to shine upon us, and lifts up the light of his countenance upon us, and gives us peace. But some things hide God's face, nothing between my soul and the Savior, so that his blessed face is not seen. That song was written by Charles A. Tindley, a great black preacher in Philadelphia.

His son, Charlie Tindley Jr. sang for me, led singing for me in three meetings years ago, Grand Rapids, Toledo, and Rockford, Illinois. And I left to hear him sing his daddy's songs, Take Your Burden to the Lord and Leave It There, and others. But this one was, I thought, the best of all.

And you got under conviction when he sang it. We could have a revival anytime if we could save our face and have a revival. That's why we don't have many.

You have to get embarrassed, and you have to get ashamed of yourself, and you have to humble yourself before God. The Japanese, when they surrendered at the end of the war, they had never lost a war. And the Oriental mind doesn't like to be humbled, and to have to give in.

And when they had to march their delegates out on the deck of the battleship Missouri in front of MacArthur, and Wainwright, and the rest of them, and sign away in their surrender, that was hard. They

lost face. And if there's anything an Oriental hates to do, it's to lose face.

When you surrender to God, it's embarrassing sometimes, but it's the only way to the blessing. I heard a woman say, I was teacher of a women's Bible class for 10 years before I ever got right with God. And I went down to an old Methodist altar and knelt there, and I said, Lord, I'll go to Africa, I'll go to India, I'll go anywhere.

And God said, I don't want you over in Africa. I want you to get right with Susie right here in the church. Uh-oh.

She said, I hadn't thought about that, and I started over. Said, I'd rather I'd gone to Africa than get right with Susie in the church. And God said, no, no, I don't need you over there.

Get right. I was in Georgia in a meeting, and the pastor said on Monday, said, lady called me up this morning, hadn't slept last night, and said, my sister and I haven't spoken to each other in several years, and I just couldn't sleep last night after that sermon. And so I called her up, and she's coming to see me, and we're going to make everything up and get it settled.

That's what I'm talking about, just plain old flat-footed, ordinary, everyday getting right. Nobody wants to hear about that. Nobody wants to do it.

I was in a meeting in Pennsylvania maybe many years ago, and we'd had a dry meeting for a couple of nights. Oh, it was dry. If we hadn't had a glass of water on the pulpit and a little humidity in there, places had dried up and blown away.

I said, Lord, do something. Anything's better than nothing. Give us a revival or a ride or something, but give us something.

And I gave the invitation, and one of the leading members of the church walked down to the front and turned and said, I want to confess the ungodly things I've said about our former pastor. I said under my breath, now we're going places. Old Adam never walks down the church on talks like that.

That's the work of the Holy Spirit. It's not easy. It's a whole lot easier to give \$100 to foreign missions than it is to apologize to somebody.

You ever tried it lately? It's a rare thing. Sometimes husbands and wives need to do that. That's the reason we've got so much trouble today.

There may be some right here tonight listening to me. The first thing you do when you get home tonight, you ought to say one to the other, maybe each to the other. Not been acting like Christians, and I'm ashamed of myself, and I want you to forgive me.

That's the reason today that we're having such trouble. This country ought to be declared a disaster area from Maine to California, home-wise, because we won't get right. We're too stubborn.

I heard of a man and his wife, they were having such a time, and the kids even said, Mom, Pop, why don't you go to a psychiatrist? You're about to run us up the wall instead of us running you up the wall. And they went to a psychiatrist. And he said to the woman and the man, I want you to sit down in chairs facing each other and just tell each other what you think of each other, and don't spare her anything.

And they didn't. They really told each other off. And they got through, he went over to the woman and kissed her and said to the husband, now that's the trouble.

She needs affection. You ought to show affection. Tell her so.

You ought to show affection to her. She ought to be shown affection. And that stubborn man said, okay, I'll bring her over every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Perfectly willing for the psychiatrist to take care, but too stubborn to do it. Now, maybe you've not got that far yet. And there are teenagers who ought to go to Mom and Pop.

And say, I've not been acting like a Christian. And sometimes Mom and Pop ought to say it to the children. That's where revival begins.

With things like that. And then it says finally, if my people would turn from their wicked ways. Now, I never hear much about that.

But it was a great old saint who said, we cannot expect God to take away sin by forgiving it, if we're not willing to put it away by forsaking it. Now, plenty of people are glad to have their sins taken away. And they sang about that, you know, and thank God for it.

But you won't put them away. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper. But whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

Supposed to give them up. What kind of sins? All kinds. Church members ought to confess sins of omission.

Romans 7, 19. The good that I would, I do not. Now, what is it that you ought to do and you know you ought to do that you won't do? While we could fill the front of this church with people guilty of the sins of omission.

We don't like to be told today what we ought to do. Children don't like to be told in the home. Students at school.

Church members at church. But the Bible says we ought, ought, ought, always to pray, to obey God, to forgive, to love one another, support the weak. And that's not a suggestion, it's a commandment.

And when you leave undone what you ought to do, to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is said, it's just as bad not to do what you ought to do as to do what you ought not to do. But, on the other hand, sins of omission. Same verse, Romans 7, 19.

The evil that I would not, that I do. What is it you're doing tonight that you ought not to do and you know you shouldn't? Now, they tell us preachers today that we ought not to do any negative preaching. Just preach positively all the time.

Well, I'd have to throw away half of my New Testament if I did that. It's a double-barrel book. And the Bible says, the Old Testament says, the righteous man walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, stands not in the way of sinners, sits not in the seat of the scornful.

Nehemiah said, so did not I for the fear of God. There's some things a Christian does not do. The New Testament says, walk not as the Gentiles.

Be angry and sin not, steal no more, let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, grieve not the Holy Spirit, no filthiness, foolish talking, jesting, no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, be not drunk with wine, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision. As I said this morning, it ends up with a negative. Whatever it is in your life, that's out of the will of God, may be a small thing.

The shelf behind the door, the shelf behind the door, tear it down and throw it out, don't use it anymore. For Jesus wants his temple clean from ceiling to the floor. He even wants that little shelf that's hidden behind the door.

Sometimes it's one thing that you will not give up to the Lord. I was in Capitol Hill Baptist Church, Oklahoma City years ago in a meeting. They gave an invitation, a fellow came down the aisle, shook hands with me and put a pack of cigarettes in my pocket and he said, that's been my trouble and I'm giving it up.

I hadn't preached on tobacco. You think I'd waste a sermon on that when I got so many good things to preach about? I always tell them, if they bring their tobacco to church, please leave it on the steps, and I guarantee you no hog or dog will get it till you go out after the meeting. But that was his trouble.

Whatever it is, we must deal with it. And then sins of the disposition, 2 Corinthians 7.1, having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Disposition.

The sins of carnality in the New Testament, what are they? Well, Paul didn't enumerate the ones that we do. Preachers used to preach, they've about quitted, on sins and drinking and smoking and gambling and all the rest of it, but we don't hear much about that anymore, alas. But Paul didn't name those things.

He said envy, strife, divisions, whispering, swellings, tumult, schisms, various debates, contentions. Those are the things that tear churches to pieces. You might add jealousy, murmuring, the Bible says a lot about that, grumbling, why the Israelites had barely gotten out of the wilderness and they started murmuring and the church had barely gotten out of Pentecost and there arose a murmuring.

We've been at it ever since. And I get in churches sometimes where we have some of these saints who don't dance and they don't play cards and they don't smoke and they shouldn't and they're right on that, but there's not much they are doing to the glory of God. And they brag on what they don't do, I don't do this and I don't do that, and I feel like saying, well, neither does a gate post.

What are you doing to the glory of God? There's the other side of it. The worst enemies that Jesus had were the Pharisees. Have you ever stopped to think that the crowd that spearheaded the movement that put him on the cross was the crowd that went to church, read the Bible, prayed in public, all of them tithers, lived separated lives from the world, tried to win others and went to hell.

You can do all of that and not be saved. My soul, how good a person can be and miss heaven. Jesus said to publicans, and harlots will go there before you, strain out a gnat and swallow a camel, like sepulchers, full of dead men's bones and all the rest of it.

And so we can wrap the rags of our religiosity. Now we ought to do all the things that the Pharisees did that I've named. Well, to go to church, read the Bible, tithe, be separated from the world and try to win

others.

But if you do all that and stop there, you're not out of the woods, because the Pharisees did all that. They wouldn't even eat an egg that had been laid on the Sabbath. They were separated with a vengeance, believe me.

We were saved to be made like Jesus, predestinated. They've argued over that for years. I've heard some preachers try to explain it.

That's why I don't. But I know the purpose of it. I was predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son.

God saved you to make you like Jesus. How much like Jesus are you? That's the thing. And your disposition here.

The real test of your Christianity is not how you act at the Lord's table when you have Lord's Supper. It's how you act at the breakfast table. It takes a couple of cups of coffee to make you fit to live with of a morning.

Maybe you better go to the mourner's bench. And then doubtful things. Whatsoever is not a faith is sin.

Is there anything in your life, it may not be terrible, but it's got a question mark after it. You're not sure about it. Paul says, if eating meat offered to idols caused my brother to offend, I'll not eat anymore.

Habits of life, though harmless, they seem, the old song says. The real need today among our people is repentance in the church. I read the other day, Associated Press, got an article about Southern Baptists are uneasy.

We had a drop in baptisms last year. And we've got all this machinery and never undertook as many things in our life as we are. But I think the trouble is we are not having repentance and confession of sin on the part of God's people.

When I was a boy, my daddy used to take me to an old mill out in the country. It was operated by a big old water wheel. You've seen them.

The water poured on the big wheel and the big wheel turned all the others. Now, suppose that miller would come down some morning and there wasn't enough water to turn the wheel. How foolish he'd be to get down there and try to make it go around.

But I tell you what he could do. He could go up the creek and deepen the channel and get the debris out of the way and the stream would flow and the wheel would turn and he'd be back in business. I've never seen as many committees and organizations in my life trying to turn the wheel in our churches today.

And everywhere I go, I see pastors and Sunday school superintendents, education men, music men, all the rest, puffing and blowing, trying to make the wheels go around. I think we ought to go up the creek and get sin out of our lives as individuals and as churches. And when we do, then the flow of the Spirit would set in.

And all the wonderful things that you read about in the Acts of the Apostles were simply the outflow and the overflow of the inflow of the Holy Spirit. But Jesus said to the church at Laodicea, he called on them to

repent, but they didn't. And so he did spew them out of his mouth.

It went out of business. But he said, I've got one more proposition. If anyone will hear my voice and open the door, I'll come in, abide with him, he with me.

I believe that we are in the Laodicean age today. I think the majority of our church members have either never been born again, or they're backslidden. That's why they don't come.

If you could get the crowd away from their altar, and no doubt a lot of your members are sitting in front of the altar tonight, it's that other one, it's that box in the living room, it's a glass front, and you know, and that's where they're worshiping. And they've got idols, that's what they call them. Movie idols, TV idols, it's idolatry.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me. And I have been saying over the country, I believe what Jesus is trying to do today. I don't know whether we'll ever have a great mass response or not anymore.

But Jesus is saying, I'll take anybody that can give. If anyone, anybody will hear my voice and open the door and say, Lord come in and take over. We'll start a new church.

Campbell Morgan said, he excommunicated the whole church and started with one man. And I'm telling churches all over this country and in our conferences, I'm trying to get a little kindling wood together everywhere I go. I grew up in the country, you know how you make a fire in the country.

Today you push a button, all I've got to do now is push a button and we've got wonderful heat or air or whatever you want. But I didn't grow up that way. That old house on top of the hill, we had air conditioning.

It's free. The Lord blew it right through the place. And on a winter morning, and how cold it could be, my daddy would wake me up what seemed like two in the morning, was a little later, get up and make a fire.

I learned I'd better listen to him the first time. If I waited till the second time, it was unfortunate. And if I waited for the third time, it was a calamity.

So I went in there and I had chopped the wood and I had it in there, the big wood and the middle sized wood and the kindling wood. And I would scrape the ashes off of the fire from the night before and hope there'd be coals underneath. And I'd lay the kindling wood on the coal and had my backlog in place.

And then I'd blow and blow till, well, you know how it is, I blew there till I was blue. And then the flame came up and the kindling wood started. Then I put my middle sized wood on, my little wood, and had a fire.

But you couldn't, if I'd have waited till the backlog caught on fire first, I never would have had a fire. And if you think we're going to have a revival, wait till these backslidden church members that are the majority, they could outvote us anytime if they'd ever come to church and vote. If you think we've got to wait till they convert, we'll never have a revival.

I'm trying to gather kindling wood everywhere I go. The folks that love the Lord in the church, and if you didn't have it, it couldn't run. This church is operating, I don't know how many members you've got, but I imagine you're like the others.

You've got a Gideon's band that's running it, keeping it going. If it depended on a lot of this other crowd, you couldn't make it of mine. And so I'm calling for the kindling wood, the people that love God, and you're here tonight, I hope, but you've got to pay a price.

You can't act for those folks, but instead of lamenting and saying, well, why aren't they here? We're here. And revival begins with the best people in the church, as I said this morning. Starts with us.

And there's a price to pay to have a revival. What is it? Humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways. Am I talking about deacons? Yes.

Sunday school superintendents, choir singers. That's the crowd that has to start a revival. That's the kindling wood.

And I'm gathering kindling wood all over the country. Then I believe if we ever have another revival, God doesn't do it the big way. He never has.

He starts the little way every time. With a handful. If God can get in this church a handful of Christians sold out to Jesus Christ, lock, stock, and barrel.

You don't have to be many. It doesn't take many pieces of kindling wood to start a fire. But you must be willing to be consumed by the Spirit of God.

You don't have to be educated. You don't have to be anything but concerned and faithful. And that's where it's at.

Now I know some of you want revival. But I want to ask you tonight. What I've asked all over this country.

How many of you members of this church. And I'm going to start tonight with the folks that are now working in the church in a special, some special position. Deacons, Sunday school teachers, other officers, choir.

You're the ones that ought to lead the procession. You've got no business singing in the choir if you're not right with God and not right with people. Not until you get right.

No business teaching the Sunday school class or anything else. There's a price to pay and God has not marked the prices down on that. He's not running the fire sale today.

You can't get any bargains in this. It'll cost every blessed thing you've got to live a Christian life. I want to talk about that if I make it through the rest of this we've got a lot of people that'll take Jesus because salvation is free but they won't take him as Lord of their lives because that costs you everything you've got and you're trying to get to heaven on a half a case religion.

You can't get saved on that. So I want to ask you tonight. No singing.

I don't have singing in most of my invitations. Because you get busy singing when I want you to think. How many of you that I've mentioned.

Deacons, Sunday school teachers, choir singers and folks who now are active in some form of church work here. How many of you can say Brother Havener I believe what you said and I believe that's what the Bible says. I want to see a real sure enough revival in this church.

I want to see it enough that I'm willing to pay the price and I realize God has marked it down. I'm willing to humble myself even to the point of embarrassment to get right with God and with people. If there's anybody I'm at odds with Jesus said if you bring your gift to the altar remember that your brother is at odds with you.

Doesn't matter whose fault it is. If he's at odds with you Jesus said. Why didn't he say if you're mad at him go and be reconciled.

Leave your gift. Don't don't put your envelope on the plate. Just hang on to it till you get right.

That sure would ruin the offering on some Sunday mornings in some churches. That's what he said. I wonder how many of you would be willing to say tonight Brother Havener I'm willing to pay the price.

Not your price. You're not dealing with Lance Havener. But that's what Jesus said.

I'm willing to do what God said here. Humble myself, pray, seek God's face. All I want is the smile of God and turn from every wicked way.

The thing that I'm not doing that I ought to do I'm willing to start doing it. And the thing that I'm doing that I ought to quit I'm willing to quit it. And the thing that I'm not sure about that's got a question mark after I'm going to quit it.

If it's all right God will give it back to me. If it's not I don't need it anyway. Isn't that not fair? That's what the Bible is saying.

Are you willing to pay that price? That may mean that you'll have to hunt up somebody or call up somebody or write somebody a letter and get right. No matter whose fault it was. It means you'll have to put the Bible ahead of TV and prayer ahead of everything else from walking close to God.

My friend I don't know how you make it today if you don't spend a lot of time talking to Jesus. I don't see how people make it in a time like this. You've got a little tip every once in a while.

It takes all the praying we can do to keep the thing going today. This is a serious hour. I'd like to know how many of you are willing to say brother heaven or I I'm willing.

Whatever it takes I'm willing. Whatever it'll cost me I'm willing. I'll pay the price.

Now you look like honest people and I'm not trying to put on an aisle parade. I gave that up years ago. I don't like it.

I think we southern Baptists have rededicated ourselves to death. We've walked down more aisles and made God more promises and done less about it than any crowd I can think of. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't do it.

We still ought to do it and mean it. I'd just like to ask you now how many of you folks that are deacons and Sunday school teachers and so on working down the church. If you are willing to do that not for my sake but because God says so when you want to see a revival.

I'd like you to get up and just come down and stand here in front of the pulpit and I want to have a word of prayer with you if you're willing to pay that price. Now let's not lose any time if you mean business if you'll

get up and come. I'm glad that you're not jumping up carelessly because it costs.

If you're not ready to do it by be honest I'm not going to take advantage of you and bore you out because you don't come if you don't think you're ready to do it. I'm not your judge but I'm just giving you the opportunity as you gather around the pulpit and you're willing as we bow our heads and talk to Jesus you're willing there where you stand just quietly to say Lord I didn't come down here for the walk. I'm willing to do what the preacher's been talking about.

I know I can't do it by myself but you never ask us to do anything that we can't do by the Holy Spirit. God never asked you to do anything that you can't do by his spirit. Now you can't do it none of us we're weak we're poor mortals we can't do it ourselves but Jesus wants to live his life in us and if you're willing to do it God will tell you what it is and he'll give you strength to do it.

Now Lord thou seest these dear people here some of them been in here for a long time and nobody perfect in this crowd nobody perfect anywhere we're not talking about perfect folks but Lord we can be blameless although we cannot be faultless. If we do the best we can under the circumstances Lord we're blameless the Bible says we can be blameless. We'll make mistakes but help everyone standing here to say in their heart Lord I came down here because I mean it.

I'm willing to humble myself and pray and seek God's face and quit anything you say I ought to stop and start doing whatever you want me to do and I want you to do something about my disposition Lord I'm not the Christian I ought to be I don't act like it. I've not got my tongue and my temper getting me in trouble. I've not got a disposition like ought to have make me more like Jesus.

I want to be conformed to the image of God's son and promise God dear friend that this is not just a step you're taking tonight it's the beginning of a walk. A lot of people take a step and then they stop. Christian life's a walk and that's one step right after another just keep on stepping the next thing the next thing the next thing that God wants you to do.

That's the Christian life.

As our heads are bowed I wonder how many other members of this church there's not room for you down here but if you mean it now I know the dangers of everybody jumping up when you and I don't know any way to handle it except leave it to your honesty I face people a long time and I want you to mean if you don't don't stand don't stand but if you're willing to say like these folks have I'm willing to pay the price for revival and if you're a visitor your church needs the same thing so you feel free to stand I'm willing to pay the price of revival in my church will you stand if you mean it right now from your heart now be careful think about it I'm willing to pay the price of revival a revival is not cheap it costs a lot salvation's free but it's not cheap because Jesus is life and to

follow him will cost you yours and as we wait if there's anybody that I appreciate the honesty of some people that didn't stand if you didn't feel like you're ready to do it I appreciate your honesty but I wonder if any of you that are still seated would be willing to go this far would you be willing to say brother Havener I want you to know that your sermon has not gone in one ear and out the other I think you've preached the truth I know I ought to do what God wants me to do I want you to know that I'm interested in by standing I'm saying pray for me that I get to where I will be willing to do it that I will do it pray for me that I may be willing could you get that far tonight and stand right now on it yes God bless you oh yes well that shows you've been listening that God's been

speaking to your heart it's a start it's a beginning God bless you there's only one other is there anybody in here that's not sure that you're a Christian or maybe you know you're not one you may be a church member but if you die tonight you don't know for sure you'd go to heaven would you be humble enough like a little child I'm not trying to trap you now with any trick would you be willing by just by standing where you are to say brother Havener I I'm not certain that's that's pretty important I don't dare live on like that I've got to live somewhere forever and I'm taking a mighty big chance I'm going to stand and say I'm not sure but I'd like to be I'd like to know that I know that I know that I'm a child of God are you that interested is there anybody who would be willing just to

stand where you are right now and say brother I'm concerned I'd like to know that I'm a child of God that's serious now I don't know just all of us that remain must be one of two things it must be that you're not sure you're a Christian or if you are a Christian you're saying I I'm not ready tonight I'm not willing to pay the price of full surrender to Jesus make him Savior and Lord I hate to see you go out of here like that I really do and this is going to be the end of the service going to be dismissed in a moment but I hate to see you go out with anything this important not settled you can settle the whole business right here tonight if you're willing to trust Jesus as Savior and make him the Lord of your life and before we go out into the dark is there anybody that would like to clear

up the most important matter in your life by saying I believe Jesus the Son of God I believe he arose from the grave I realize that I can't save myself whatever I have done or haven't done back in the past I trust him tonight as Savior I confess him as my Lord that'll settle it if you mean it is there anybody willing to settle it just by standing where you are I want to confess Jesus tonight before we go out here I want to give you abundant opportunity now it may be that some of you who stood on this earlier proposition it involves surrender to the Lord and I will say more about that later service father we pray now that what's been started here tonight will continue as we go out may we be careful what we talk about going out of here and not lose in foolish conversation any of the holy

impressions of this sacred hour don't let the fowls of the air snatch up the seed of the word and we thank thee for thy presence among us tonight and for what's happened only heaven knows what it'll mean and we pray that thou will guide us through these few days there's so few that remain and that something will happen that'll last for eternity and help us to keep up the step with another step and the next step and the next walking in the life we pray in Jesus name amen

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