

Communion - The Results of Revival

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[0 : 00] Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord and the king's palace, and successfully completed all that he had planned on doing in the house of the Lord and in his palace.

Then the Lord appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, I have heard your prayer, and I have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice.

If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people, and my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven.

We'll forgive their sin and we'll heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayer offered in this place.

That's a very powerful promise, and it is one that God gave to the children of Israel. And he simply said, if you meet the conditions, then I will provide precisely what you need.

[1 : 30] And that, of course, was a genuine spiritual heaven-sent revival. A revival or a need for revival is obvious when a nation or an individual begins to disregard their faith and refuses to take it seriously.

They may maintain a position with the Lord and salvation, but there is no joy in the relationship. There is no power in the relationship.

They have slipped into an indifference and a kind of laissez-faire attitude regarding spiritual things. The fervency of a white-hot love that they once had for the Lord is gone, and what has replaced it is a very kind of lukewarm thing, such as John described of one of the churches in the book of the Revelation.

And I suspect that there is a great deal of lukewarmness that is going on in America today on behalf of so many of our churches and individuals.

[2 : 45] A true revival cannot be scheduled on a church's calendar. Over the years, being a native Springfielder, I have, of course, driven all over the city back and forth, and very often I pass a church that has a big banner or a big sign out front, revival, beginning such and such a day, and naming the evangelist who was coming.

And I've often thought to myself, huh, if only it could be that simple. If only we could put a revival on a calendar and then call in the right evangelist and all of the people would be revived, refreshed, renewed, reestablished.

Energized. But we know that it can't be put on a church calendar. It just doesn't happen that way. Now, you can have special meetings, and you can invite somebody in for a series of messages or something like that and publicize it and promote it, and that's all well and good, and I'm in favor of that.

But that isn't revival. For whom is revival intended? Well, first of all, we need to know this. Revival is designated and operative only for Christians.

Revival is not for the unsaved. The unsaved do not need revival. What they need is vival. They're dead. They need to be made alive.

[4 : 16] But for the believer in Jesus Christ, who has placed his faith and trust in him, he has already received eternal life. You are already born again. You don't need spiritual life.

You already have it. But the revival is a visitation of that spiritual life that we have and a renewing of it and a re-energizing of it and a re-commitment and a re-dedication, and all of these things are involved.

Basically, the bottom line is this. When a believer is truly revived, he just gets a lot more serious about his faith, about practicing it and honoring it and sharing it.

That's one of the principal things that revival does. So revival is only for those who are already alive spiritually. It is for believers, not unbelievers.

Although it's true, unbelievers may benefit and will benefit greatly from believers being revived because when believers are revived, there is a climate created for evangelism.

[5 : 23] And very often, people who are not saved come to faith in Christ when a revival is actually present. And we have seen this in the accounts of revivals that we read that are available to all of us right here in the United States.

Under the Wesleys and the Whitfields, there were great revivals in the 1700s. And we just cannot imagine the kind of response that these people witnessed when God really visited his people.

For one thing, the taverns were closed for miles around. Now, we may look upon that with some degree of humor today, but you need to understand that alcohol and all that it involves has been a principal destroyer of humanity, of families and individuals for hundreds of years.

We all know the ravages of alcoholism. And it was rampant back in the 1700s. And for all of these taverns and things to be closed, so you couldn't buy a drink of whiskey anywhere within miles.

What was responsible for it? Oh, yeah, yeah. Eventually, things cooled down and the taverns all reopened. And it was business as usual.

[6 : 46] But it was not so for the time. At least there was a heaven-sent visit, and people recognized that. And we read of instances of revivals like in Wales.

When George Whitfield went to Wales and preached there, there were huge crowds of people. I mean, there would be thousands of people come out to hear him.

And I was reading this account, and he was talking about going and preaching among the colliers. I had no idea what in the world a collier was. What is a collier anyway? And it didn't dawn on me until I continued reading the account.

And George Whitfield related how that when he preached the gospel of the grace of God, these hardened men who were two-fisted and always ready for a fight or a brawl and earned their living in the coal mines.

And he went on to describe seeing these hardened men with their faces, and he called them the colliers, with their faces all covered with coal dust. And he said, The tears that they shed left little obvious rivulets on their cheeks as it stood out against the background on their face of the coal dust.

[8 : 01] And these men had been brought to tears all over the place. And it was simply because of the visitation of the power of God. These were not men who were normally given to tears.

And by the way, most Americans can tell you that real men don't cry, right? But most Americans are wrong. That's a bunch of hooley.

Real men are able to cry about things that really matter and do so unashamedly. After all, our Lord wept.

So we would be in good company. Don't ever apologize for tears in regard to a tender emotional moment. It simply may be an indication of the temperature of your soul.

So, when real revival came, these were the kind of results. And another thing that was very characteristic that they pointed out was this. And this is something that we really, really need in our culture.

[9 : 04] When real revival comes, and the Spirit of God settles in on the human heart, and re-energizes, doesn't re-convert, doesn't re-save the person, but renews and refreshes and re-energizes that life that is already there, one of the first things that is manifested is a desire to get right.

Not only with God, but with people. Grudges that have been held for years. That some of the principals couldn't even remember what the grudge was about.

Sought out one another to make amends. Parents and children who had been on the Alps for years sought out one another for reconciliation and apology and forgiveness.

This does not ordinarily happen. Somebody has to be touched very deeply in their personhood in order to be willing to go to someone and say, I'm so sorry, please forgive me.

We don't have nearly enough of that going on today. And the reason we don't is because there is so much spiritual coldness and aloofness in our personhood.

[10 : 30] So much detachment from things that really matter. Nothing speaks so powerfully to non-Christians more than Christians who are acting like what they are.

I have often said that the greatest asset God has on this planet is a believer in Jesus Christ who is walking in the spirit.

That's God's greatest asset. And God's greatest liability is a believer who is walking in the flesh and not serving the things of the spirit.

They are a detriment to the cause of Christ. And there's a lot of that going on too. So real revival occurs when Christians get serious about their faith and their relationship to Christ and they actually start acting like Christians rather than falling in place with the world and its values.

This, more than anything else, will make the world set up and take notice. While we as Christians cannot produce a true revival in our country, we can create the conditions for bringing a personal spiritual revival in our own individual life.

[11 : 49] And I rather think that each of us is under a spiritual and moral obligation to do just that. Not only so, but we ought to live our lives as believers in such a way that we function daily in a climate of spiritual revival on a personal plane.

Before we examine how we can do that, how we can live our lives in perpetual spiritual revival, let's ask the question, why does any believer need revival?

I've already touched on that, but to be repetitious. We already have life. We've already been born again. That's life itself. What more do we need than the spiritual life we already have?

Well, you don't need anything more to take you to heaven. That's it. Christ died for your sin and your faith and trust is in him. That's all you need. Christ is your ticket.

But we are not to be concerned only with the sweet by and by. As someone said, we need to be concerned with the nasty now and now. And that's where this business of walking in the spirit and revival really comes in.

[13 : 03] Before we can answer how we do that, that is, how we would live our lives in perpetual spiritual revival, let's illustrate something and digress a little bit to our physical lives.

Because we can all really get a handle on that. But the moment you go talking about something spiritual, which is immaterial, nobody's ever seen it. Yet we believe we all possess this spirit.

But we're all very, very familiar with the body and its concept. So let's think about that. Let's ask the question. What is it that degrades the quality of your physical body?

What is it that can tear you down physically and bring your body to rack and ruin? How about just a few suggestions?

Poor diet? Junk food? And more junk food? Lack of exercise? I'm not going to spend much time on this one.

[14 : 20] Flabbiness? Overweight? That takes a toll on all our organs? And some of you are wanting me to move right along on that one too.

And lack of rest for the body? You know, I never really realized this. I do a little program on WEEC called Marriage on the Rock.

And one of the segments I did was encouraging people to make sure that they get adequate rest. Because if you are sleep deprived, it will take a toll on your body.

It can make you difficult to live with. It can make you grouchy and irritable if you don't get enough sleep. And my formula for that was simply make sure you get eight or nine hours of sleep a night.

And some of you right here are saying, yeah, right. Because it doesn't come that easily. Sometimes you get sleep in two-hour snatches and then you spend the rest of the night awake.

[15 : 24] Going over whatever it is that you go over. But it's a lot easier to say it. And I've come to appreciate this in just the last couple of years.

It's a lot easier to say it than it is to do it. To go to bed and get seven or eight or nine hours of sleep. In the first place, you usually have an uncooperative bladder that's always wanting attention.

You see that commercial on TV where this woman is walking around and she's got this little pink bladder on a leash. And it wants to go everywhere and stop at every restroom. Well, sometimes that's the way it works for us.

You young pups, you don't know anything about this. But when you get a few years of maturity on you and the bladder beckons at 2 and 4 a.m. in the morning, it's not an easy thing to go to bed and get seven or eight hours of sleep.

Is it, Marie? No. It isn't always easy. So, what I'm saying is all of these things that we've mentioned, plus others that could lengthen the list, they depreciate our quality of life in a physical way.

[16 : 32] They are all commissions or omissions that actually do our body harm. Okay? So much for our body.

But, you are more than your body. There is that other part of you to which you can also do harm. And that is your immaterial part, your spirit, that unseen part, that is just as real as your body, but it is not physical. Question.

Are there things that depreciate and impair the spiritual health of our being in the same way that things physical impact our body? And what might they be?

What would be the spiritual equivalent of, well, the long list that I mentioned that I will not revisit.

[17 : 32] But how would we translate that spiritually? How can we pull that over? How about willful disobedience to God? How about the kind of attitude that says, yes, I know what the Bible says, but.

How about that? How about an attitude of ingratitude? How about being stiff-necked and unrepentant of our sin?

How about refusing to apologize to our mate for offending them? Just leaving it for time to take care of. Oh, she'll get over it.

Just give her enough time and things will get back to normal. No, they won't. Time alone doesn't do it. How about harboring a grudge?

How about refusing to forgive someone who has hurt us? Will these do for starters? And what are all these things called?

[18 : 41] They're called sins. There isn't anything else to call them. You can't call it righteousness. That'd really be stupid, wouldn't it? These are deeds of unrighteousness.

And in the same way that the negative things we mentioned impact your physical body and reduce its efficiency and its enjoyment and sometimes its longevity in the very same way these spiritual counterparts tear down our human spirit.

They make it inefficient, ineffective, sluggish, out of touch, uncaring. All of these things take a toll on our inner person.

They are all contrary to the abundant life. Jesus said, I am come that man might have life and have it more abundantly.

That simply means, I think, that Jesus Christ wants you to live life to the hilt that is in the will of God. And he expects you to fully enjoy your life and there's no better way of enjoying it than being right where you belong with the will of God.

[19 : 57] All of these things we've talked about are hindrances and they rob us of joy. They make us unattractive to unbelievers around us because while these things are being acted out by us, they make us look just like the non-Christians who are watching us.

And if they have an opinion of us because we act out these things, yet we're in church every Sunday. What do they call us?

They call us hypocrites and rightly so because that's precisely what we're sending out. Brethren, these things ought not so to be.

All God wants us to do is to live what we are. New creatures in Christ. All of these things are hindrances and right here is where we must begin if we want to create the conditions of a personal revival in our own life.

And this is well within the reach of every single believer. I don't know about you, but I hope your sentiment is the same as mine. I want to live the life that God has given me and the spiritual life that Christ has provided for me.

[21 : 34] I want to live it to the max. I want God to get the biggest bang for his buck that he can get from me. And what's more, I feel like I have an obligation to do that.

But it's not a begrudging obligation. It's a joyous obligation. It's one that we ought to all be eager to fulfill. Especially when God has provided us with the wherewithal to do it.

And when we engage in these things that we've just mentioned, we are all functioning in a way that is absolutely contrary to our own best interests and to God's glory.

So why do we do that? Why do we do that? Well, we do that because we still have this old nature. We still are capable of walking in the flesh.

And there is no one of us who hasn't from time to time succumbed to that. Including myself. And I don't say it proudly, I say it shamedly. We are all subject to this.

[22 : 42] And yet, each time we see or sense that we are engaging in these things, God has made ample provision to somehow, whatever means he needs, to call it to our attention and give us an opportunity to reverse the thing.

And when we do that, that is called repentance. This is the most wonderful thing that God has given. Repentance.

It means a reversal of our thinking and our position and our attitude. It literally means change our mind.

It's exactly what it means. If God has such a thing as a silver bullet, this is it. He loves repentance because there is only one thing that you can repent from and that is wrong.

that is sin. And when you repent, you reverse yourself on that. This process is something that goes on in the human spirit, this repentance.

[23 : 59] And it begins with information. I want to just run through this if I may as quickly as I can because and the reason it's so fresh in my mind and I'm so committed to it is because of the work that I've been doing with the Marriage on the Rock series.

And this, as some of you know, is a series of CDs that we have put together that address marital issues primarily.

But the whole series begins with an underpinning that is much deeper and much broader than the marriage because the principles that we talk about regarding repentance and all that goes along with it has to do with all relationships.

Not just marriage, but neighbors, friends, relatives, co-workers, people in school. It has to do with relationships on every level.

And you know, you know how I've waxed eloquent in the past about relationships. And I have told you, and so say I now again, without apology, God is more committed to relationships than he is to anything.

[25 : 14] And the evidence to prove that is the fact that Jesus Christ came to this earth for the sole purpose of repairing a broken relationship.

That's why he came. That's why the father sent him, is to repair the broken relationship that God had with mankind. And this ought to cement in our minds forever the idea that God is committed to relationship.

He wants the brethren to dwell together in unity and in love. There is simply no room for rancor, for bitterness, for obstinance, for an unforgiving spirit, for refusal to apologize.

There is no room for that. It ought not to exist in the body of Christ. Because those are the things that hinders and mars relationships. Those are the things that divide people.

They cause splits, schisms, unforgiveness, divorce, parting of the ways, not speaking to so-and-so, avoiding so-and-so, because we're on the outs with them.

[26 : 25] And always, always, always, no exceptions. You can't say that about a great many things. But there's no exceptions to this. There's one thing, one thing that always causes difficulty between people.

You know what it is? It's the offense. The offense. We hurt people, and we anger people by things we say and things we do.

And very often, those whom we hurt and anger, don't take it lying down. They respond. And what do they respond with?

Anger and an offense. So then, the offended becomes the offender, and it just goes back and forth, and finally, it ends up with parting company, parting, going separate ways.

how many churches across this country have been split wide open by people who absolutely refused to settle their differences.

[27 : 39] And you know what their solution is? Just leave. Leave. Part company. Split. So you don't have to be around them anymore, you don't have to look at them anymore, just leave.

And that's the way we solve relationship problems. We just bail out. And it makes the devil gleeful. He loves it. That's what he's all about. His game is divide and conquer. And he does it very, very well. The formula that God has given that needs to be applied not only in marriages, but in all relationships across the board, is something that every believer can implement and should implement and it is designed to heal relationships, to bring people together again, not in a phony, artificial, superficial way, but in a genuine, loving, caring way, where the old grudges are really honestly buried, and where those who were at odds with one another are now best of friends, like

they ought to be.

And listen, what I am talking about is not unattainable. It is well within the reach of all of us to be involved in this kind of a situation.

This is the formula for a personal, perpetual, revived heart and spirit. And it all begins with information about the offense.

[29 : 26] And what do I mean by that? Just this. Sometimes we offend people and we don't even know we did it. And we didn't intend to offend them.

we didn't even know that we offended them. But maybe sometime later we learn because a mutual friend says to us, you know, what you did or what you said to so and so the other day really made them angry, really hurt, really got them upset.

And you say, what? Well, I didn't mean it that way. I didn't know they took it that way. I'm sorry. what they are doing is giving you information, data, facts, and you begin processing those.

But more often than not, it isn't because of offenses that we have committed that we don't know about. Usually, we do know about them.

usually, they were intended. I've often said there are only two ways that you can hurt each other.

[30 : 38] Only two ways. One is by the things you say, and the other is by the things you do. But we don't need any more, do we?

Those two are adequate, aren't they? And usually, when we offend somebody, we meant to. We intended to offend them.

Usually, when a husband or wife says something bitter or sarcastic or unkind to their mate, it isn't because they did it accidentally. It's because they did it on purpose.

Because their intent was to hurt. And it did. There is no one of you here that does not know your mate's hot button.

Is there? There isn't no one of you here that doesn't know what button to push to get the rile out of them. And sometimes that's the button we go for.

[31 : 38] And it is intentional. And then this information thing, I don't want you to be astray now regarding this concept of information. It simply means nothing more than understanding the situation.

information. And they may, the person that you offended by what you said, they may be the ones to provide you with information that this is not a good situation, and they do it through their body language.

You can tell that by the look on their face, by the hurt expression, or you can tell it by the retaliation of words that they throw back at you in response and in defense of what you said to them.

Now this is just the flesh, just plain old arguments. happens all the time between husbands and wives, happens between brothers and sisters, parents and kids, people at school, people at work.

This is what makes the world a dicey place to live in, is that people get after one another, and it's not a pleasant thing. So when we have the information that we have offended somebody by what we said or what we did, then we begin processing that information, thinking about it, mulling it over, reliving it, what we said, what we did, what their response was, and here's where you hit the crisis.

[33 : 08] What are you going to do about it? Sometimes a typical response will be, yeah, that's what I said. Well, they deserve it. They have it coming. And you know what?

There may be an element of truth in that. But what did it do? What was the bottom line? You're separated. You're divided. Maybe you did speak the truth, as the old saying goes.

The truth hurts. And sometimes that's why people wince when we say things, because they are true, and they do hurt. hurt. But what is our real responsibility in that?

Is it to just hurt them and rub it in? Or is it to be a true friend and help them to recognize, hey, this is a problem area in your life, and you know what? I want to be your friend, and I'm more than happy to help you work on that.

And will you help me work on a few things, too? Wow. I've never heard of the Holy Spirit fainting, but that probably would be what he would do in a case like that.

[34 : 11] Because people just, you know, we tend to be so self-centered, and self-seeking, and self-preserving, and self-serving, that we just care mainly about us, and our feelings, and our hurts.

Never mind the other guy. And let me tell you something, that is completely natural for an unregenerate person.

But it shouldn't be the base of operation for those who say they know and love the Lord. Should it? So, you've got to do something once you get that information.

What are you going to do? And that's where the subject of repentance comes in. That is to change your mind. And usually, conviction sets in first. You know what usually happens, at least this has been an experience for me, in the almost 50 years that Barbara and I were married.

You knew Barbara is my first wife. It was conviction. We would have words. I would say something sarcastic or nasty or critical to her.

[35 : 20] And I knew it hurt her. Good! I wanted it to. That's why I said it. That's the heat of battle. You use the barbs you have.

But then when you process this and when you see how you hurt her, this nasty, pesky little thing called conviction begins to set in.

And it isn't long until I am saying to myself, Marv, you skunk. How could you do that?

Why did you do that? She did not deserve that. You better do whatever it takes, Buster, to make it right. That's repentance.

That's an about-face. And let me tell you something. It is one of the hardest things you'll ever have to do. That's why we so often don't do it.

[36 : 38] I'm speaking from experience. It doesn't do my ego any good to say, Marv, you skunk.

don't feel good. I don't look good. But that's the truth.

And that's repentance. Repentance, I'll tell you how to tell whether repentance is genuine or not. If you had the situation to relive and do over, would you do the very same thing or would you do it differently?

Oh, no, buddy, I'd do it differently for sure. That's repentance. That's repentance. That's a change of mind. And that is really difficult to do. It comes from conviction.

And then there is the apology. Now, if repentance is hard to do, apology is hard to do. I've shared this with you before, but I'm going to do it again.

[37 : 40] It's one of my favorite scenes. And it really teaches the lesson. It was an old western movie with John Wayne. He was a colonel in the cavalry, you know, the blue belly and the uniform and all went with it and that set back in the Civil War days.

And he had assigned some particular job to this shaved tail lieutenant who was under his authority to do something, to accomplish something. I don't remember what it was.

But anyway, this lieutenant came riding up to John Wayne and Big John was sitting there on his horse, Cheneau, and he's lieutenant so-and-so reporting in, sir. And Wayne says, very good, sir. By the way, did you thus and so and thus and so? And this young lieutenant says, no, sir, I didn't get to it. And I apologize for that.

Don't apologize, mister. It's a sign of weakness. Oh, that still grates on me to this day. Because it's not a sign of weakness.

[38 : 43] It's a sign of strength. Can you bring yourself to say, I'm sorry, I was wrong.

My fault. My bad. Can you do that? If you can do that, you are the master of your own spirit.

spirit. This is especially difficult for men. Because it does, in our minds, make us look weak.

But let me tell you something. And I say this from 50 years' experience of marriage counseling.

Weak people, weak people never apologize.

They never take responsibility. They're never wrong. That's weak people. It takes strength and strength of character to step up and take full responsibility and say, you know what I said, what I did, well, I was wrong.

[39 : 48] I was out of line, and it was my fault, and I got nobody to blame but myself. I take full responsibility. And the tendency is, we think that makes us look about that high.

But it doesn't. to people who really matter, you'll stand ten feet tall. It's a rare commodity.

Apologizing. It means with words. That's what the word apologize means. It means with words. You say it.

most of us, and I'm talking about guys now, we'd rather not say anything. We'd rather not go to our mate and say, I'm sorry, I apologize for what I said, thus and so, thus and so.

We'd prefer to buy them a little trinket and leave it on their dresser and let that apologize for us. It won't work.

[40 : 56] It's not the same. It doesn't count. You can't apologize on the cheap by buying her a little bobble and let that be your way of saying to her, I'm sorry and I apologize, without having to say, I'm

sorry and I apologize.

Again, I speak from experience. It doesn't work, and it's not supposed to. Nothing takes the place of a gut level facing your own deficiency and your own sin and saying, I really shouldn't have said that. I shouldn't have done that. I don't know what I did, and if I had to do it over again, I'd do it differently. You can't undo it. You can't undo it. If you could go back over again and replay it and do it differently, you would.

But you can't do that. It's done, it's done. So what's the only thing left? the only possible way of salvaging it is through the apology.

And when you apologize, you have to make it clear what you're apologizing for. And fellas, the ladies love details. They want you to spell out what it is that you did or said.

[42 : 16] And each elaboration pains us a little more deeply. because we are reliving that thing in bold relief. And it makes us feel kind of ashamed, which is the way we ought to feel.

But who wants to feel that way? Nobody I know of. This is the thing, though, that really heals relationships. Because when we apologize, we are taking the other person's part against ourself. We are making ourselves their ally against us. Well, that's crazy. Who wants to do that? That's what it takes.

That's what it takes if the apology is going to be real. And then we ask, we respectfully request, will you forgive me?

And you know something? They don't have to. Oh, what about what the Bible says? Well, listen, you were already out of line with what the Bible says when you did or said what you did.

[43 : 40] And if they are not real quick, to extend forgiveness to you, you cannot demand it. Forgiveness cannot be demanded.

It can only be requested. And when you ask someone to forgive you for a wrong you committed, you put them in the driver's seat. They are in charge of the situation.

You willingly relinquish it and you put them in control of the situation. Now, granted, they ought to forgive you because they've been forgiven. And we ought not to withhold forgiveness from anyone. But it ought not to be automatic. And we need to understand that forgiveness is in their power to grant or to withhold. It's not for us to say. We are the offender. They are the offended.

You know, this is very simple. But it's very difficult. And let me tell you, this is why most risks in relationships, including marriage, are never healed.

[44 : 50] Because people are not willing to put these things into practice. And yet, these are God's provisions for healing relationships, strengthening them, renewing them, making them better than they ever were.

If we could only grasp this, our enemy is our flesh. Our enemy is our ego. Our enemy is our refusal to take responsibility.

And it perpetuates the isolation and all that goes with it. I want to leave you with this one thought from Matthew 5. And I apologize in that this message is a lot longer than most of our communion messages are.

there's a passage in Matthew 5, 23 and 24, that says if you go to the altar to offer your gift to the Lord, and it occurs to you that your brother could be your sister, could be your neighbor, could be anyone, and your neighbor has ought against you.

Now, understand the wording here. If your neighbor or your brother has something against you, you go to him and try to work it out and make things right.

[46 : 25] and I read that and I re-read it and I re-read it and I checked it in this translation, checked it in that translation, checked it in the Greek, said the same thing all the time. If your brother has ought against you, you go to him.

Our first response is, well, if he's got something against me, he should come to me. Why do I have to go to him? I'll tell you why.

the one in the know is the one to go. It's always your turn. You don't wait for that, well, I'll apologize to him when he apologizes to me.

We are to take the initiative. We are the one who, when we realize the situation and what has happened, we are the one in a leadership capacity there, supposed to do the going and we go to them.

Now, say, well, they won't be receptive, they won't care. That's not your responsibility. You cannot answer for them or what their response is. You can only answer for you taking the initiative and you

making the effort.

[47 : 34] And Paul said in one of his letters, as much as lieth within you, I like that expression because it leaves us a little out, as much as lieth within you, live at peace with all men.

but that's only as much as lies within you. And what that means is you don't have any responsibility and you don't have any control over what the other person's attitude or response is going to be to you when you go to them.

That's not your job. Your job is to go and seek to make it right and offer whatever apology is needed. And you know, the dynamic of this, the way it often happens, is when we humble ourselves, and that's what the text is talking about in 2 Chronicles, when we humble ourselves, lower ourselves, eat a little crow by going to them, by taking the initiative and going to them and indicating that we want things to be right with them.

And I want to apologize to you for any part that I've had in this that has wounded you or hurt you or upset you or angered you, and I want you to know if I could do it over again, I would, and I'd do it differently.

And I'm really sorry that I hurt you. That very often has a softening, melting effect on the heart and spirit of the one to whom you are apologizing.

[49 : 05] And don't be surprised if they respond with a, well, you know, I was out of line too, and, I shouldn't have said what I did either and, and I'm sorry too.

And then there can be the hug that is genuine and real. And it is one sinner forgiving another sinner.

And the rift is healed. And that's the way it's supposed to work. work. But let me tell you, there is precious little of this going on in the body of Christ.

We usually just split. Well, I'm not going to that church anymore if I have to see them every week. week. Well, with these things in mind, we come now to our communion table.

And we are admonished in Scripture that we are to examine ourselves before we partake. and if there is something in our life, spirit, that is displeasing to the Lord, this is the time to deal with it right here and now.

[50 : 33] And what I would suggest you do, if you are really on the outs with someone, you've got a grudge, you've got unforgiveness, somebody you need to apologize to, you are not a candidate to partake of the Lord's table.

You need to do business with the Lord before you come to the table. And the way you do that is just by telling him, by admitting to him what the problem is and what your part is and what you are going to be willing to do when you leave this place to rectify that situation.

You may need to make a phone call, you may need to visit somebody, you may need to write a letter, I have no idea, but in an audience this size, I'm almost certain there are those who are on the outs with somebody, probably many times over, and we just kind of out of sight, out of mind, but it is not right, and you know it isn't right, and this is an opportunity to do something about it, so I would encourage you to do this, I would encourage you to say, Lord, we're going to have a formative prayer in just a minute, I need to make things right with somebody, and tell the Lord who it is, because he knows them, he knows them, and then you need to covenant with him that you're going to ask him for the grace that is needed to go to that party, or call them, or whatever, arrange a meeting, and get this thing settled, life is too short not to do that, let's pray,

Father, we are so grateful that you have provided steps wherewithal, so that injured relationships, which we are all capable of causing, can be healed and restored, and even made stronger and better than they were before, and that is our prayer, for every single person here this morning, if there is anyone who is out of sorts with their fellow man, that we may be willing to take the initiative to make things right, and if other parties are unwilling to respond, we just have to leave that between you and them to work in their heart like you worked in ours.

Thank you for the wonderful, effects that are realized when sincere repentance is in place, conviction of sin is in place, repentance and apology and extending forgiveness is in place, how blessed and sweet it is for the brethren to dwell together in unity.

[53 : 29] This is your desire and we wouldn't want to do anything contrary to your desire. honor and thank you father for the potential that you have built into the body of Christ for this very thing to work.

We don't want to be a hindrance to it, we want to implement it. Thank you for all your gracious provision and we recognize that it all comes through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. Would you take your hymnal please and open to number 593 593 and we'll ask you to stand. I can hear my Savior calling, I can hear my Savior calling, I can hear my Savior calling, our Debbie Fif ersten inchad pounds and whole age and In the eye of the Lord.

In the eye of the Lord. In the eye of the Lord.

[55 : 14] How you will be the Lord. In the eye of the Lord. Can you sing a please?

The night our Lord Jesus was betrayed. He took the bread. It was a common piece of bread. One piece of bread. And he broke off a piece of that bread. And passed it to the apostles around him. And said take eat. This is my body which is given for you. And I'm satisfied that not a one of them there that night. Really understood. Just what that meant. But they would before long.

So today. We partake of these elements. And we understand what they mean. Because we can look back in history. And we know that the bread speaks of the body of our Lord.

[56 : 08] The cup speaks of his blood. If you have a personal relationship with Christ. You are invited to this table. And if you do not know the Lord Jesus. Partaking of these elements will not make you a Christian.

There is much more involved than that. And we need to come to him and exercise faith in his finished work. And receive his forgiveness. And that's what makes us a believer.

So we partake of these elements. Not in order to become Christians. And not even in order to be better Christians. But we do it in remembrance of him. And we do it because we are Christians.

It's a joyous occasion. It's a privilege. To be able to gather like this. And partake of these elements.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[57 : 51] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Our Lord said, take, eat. This is my body which is given for you. And in the same manner, he took the cup.

[60 : 18] ... Three.

... Fire. Where we live in the Isle of the Old, Where we live in the Isles of the Old, Where we live in the Isles of the Old, I know where I am, I know where I am.

All the chorus again. Where he is, I know where I am. Where he is, I know where I am.

I know where I am, I know where I am.

I know where I am.

[62 : 28] I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am.

I know where I am.

I know where I am.

I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am.

I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am.

[63 : 33] I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am. I know where I am.

I know where I am. pass an offer plate at our regular services. We do receive an offering in connection with communion, and this is for the Elders Benevolent Fund, and we encourage people to give as they have the ability and the desire.

So 100 cents of whatever dollar you give will be used to address material needs of those that may arise from time to time. And very often they are for someone outside our congregation, but sometimes we are able to help those in our congregation because of difficult times or pressing circumstances they may be up against, and it is all due to your generosity.

So we appreciate your giving as you have the ability and the interest, and following this we will be dismissed. Gentlemen, we'll sing that third stanza.

He will kiss. He will kiss. He will kiss.

[64 : 56] He will kiss. He will kiss. He will kiss.

He will kiss. He will kiss. And until then.

Look. word. Don't words. He will kiss. Scripture said, And when they had sung in him, they went out.