

# Christians Hate Sin

By Paris Reidhead\*

Will you turn, please to Acts 24:16. We saw the entire setting of this, having read the Chapter earlier. We come shortly to the Lord's Table. This morning a letter was handed to me by one of our people that made special request that we should consider the matter of preparation for the Lord's Table, that we drink not unworthily. It was in exact keeping with that burden which the Lord had placed upon my heart, and gave that further evidence of His leading. But since someone cared enough to think, and to pray, and to write, it is my conviction that probably there is a deepening concern. Certainly in the person of the Apostle Paul, there was a great concern:

“And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. -To have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.”

You understand that it was spoken by the angel of our Lord Jesus to Joseph: “Thou shall call His Name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.” Now the one characteristic, above all others, that a person is one of His people is their hatred of sin. You see, God is Holy. He said, “My Name is Holy. I dwell in the High and Holy Place with him that is of a broken and a contrite spirit, to revive the hearts of the broken, and to revive the spirits of the contrite ones.” (Isa. 57:15)

So many people feel erroneously that the Lord Jesus died so that He might send Salvation. This is not the case. He cannot send it. He can only bring it, because He is Salvation. You recall that David understood this in Psalm 27. He declared, “The Lord is my Light and my Salvation.” (Psa. 27:1) It was Dr. Simpson's<sup>1</sup> song that was in our lips and hearts a few moments ago that emphasized the truth, “Christ in me; this is my wonderful story; Christ in me; this is my hope of glory.<sup>2</sup>” And when Paul was writing to the Church, at Corinth, he said, “Examine yourselves whether ye be in the Faith. Prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves how that Christ be in you, except ye be reprobate.” (II Cor. 13:5)

Now, a Christian is someone into whom Christ has come. Now we must remember this. We often times think a Christian is someone whom Christ has forgiven, whom He has pardoned, and whom He has saved from the penalty of Hell. But this is incomplete and erroneous. Many will in that day say, “Lord, Lord. Didn't we hear the plan of Salvation, and didn't we go to Church, and weren't we baptized, and didn't we tithe and work and pray.” And He said, I will say unto them from within, “Away with you. I never knew you. I never gave Myself to you. I never came into you.” (Matt. 7:23) And so, a Christian is someone into whom Christ has come.

The best definition of Christianity has been made - this: Christ - in - You - ity. We understand that there is certain preparation that is made in this. He has to first bring us to a sense of conviction of sin, and we realize that it is this enormous crime, and I cannot stress it too much, the enormity of it, of turning to our own way, and of being God in our own life. He makes all of the sin we call sin flow out of this, to please oneself. And our Lord brings us to the place where we see it, we are convinced that we deserve His wrath and His anger, and we renounce our intention to go on in this course. He brings us to brokenness, brokenness both in the sense in which we realize that we cannot extricate ourselves from the dilemma in which we are, a mountain of sin upon us, and we are unable so much as to atone for one sin by any amount of work that we might do. And so He closes us in with Grace. But first, before He offers that Grace, He brings us to the place where we hate sin. We renounce it. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,” and “the fear of the Lord is to hate evil.” (Pro. 9:10; 8:13) And, consequently, before Jesus Christ came into you, He gave you a heart of hatred for sin. And may I say that if, after you have professed to be a Christian, you have not found this heart of hatred for sin, the question you should ask is, Is Jesus Christ in me, or is just Scripture verses and truths and dogmas, and doctrines in me? Before He comes in, He brings us to the place where we feel the same way about sin as He feels. And the one characteristic of every child of God is a hatred of sin. The one that went down from the Temple justified was the one who could say, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” (Luke 18:13b)

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<sup>1</sup> Albert Benjamin Simpson (1843-1919) founder of The Christian and Missionary Alliance

<sup>2</sup> “Christ in me” Lyrics and music by Albert Benjamin Simpson, 1891.

Now there is of this recognition and abhorrence, and renunciation. Everyone that goes down justified has had recognition of the crime of sin, and abhorrence of it, because of what it has done to God, and because of what it means toward God, and renunciation of it. So, if I am speaking to you today as a Christian, then it is that Christ is in you, and you know that He is in you because of the fact that you feel the same way about sin as He feels. Is this true? Do you hate sin? Certainly the Apostle Paul did. He called himself the chief of sinners, but he did not have room in his heart to make peace with it, or to continue to condone it, or to indulge in it. He said he buffeted his body that he might bring it under, that he was not going to give place; he was not going to give consent nor opportunity to sin, because of his deep holy loathing and abhorrence of it. And so the thing that I feel we should recognize is that before Paul gave the testimony he did to Felix he had met Jesus Christ on the Road to Damascus, in the meeting seen himself, and in the meeting had broken, in the meeting had renounced sin, had abandoned it forever, and had purposed to please God. Now is this true of you? Have these things happened to you? If that is the case then we are starting out on common ground. Christians hate sin. Anyone who does not hate sin is not a Christian. Anyone who can make peace with it is not a Christian. You say, You are being mighty hard. Aren't you? No, I am being no harder than the Word is. "He shall save HIS PEOPLE from their sins," and when the people call themselves His, and continue to live knowingly and willingly, and deliberately in sin, then they just simply may have met someone that had some experience, but it is counterfeit, because it does not have this hall mark of genuineness, namely, a deep loathing and abhorring of sin, and a purpose not to go into it. (Matt. 1:21) When a child of God sins, he does something he does not want to do because when he first was awakened, and brought to conviction and repentance there was formed in his heart a purpose to please God. And, therefore, when the thought of sin enters, he is grieved; and when the act of sin comes, he is broken again, not so much because of the danger in which he stands but because of the nature of sin as a treasonous rebellion against God. So we begin on a common ground. Christians hate sin. Counterfeit Christians do not. Hypocritical professors do not. Those that have just a name to live, but in heart are dead, do not. They love it. But His people hate sin, because this is what God does before He opens the heart, or prepares the heart for Life in Christ. We, therefore, are going to assume that you will, by what I have said thus far, have classified yourself. You either are a child of GOD, or you are not. If you are a child of God, then there is in you a deep loathing of sin, a horror of it, and you are appalled by it. You cannot make peace with it, and knowingly condone it. You feel the same way about it, in measure at least as Christ felt when He saw the stock, the money changers in the Temple. There has to be war declared against it. Not only some, but all kinds, everything. Now that is the first basic premise that underlies this. The only ones that are welcome at the Lord's Table are His children. And the assumption is that His children have come to the place where they hate evil, and they are, therefore, not going to make peace with it. You see the only kind of a person that God will not despise is the one that has a broken and a contrite spirit, He despises all others.

Now I did not say, that if a child of God sins-a person sins he is not a Christian. For, Paul was said, Beware lest any of us, thinking he stands, falls. There will never come a time in your experience when you are not subject to temptation and capable of falling. Now I will make it clear. I want you to understand it. I am talking about your attitude. But when you do, as a child of God, disobey Him, and grieve Him and transgress His Word and Law, and Will, and sin against Him, then you are broken again by it, because you realize what it has done to the Lord you love.

Now, understanding this, and recognizing this, and realizing this, as I say, gives us a foundation upon which we can come. Paul said, "Herein do I exercise myself." He did not leave this for someone else. He did not say, Well now we are hoping that we are going to have an Evangelist in the church that is going to really dig us up. He said, "I am digging up." He did not say, "I hope that Revival will come to our town, so that I will get right with God." He said, "Herein do I exercise myself." This was a personal matter, not a group matter. He was not leaving it for anyone else. He realized that there was the possibility that others might be counterfeit, might be superficial in their pretense instead of in their actual possession of life. And he was not going to judge himself by others. He was not going to acquiesce to their attitudes and submit to their conduct, as the standard for himself. "Herein do I exercise myself." This is a personal matter. How many times people are waiting for everybody to do what they know they ought to have done long ago, and they are praying for revival, but what they really mean by revival is, Lord I want you to make it easy for me to do the thing I know I ought to do. Well the Apostle Paul was too concerned about the fact that he lived for eternity to let a day go by of this sort, and so he said, This is a king, and it is a pagan king he is talking to, I have exercised myself. I have brought every intellectual muscle, and every spiritual nerve, in my entire being, to this task of seeing to it that I have a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men. I cannot leave it to anybody else. I cannot wait for

anyone else to do what they ought to do. I feel that it is incumbent upon me to be right with God, and with man, whether anyone else is or not. Now, beloved, I believe that this is the attitude that characterizes the child of God, or ought to, and if you are His child you will concur with it, and you are prepared to say, Whether anyone is right or not, I am going to exercise myself and bring every faculty and power into the place where God would have them be. I am determined that my life shall please Him. This is the testimony of the Apostle who said, "Be ye followers of me as I am of Him." (I Cor. 11:1)

But he said, "Herein do I exercise myself to always have a conscience void of offence toward God." How can this be? By what means can you have a conscience void of offence toward God? I believe that most of our memories are so grossly inadequate that we should seldom trust them. It is for this reason that I am so happy that on every Lord's Day, morning and evening, the sermons are recorded on tape and early in the week through the kindness of one of our people are typed, so that I can look back and see what it is that I said. I am often thanked at the door and at other times for things that I have never said that have been a blessing. Association has stimulated recollection, and someone has been able to get something from God because there was a triggering of their own thought. But it is nice to have it there so that you know exactly what it is that you have said. This is the reason why business firms spend so much money for carbon copies and for filing, because they want to know what it is that they have said.

Well now, God has taken great care and pains lest at any time you should forget what He said: You should fail to recognize what He said. How are you going to know that you have a conscience void of offence toward God? Well go to the copy of what it was that He said. David said, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word." (Psa. 119:9) And it is, therefore, the Word of God that is going to enable us to discover whether or not we have a conscience void of offence toward God. You see, too often we have been guilty of erecting our own standard. It is made up out of the common conscience of the community, out of teachings that we have had from the past, out of some ideas of our own. We have accepted these things as being the standard. Everyone is right in his own eyes. Did you know that? And did you know that everyone who does anything always feels that it is wise and right and justified at the time he does it? - for him to do it, that is. Even the man who murders feels that under his circumstances, in his situation, with his problems confronting him, he is justified. Now nobody else would be, but he is justified in doing it, because no one has ever had the set of circumstances and conditions, and problems that he has. We are rational creatures. And even though our actions may be ever so irrational, according to the way the wheels are turning in our minds at the time it seems right. And everything you have done, up until today, you thought was right when you did it. Every letter you have written, every conversation you have had, every thought that you have held in your mind, everything you have done you thought was right when you did it, because you are acting as a human being, not by instinct as the dog or puppy, or by just learned condition response, but we are assuming that you are acting as reasonably intelligent human being that wants to live consistent with himself. And so, even though you may have lied during the past week, under your circumstances, in your situation, with the problems you are confronting, even God would certainly not criticize anyone for telling just a little kind of a lie that you had to tell because it was rational at the time. It seemed right. Now if you will remember that everything, anyone ever does, at least at the time he does it, in the circumstances, he may know that generally it is wrong, or that in God's eyes it is wrong, but at that particular situation, in the point of time in which he makes his decision, it seems rational to him. And, therefore, since he is a rational creature, he seldom is going to question what was rational.

A man is driving down the hi-way 80 miles an hour, and under his circumstances, with the hi-way in that condition, and with the destination that he has, and the responsibilities that are upon him, and the car he is driving, it is rational, and it is good, and it is just, and it is fair. And then he hears the sound of the siren behind him, and immediately he is under desperate conviction, because he realizes that the state of New York, or whatever the State may be, does not concur with the rationality he has exercised in his actions. And he immediately gets under conviction. And it is because he comes face to face with a representative of the Law. He judges the thing which a moment ago was rational to be the height of folly and irrationality. But if he did not come into contact with the Law, he would have finished the trip, put his feet up on the railing, and said, Boy did I have a trip today: 80 miles an hour down the road and not a thing in the way. Certainly made good time. I don't know how this car goes, if I drive it fast, but it cruises nicely at 80. Oh yes. Lots of clever things to say, until the man with the little red light comes up, and all of a sudden he realized that the explanations which are justified in his mind, breaking the law, are utter folly.

And he stands now on, the grounds, not of his rational, but of the State's Law. And this is what Paul said. "I am constantly seeking to bring my conduct up, not against what I think is right, but against what God's Word says." Do you see? To keep a conscience void of offence toward God means that one must understand God's Law, God's Will, God's Word, and bring every attitude, and every thought, and every action up against God's Law.

Now we have assumed that if he is a child of God he wants to please God, but we understand this, that if he ignores God's Word, makes no attempt to study it, to meditate upon it, to memorize it, or to obey it, all profession of being in Christ is spurious and counterfeit. Because his actions have contradicted his testimony. If his purpose is to please God, the only way in this world that he can ever know how to please God is to study God's Word, and to meditate upon God's Word, and to read God's Word, and to bring his actions, and to bring his attitudes, and to bring his thoughts, not up against what seemed rational the time, but against this inflexible and intolerable revelation of the character, and the mind, and the will of God. So if you are exercising yourself always to keep a conscience void of offence toward God, you are continually bringing every attitude, and every sympathy, every feeling, every emotion, every action and motive up against this standard of the Word of God.

I have used it so many times in the past: this thing which is the revelation of God's attitude. "These six things doth the Lord hate: Yes the seventh is an abomination unto Him." (I am quoting from Proverbs 6: 16-19) "These six things doth the Lord hate:" (Pro. 6:16) — Now should it possibly be that you name the name of Christ and have done one of these six things knowingly and willingly, and have condoned it, then the evidence is one of two things: You have either become sort of anaesthetized by your circumstances that your conscience has been dulled, or else your profession of being a Christian is counterfeit and spurious. "These six things doth the Lord hate." Do you exercise yourself always to have a conscience void of offence toward God? Then you know that under no circumstances can you do that which God hates, and justify it. God hates a proud look, all kinds of pride, national pride, racial pride, family pride, educational pride, personal pride, financial pride, and above all He abominates spiritual pride. "God hates a lying tongue," anyone that uses words with the intention of misconstruing deceiving, or in other wise obscuring the truth. (Pro. 6:17a) "God hates hands that shed innocent blood," whether they take a pen to write a letter that causes great heartache and grief, or whether they point the finger, or whether it is the pointing of the elbow or the twisting of the lip, but in some way it has the purpose of hindering, and injuring, and hurting, God hates it because it is a hand that — the hand is not the instrument that committed the crime. (Pro. 6:17b) It is the heart behind it. "God hates the heart that deviseth wicked imaginations," whether they are immoral thoughts, or cruel thoughts, or bitter thoughts, or selfish thoughts. (Pro. 6:18a) When the mind is used as the instrument of sin, then God hates it. "Feet that be swift and running to mischief," gossiping feet, tale bearing feet, whispering, back biting feet. (Pro. 6:18b) Whoever heard of feet that whisper and gossip and backbite. No. But the feet carry one to the place where they can. And so God says He hates the feet, but He is setting right back to the person whose heart has moved him to use his feet in this way. And then it says, "He hates a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Pro. 6:19) Oh how many churches have been hurt, how often the Spirit of God has been grieved, how often the work of God has been injured, how often Mission Fields have been closed down, Satan has conquered, because of sowing discord, just sowing discord, or discontent, unhappiness. And God hates it, and anyone that does it knows. Well if you have done these things, and you are a child of God, the Spirit of God immediately probes to your heart, and you exercise yourself to have a conscience void of offence toward God. And so you go through the Word. Not just this little portion, but all of God's Word is a mirror to your heart, just as the laver in the Old Testament in the Tabernacle was the means by which the Priest could see himself ready for fellowship with God, so it is that God's Word it to ever be before us, to meditate upon it, and to live in it, and to judge ourselves by it, and compare ourselves with it, in order that we might be clean.

Therefore, let him that cometh to the Lord's Table take heed lest he come unworthily. What does it mean? Always to be exercised, to have a conscience void of offence toward God. That means familiarity with His Word, living in His Word, a glad, hearty submission to His Word. But now notice, it not only says we are to have a conscience void of offence toward God, but also toward men. Toward God and men. Do you realize what this means?

We read the other day from our Lord's words, "If thy brother hath offended thee, go to thy brother." (Matt. 5:23) Oh how much heartache would have been spared, and how God's work would have been prospered if we had followed the simple rules there. ..And toward men. You have someone who has hurt you, someone has injured you, and obviously you assume that they

are Christians. You expect nothing but injury and hurt from the unsaved. You do not expect anything from them. You are constantly expecting that all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. You ought to be amazed when the world treats you nicely. And so you are not going to go to the unsaved. Do not go to the people that know not the Lord. This has no reference to them. This is a Church matter. This is a matter for the Body of Christ. But the assumption is that this person did not want to hurt you. He was not intending to hurt you. If he did, it was something that should be cleared up. You are assuming that he hates sin, and he wants to please God, and he wants to be on praying ground, and so you go to him. Ah but you discover he won't hear you. Then, the Lord said, take somebody with you. And if he won't hear you, and the one or two you have taken with you, then bring him before the Church, and let the Church into the matter. And if he won't hear the church, let him be excluded from you, as the heathen, or the publican, have no fellowship, no place, no connection with them, because they have refused both the individual that has gone, the people that have gone, and the Church. Consequently, toward men means that we are going to have to let our lives be such that we do not carry anything. Someone may do something to you. There may be someone that has said something, or has done something along the way, but our hearts ought not to be out on our sleeve, and our nerves ought not to be out where the seams of our coats are. We ought to rejoice and praise the Lord, and love them anyway, and not have to make an issue over everything that comes. But at the same time, if it is something that is there, and it is in your heart, and it is breaking fellowship with you, the Lord has prescribed it. So to "keep a conscience void of offence toward man," means that you have forgiven anything that has happened to you.

Have you ever realize the implication of our Lord's Prayer. How glibly and lightly often people can utter it, but nevertheless it is there before us. And I believe there is profit in our repeating it, especially to that one whose heart is genuinely in it. But do you know what you say when you say the Lord's Prayer? "Forgive us our debts..." (Matt. 6:12) You do not stop there. You do not put a period there. But you make a contract with God, and you say, Father do not forgive me any more than I have forgiven him. That is what you have said. Father, do not forgive me any more than I forgive her. I am setting the upper limit of forgiveness that I expect from you. I do not want You to forgive me, my debts, any more than I have forgiven him or her his debts toward me. Do you realize that that is what you have said when you have prayed the Lord's Prayer? You have definitely contracted with God to say, I want no more forgiveness, no more pardon, no more cleansing or relief, than I have given to this one who offended me. Now if you are prepared for that, well and good, but this is not the way most of us want to have our relationship to the Lord. We want Him to truly forgive, really pardon, and remember no more the sins we have confessed and forsaken. But do you cherish in your heart bitterness? Do you remember the fault someone has committed against you? Do you bring to the Lord's Table the resentment that is caused by actions which happened years in the past? Then I say you partake unworthily. To come to the Lord's Table with resentment, with bitterness in your heart, to come with an unforgiving spirit is to drink destruction and judgment to yourself. To come to the Lord's Table means, Lord, Forgive me of all the past just the way I have forgiven them. And to have come, if you have not forgiven them, then you know you have not been forgiven by the LORD. You have entered into contract with Him.

What does it mean to come to the Lord's Table? As Paul said, He strived, not only on Sunday morning, on the first Sunday of the month, but, "Herein do I exercise myself, continually, to always have a conscience void of offence toward God." You see in the early Church, the Lord's Table was not offered just on the first Sunday of the month. The Lord's Table was at the conclusion of the meal. I mentioned just the other day how that when the two disciples were on the Road to Emmaus and the Lord accompanied them, they went into the home of one for the common evening meal, and when they had finished the meal, I suppose that the host said, Do you know before He was with us — for they did not recognize the Lord at that time. They did not know who He was. Just a stranger. They said to Him something like this: Now, stranger, we have appreciated having you with us, but before He left us, He told us on that last night, before He was taken to be crucified, He took the bread and broke it and He said, Take, eat. And He said, "Do this as oft as ye do it in remembrance of Me." (II Cor. 11:24) And we would like to ask you if you would be willing to eat with us. And then they took the cup, and He blest it and He gave it to us, and He said, Drink ye all of it, so we are going to just do that now. Do you mind? And of course the stranger did not mind. He loved obedience, loved Faith, even though they were in the darkness of a cloud, not knowing what was going to happen, they remembered the Lord said, "This do as oft as ye do it." And so they concluded that meal that night. And when they had obeyed, then it says, "And He was revealed unto them in the breaking of the bread." (Luke 24:35) It was not the first Sunday of the month. It was at the conclusion of the common meal. No wonder Paul said, "I do exercise myself to always have a conscience void of offence

toward God and toward men.” On the Lord’s Day, of course. But what about Friday morning? What about Friday night? There ought to be a constant Communion. There ought to be a constant fellowship. You cannot afford to come to the Table today with nothing between, let something happen this afternoon, and cherish it for the next 30 days until you come back to the Lord’s Table. No. No. No. It is this. “Herein do I exercise myself to always have a conscience void of offence.” That means that at the slightest moment, at the first instant, I can’t let the sun go down upon my wrath. I cannot let broken fellowship estrange me. “I must keep my conscience clear and void of offence toward God and toward men.”

Now I believe that if you will take this verse, you won’t talk tomorrow the way you talked yesterday. You won’t talk this afternoon the way you talked last Sunday afternoon. Things will be different in your home. Things will be different in your heart. Things will be different in your mind. You cannot be the same if you are striving and “exercising to have a conscience void of offence,” for when you fall into the habit of immoral revelry, if some of you are troubled by that, you are going to say instantly, Oh God, this grieves you. And you are going to deal with it as sin. You fall into the habit of gossip and saying the critical, sarcastic — some people, you know get so in the habit of gossiping, so in the habit of criticism, so in the habit of biting, that every time they open their mouth it is like the squirting of acid out of the decanter. It just constantly comes. They cannot speak because out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks, and their heart is filled with acid. I assume that such could be Christian, but oh I tell you, dear heart, that if you know and love Him you cannot have your word poisoning and searing and burning, and hurting, and injuring. YOU CAN NOT DO THAT. Not if you are His. Because if you persist in it, you say, I am not His. My profession of being in Christ is counterfeit. I am a hypocrite. Oh I can sing songs, I can recite Scripture, I can pray, I can work, I can do this, but deep down in my heart, I am an unmitigated hypocrite. This is the attitude and the expression of the person who knowingly persists in that which God’s Word has condemned. No. No. A child of God breaks. A child of God has broken. He hates sin, and the purpose of his heart is to please God.

And so, today as you come to this Table, beware. It is not my Table. It is His. A conscience void of offence. God is easy to live with. You say, Well God is always looking out for something to find wrong with me. No. No. God is always trying to make trouble for me. No. God loves you. God is much easier to live with than you are. He is not trying to make trouble for you. What is the whole Law: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.” (Matt. 22:37) What does this mean? The one you love is the one you seek to please. And when God sees in your heart there is a deep desire to please Him, and to be the greatest possible blessing that you can to others. When your heart is right then your words are going to be right, and your thoughts are going to be right. So it is to bring the heart, to bring the mind, to bring the motive, clean through Jesus’ Blood to the place where the one desire of my heart is to please Him, and anything that displeases Him I instantly judge as sin.

Forget the Message. Forget the exhortation, if you must. Forget everything but the Text. Let the text be emblazoned upon your mind the same way this is upon the wall. It is equally important. For, if “the Lord our God in the midst of us will be shown to be mighty,” it will be because we “do always exercise ourselves to have a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.” (Zep. 3:17) “Judge yourselves that ye be not judged.” (Matt. 7:1) If there is anything in your past, anything in your present, anything that is not forsaken and confessed and under the Blood, deal with it now, deal with it now, and then come to the Table clean through Jesus Blood, with your eye single to His glory, and a heart purpose to please Him. Won’t you do that. Let me read it just once more: And “herein do I exercise myself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men.” May this be true of us.

Shall we bow our hearts together in prayer. A few moments of meditation in order that you can apply the exhortation of this hour to your heart. What will it mean to you? He said, If we judge ourselves we should not be judged. Are you.. Do you have attitudes and actions and thoughts that you must judge? As sinful? Maybe there has been some deep-lying resentments. You have got to bring them out and expose them. They are like serpents under the surface, but they have to be brought out. Are you prepared to deal with everything that grieves Him. Will you deal with it now? so that you can have a conscience void of offence toward God? And what about men? Do you have a conscience void of offence toward men?

Our Father, while we bow before Thee, before coming to Thy Table, teach us that we are to live daily, continuously, every day of the week, and month and year, as though we were before Thy Table, for we are living in the presence of Christ who as the Bread of Life was broken, and whose Blood was shed. So grant, Heavenly Father, that there need be no great preparation in

coming to the Table, but we live constantly under Thine eye, that when we do come, may we take inventory and stock again that we not be guilty of drinking unworthily, with deliberately held sin. We know, Father, that none of us know completely our own conscience and our own hearts. But we want to have a conscience void of offence toward Thee and toward men. This must be the purpose of every worthy child's heart that can come openly and freely to the Table. This purpose and a willingness to come to Thy Word to deal with anything that Thou dost show us. And so, Father, we pray, that there might be given to us by the Holy Spirit today deep preparation of heart for the Table, that we not come lightly or carelessly. Perhaps there are some that must ask forgiveness or make apology. Perhaps there are some that must write letters. Perhaps there are some, Lord, that must break before Thee over attitudes they have carried. None other knows but Thee. Whatever it is, Lord, might it be that as we come to the Table our consciences are void of offence, that we purpose to deal with everything Thou hast shown us and everything that subsequently Thou wilt show us. Might we like Paul exercise ourselves to have "always a conscience void of offence toward Thee and toward men." When this becomes the rule of our life, then the Table is ever before us and we are ever welcome at it. And so we ask Thee, Lord, that there may be this preparation this morning. Make this a precious time, even though there must be brokenness of heart, and confession, we know there is cleansing, for we have Thy Word that if we confess our sins Thou art faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. "The Blood of Jesus Christ Thy Son cleanseth us from all sin." (I John 1:7) Oh might we be clean through Jesus' Blood, as we come to the Table, truly Thine, hating sin, purposing to please Thee, and to be a blessing to all men. And so to that end Father prepare us as we come to the Table. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

\* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York City on Sunday Morning, August 6, 1961 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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