

Repentance, True and False

By Paris Reidhead*

There are several Scriptures that we shall be using this evening. Perhaps you would like to note them, and so I suggest that, if you think you will at any time, you prepare to do it now.

We are speaking about repentance, true and false, as illustrated in the case of Abraham and Jacob. And the consequence of this is, we will turn first to I Thessalonians. Here we have a statement which is most appropriate, if we are to understand what took place in Abraham's case, and what failed to take place for a good while at least in Jacob's situation.

In the 3rd vs of I Thessalonians, Chapter 1, Paul states three things. He says, "Remembering without ceasing your (and then he gives three things in sequence)... Your work of faith, your labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God our Father." If you would like to know what the work of faith is, you will see in the 9th vs. "For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols..." (I The. 1:9). This is the first part; the work of faith is to turn to God from idols. The labor of love, to serve the living and true God. And the patience of hope, to wait for His Son from Heaven whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.

And we see these three things in sequence. The work of faith, to turn to God from idols; the labor of love, to serve the living and true God; and the patience of hope, to wait for His Son from Heaven.

Now will you go back to Genesis, the 12th chapter, and remember, bear in mind our general theme, Repentance, True and False, as illustrated in the Old Testament in the case of Abraham and Jacob. And so in the 13th verse, we find an abrupt introduction of an individual that is going to occupy most of the attention here in this book of Genesis, and from him is going to come that which will be the main subject of the entire Old Testament.

"And the Lord had said unto Abram." You notice his name here is Abram, "Get thee out of thy country Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee" (Gen. 12:1). Now why? Well the work of faith was to turn to God from idols, and Abram's father dwelt in Ur of the Chaldees, the archeological evidences that have been discovered by excavation point to this as the center of idolatry. It was in this general vicinity that the tower of Babel was erected. And here you will find the rise of all organized religion. In a previous message, I have pointed out to you that Old Testament idolatry was in three main divisions. There was first the worship in terms of time, the worship of Ashtoreth or Astarte, the deification of the female; and then there was the worship of Baal, the appeasing of the local evil spirit; and then there was the worship of Moloch; The worship of Astarte corresponds to what John describes as the lust of the flesh. The worship of Baal, the appeasing of the local evil spirit, was for the purpose of prosperity, money with which to buy things, and corresponds to the lust of the eye. And the worship of Moloch, Moloch meaning king, was for the pride of life, for position to be granted by the personality represented by the immense statue to Moloch.

And so, this was a land wholly given over to idolatry. Can you imagine now what is taking place? God is appearing to a man, Abram, and He is presenting him with this challenge, Leave what you have known, leave the religion of which you have been a part, leave all of the culture that you have come to enjoy and appreciate, leave all of the privileges that you and your family have secured, leave it all; and go where I shall lead you, and to a land that I will show you. It was to turn to God, to turn to God, for this is all he had, was God.

Now I can imagine what happened. I just am sure that what was said when he went home and told Sarah and some of the friends, they said, You know, Abram, this is a terrible thing. You have had a heat stroke. Don't you know that this is not the dispensation for men to speak to God in the field. Now He spoke to Noah, there is no question about that. And He spoke to Enoch, that is true. And He spoke to Adam. But it has been such a long time since God has spoken to anybody. The last thing He did of which we had any record was to break down the tower. And He has not been speaking to people. This is from overeating, or it is from too much heat, or advanced senility, or it is from something else. And you can imagine that when he announced that he was leaving, that there was a considerable clamor against it, and of course we will discover that Sarah was

not too happy about the change, and her friends would come and put their arms around her neck and say, We knew when you married him that he was a fanatic. They always do that you know. Of course, the very ones who wanted him the worst would be the first to get there and criticize him now that he has taken this step that seems contrary to the current of their day and culture. And then the business men shake their heads and say, There is something about that man. You, oh, remember, We knew that there was something about him, that the time would come-just give them time enough and it will show, it will be discovered, it will be revealed. And so wiseacres shook their heads, as a for sale sign went up in front of Abram's house, and he resigned, and sold, and had an auction, and converted everything he could into moving currency, that could walk on the trip, to camels, and to donkeys, and to sheep, that which he could take with him wherever he would go. And as the last day came, here is this man-by this time the family said, Well, we can't leave you. He was supposed to leave them, but they would not leave him, and so he had to spend some seven years up at Haran until there was a dealing with this problem. But here he is, leaving town, and the women are running alongside of Sarah's camel, sobbing, and daubing at their eyes, and she was just as bad. And he is there, determined to leave, determined to go, and back there on one of the camels is a cradle. And what is this for. He is 85, and she is about 75. What is this for? Well that is for the baby that we are going to have.

And they say, See, he is sick. He is wrong. He has gone foolish on religion. A man as old as that expecting to have a son. Impossible. And so they leave. It is not a happy scene, because there are a great many ties that have to be broken, and the wise men say, This was not God. God does not ask you to do foolish things like that. God does not ask you to leave everything you have worked for. God does not ask you.. No, you have made a mistake.

My friend, everyone that has ever turned to God has had to have the pull and tie of the past hold him back, and Abram was no exception. We find every evidence of it inferred, that we can infer from the Scripture, that when he moved he had to move against the pressure that would have held him where he was. And everyone that turns to God has all the pressure of culture, all the pressure of the social climate in which he has been raised, all the pressure of the community of which he is a part, to hold him where he is.

And I speak to some of you that have known what it is to leave where it has been national treason to have named the name of Christ. It has been a complete break with the family. Some of our Hebrew Christians, no at the present as much I am sure as in the past, had to know that their family were having an official funeral in the synagogue. They were having a funeral for them in which their picture was placed in the casket, and everything was done. And there they were on the street.

My dear friend, now with the Lord, Elsie Clore, walked down the street in Chicago, passed her father and mother, who looked right at her and recognized her, and refused to speak, though she stood there with tears in her eyes, pleading for recognition. But they had had a funeral and had buried Elsie in the large picture that was in the bottom of the casket, spoke of what it had cost her to turn to God from that which had held her to the past. And so it was, I am sure, with Abraham.

Here was something which typifies to us true, real repentance. God spoke, God revealed, God gave the instructions, and previously He had had another course of action governed by the customs, governed by the procedures of his particular community. He was prepared to live that way until he died. But not so now. He has heard the voice of God, and he has to turn to God. This is all he has. He turned to God, from idols, from the idols of his parents, from the idols of his community, from the idols of the whole area. He went out because God through him wanted to do something.

You will notice that it was not just a turning to God from idols, but it was to serve the living and true God. And let me read further. I will make of thee a great nation. I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him... This I want you to see. Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him:... And the next 25 years are the evidence of the genuineness of that which took place in his heart when God spoke to him, and said, Get up and leave. Twenty five years elapsed from the time God said, I will make of thee a great nation, until Isaac is born. You must recognize that there was a period of great trial of faith. You will remember that there was the lapse with Hagar. You will remember there was the lapse when he went before the king and denied that Sarah was his wife. But when he was dealt with, he repented of his sin again, and he turned again to the Lord, obeying the Lord. In the case of Hagar, he did exactly what God

said. He put Ishmael and Hagar away. When he had denied that Sarah was his wife, there we find again that he did what were the instructions that came to him from the king, and from the Lord.

And so this man back there, when God spoke and he heard the Word of God, made a decision. That decision cost him his family. That decision cost him his career. That decision cost him his possessions. He had to leave it all. He turned to God. And in turning to God, obviously he was turning from the past. He was turning from everything that would have held him; things experience, position, all of it had to be left. And this is the picture of true repentance.

If I speak to someone here tonight that does not know forgiveness of sins, does not know pardon from past transgressions, then this is what God is saying to you. You will find that Abraham is described as the father of the faithful, and to everyone to whom the Gospel comes; it comes on these same terms. It has not been changed. If being the father of the faithful is the function of Abraham, then we can learn from him what is involved. Yes, he believed the Word of God. He believed the truth of God. And, in believing, he obeyed. Now these two are always inseparably joined. He had to change his mind about the rule. It was no longer family. It was no longer friends. It was no longer custom. It was no longer what was expected of him. He had come under a new government, a new dominion, a new rule. He turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God. And in this case, to wait for a son. The son certainly was from heaven. The son was the son of promise, named years before he was born, given by the supernatural power of God.

But you notice also that God asked him to take that son up to the top of Mt. Moriah, which later was the place probably where our Lord Jesus died, or very close to it. For some have said that it was at the place of the Temple, or others have said that it was actually the little hill of Calvary where Abraham went with Isaac. And there he laid his son upon the altar, raised the knife, and it started to descend when God had his hands stopped, and he discovered that in the thicket was the ram caught by its horns. And so here, after waiting for all of these years, for the son of promise to be given, he had to offer that son back and receive him as from the dead. And you remember what we read there in 1st Thessalonians, to turn to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven. And thus Abraham becomes to us a picture and a type of true repentance, and true faith, a commitment that was made at the beginning of the pilgrimage that, he observed all of the years that he travelled. From that time on Abraham observed the commitment that he had made back there when he left his family.

But in contrast, let us consider Jacob. There is a great deal more that we could say about Abraham in this connection, but I think it is sufficient for us to see the contrast in the case of Jacob. Jacob, as you know, was the grandson of Abraham, and was the son of promise, the one whom God chose, for He chose Jacob and rejected Esau. And the 27th Chapter of the Book of Genesis gives us this setting. Here he is aided and abetted by his mother who prefers Jacob to her son, Esau, and who remembers that God gave a promise. But in this case Rebecca feels that it is up to her to engineer the fulfillment of the promise made by God to her concerning Jacob. And so, Rebecca spoke to her son, and I read with vs 6, saying, "Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying, Bring me venison... Now therefore, my Son, obey my voice and go to the flock, and bring the kid and slay it and put a piece of skin on your arm, come before your father, and tell him that you are Esau, that you have gone to the field, and get the blessing that he is prepared to give to Esau" (Gen. 27:6-10). It belongs to you, God promised it to you, and therefore it is up to you to use the means that I prescribe to do this.

Well we find in the 41st vs. that Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him. And then the next thing we find is that Jacob is sent away into another country and he goes, largely out of fear of what Esau is going to do to him. And so the difference is this: Jacob gets up and leaves his father's house and his kindred, but he is not turning to God from idols, he is turning to idols from God. He is moved by fear. He is motivated by self-interest. His great concern is what is going to happen to him. And we find today that there is the possibility with all of us. We know that fear has its good work. I trust that... Abraham feared God, but I trust that his fear alerted him, and awakened him, and made him sensitive to the voice of God, for it went far beyond fear. There came into his heart trust, confidence, love, or else there would not have been these 25 years and more of following in the way God set before him. But in Jacob's case, he is afraid. He knows that he has used duplicity. He knows that he has lived up to his name, which is deceiver, or supplanter. And so he leaves his father's house. He leaves his kindred. But he is motivated by self-interest, and by fear.

You recall that he came to the place where he spent the night in the field, and used a pillow, a stone for a pillow. And in this evening, he had a dream, and in the dream he saw a ladder, from earth to Heaven, and one descending and ascending, speaking to us of course of the Lord Jesus who came down from Heaven, and returned to Heaven, not of man going up, but of God coming down for man's redemption.

And the next day, he was greatly afraid, and being afraid, he thought again of what he had heard, he knew that his father and his grandfather had been greatly blessed of God, and so he made a covenant. What a pathetic covenant it was, a covenant again saying, I will serve God if He blesses me; and if He blesses me, I'll give Him a tenth. Here is a man that has fled from his father's house out of fear, and has made a covenant of self-interest. Here is a man that has seen Heaven, seen salvation, for this picture of someone coming down the ladder, and going up the ladder, certainly was the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ as the One who was coming down from Heaven that He might make a way and take us back to Heaven with Him. But what did he do? Did he submit? Did he stay there? Did he break? Did he bend? Not Jacob. For the next day, he makes a covenant, saying, Bless me and I'll give you a tenth, showing his continued self-interest, his unbroken spirit, and he goes off into the very land from which Abraham has come. He returned down again to Ur of the Chaldees.

And what does he do? Labors and works for seven years, and then for seven years, and then for seven years. What is he after? Wives. This is what he wants. Cattle. He is greatly interested in his possessions. And oh, he remembers that back there at Bethel he said, I'll give you a tenth, but of course here it is convenient. He doesn't have any place to cash it in. And no one to claim it. And so it is all his for the time being at least. And so he is having these enormous herds that are gathered. But finally, he is brought to the awareness of the fact that things are not enough, just possessions do not satisfy, and there is hunger stirred so that he is willing to leave, get out of Laban's country, and go back to his own, even though he is still mightily frightened, mightily frightened of his brother Esau.

He knows that his wives are idolaters. He knows that they have carried with them their idols. He is aware of this. And so, when he comes to Peniel, to the brook Jabok, there he sends over the servants with the cattle and the sheep, and the gifts that he is presenting to Esau, and he stays behind after his family has crossed the brook. And an angel of the Lord wrestles with him. He fights just as he characterizes the impenitent heart fighting the will of God, fighting the Word of God, fighting the way of God, fighting the truth of God, fighting right to the last, and then he begins to realize that he is fighting with God. So what does he do? Has he changed in these 21 years? Not at all. Not in the least. He says, I cannot let thee go until Thou hast blessed me. He is far more interested in blessing he is going to get than the glory that God might get. Not here do we find the slightest submission. Thy will be done. And so God touches His finger — the angel of the Lord, whom I believe is the Lord, touches His finger to his thigh, and the strong cord of his thigh is withered, and He says, Your name shall be called Israel. He is not called Israel yet. But it shall be called, a prince with God, but it is still Jacob. Why? Next day, he goes across the river, halting on his thigh, and he meets his brother Esau. By this time he is wealthy, has gotten more than the heritage would have been from Abraham, and after all Jacob had not come back to claim the elder brother's share anyhow. It has been held in custody for him. And so Esau is very prosperous, very well to do, looks back on the event as being a childish experience, has no animosity toward Jacob, and consequently Jacob is rather relieved, and so he says, Now listen Esau, you go ahead slowly up to Seir, because I have the children, because I have the flocks and the herds. We'll meet you up there. You go up ahead of us, and we will meet you.

And so, Esau starts off with his horsemen, with his servants on their way up to Seir, and you know what our friend Jacob does? He turns to the right and goes up to Succoth. He has lied to God. He has lied to his brother. And he goes up to Succoth. Incomplete repentance. Oh, he saw the ladder, but he did not submit to the One walking up and down the ladder. He wrestled with God, and he has been hurt, and crippled, but he did not submit to the God who touched him. For we find no evidence that he had a changed heart, no evidence yet of repentance at all. Here is one who has gone through the motions. Bless me, and I'll give you a tenth. Religious, yes. But he is still able to compromise. He has not turned to God from idols. For his wife has idols, and here are the herds which are his idols, and his children which are his idols. And his position, and possessions which are his idols. And nothing can happen to these. They are very dear to him. And so he starts up to Succoth. And there he sees ground. Good ground. Fine, rich soil. And so he buys a piece, and he settles down. He has lied to his brother, and now he has settled down with people that he can call on to protect him in case Esau comes, claiming something from him.

But what happens? Well the first thing that happens is that Dina, his daughter, is ruined. And then his sons become murderers. And it is not until his family is utterly shattered and ruined that he begins to realize the enormity of his crime. Now look. He has had a revelation back there as a youth of salvation. He made a covenant, but a covenant that expressed his own interest in what he could get out of God, and no concern about what God would get out of him. He has proceeded out into a land of idolatry, and lived and served there.

I used to think this was the picture of the Christian life, but it is not. This is a picture of incomplete repentance. This is a picture of a heart that has sinned against light and truth. But God has not yet abandoned him. We rejoice in that, for the Spirit of God continues to stir his heart. And there at Succoth, you find the first beginnings of repentance as he sees Dina ruined, his children murderers, his family utterly shattered. It took this before he was willing to come to himself.

And so, at length, he says to the women, his wives, put away your idols, bathe yourselves, put on clean cloths, for tomorrow we are going to go back to the place from which I started. And oh, tonight I want you to see that this is the contrast. Two men, both left their families, both left their kindred. One left, because he had seen God, and the other left because he had seen fire in the eyes of his brother. One was motivated by faith, and the other by fear. One went expecting to have a son of promise, and for 25 years walked in obedience and expectancy, founded only upon the Word of God; the other one had seen a vision, and had seen a man descending and ascending and yet, this was not enough; he went back into the land of idolatry to serve himself.

And I would have you see that there is just this possibility tonight in your heart, that you like Jacob, grew up in a Christian home, that you like Jacob knew something of the promises of God and the prosperity and blessing of God, that you like Jacob saw a vision of salvation, of Jesus Christ coming down from Heaven and then ascending into Heaven, after He had provided salvation. But, even though you saw that vision, even though you understood that truth, and made some kind of a covenant, you have not lived or walked in it. And you have gone in your own way. Looking back, yes. Remembering a place, yes. And from time to time becoming sentimental about it, and maybe three months out of every two years getting interested enough to go to church for a couple or three times a month. But then soon your heart becomes cold, and you go back to serving Laban, and serving idols. And the consequence? The years have gone on. You remember back there when God touched you, when God put His finger upon you, and you have not been the same. Perhaps it was sickness or great loss, or some tragedy. But you still were not willing to break, still were not willing to bend, and now you have found the loss of things precious and dear to you, and you are at Succoth.

I assure you, dear heart, that if I am speaking to someone whose face is parallel to Jacob's, that there is only one thing for you to do. And that is to arise from where you are, put away the idols, turn to God from idols, the thing you ought to have done at the very first, and recognized that He is to be the supreme rule and government in your life, and come back to Him. The contrast between Abraham and Jacob gives us the picture of saving repentance and faith, and spurious, counterfeit repentance and faith. The one was that which was a change, permanent, complete, persistent, something which went on, and on, and on; the other, spurious, cheap, shallow, superficial, and it led to heartache, it led to the ruination of his family, led to the complete robbing God of all that He had a right to expect.

Which has been yours? Which has been yours? Has it been true in your life that when you turned to God from idols you made a break? You may have had a lapse, but there was a break. And when God spoke to your heart, you instantly dealt with the thing which He showed you. Or has your repentance been counterfeit? Just wanting something from God, just trying to do enough so that God won't really take after you? as you are sure He can and might. And your whole interest is to protect yourself.

Oh, I trust you have come to Succoth. I trust you have come to that place where you realize life is so temporary for Succoth means booths, just a little grass shelter, that you realize that you are not going to be here. Oh, that somehow tonight I might be talking to someone that is tired of the cheap and the shallow and the counterfeit, and the make believe, and you are prepared to say, I am ready to go back, I am ready to go back to that place where I had a revelation of God. I am ready to go

back to that place where I will meet Him on His terms. I am ready to go back to the place where father Abraham was when he turned to God from idols.

What is the evidence of genuine repentance now? in Jacob's heart. He says to his wives, Where are those idols you brought with you from Laban's country? Where are they? And the women dug them out, bring them to him, and he burns them, and he burns the garments, and he has his family, all of his family cleansed, clean, clean bodies, clean clothes. He said, We are going into the presence of God.

You remember what John the Baptist said, Repent and bring forth works meet for repentance. Here is the evidence of genuineness. Jacob at last is beginning to deal with the things that God has put His finger on. And my friend, the evidence of genuineness of repentance in any heart is the fact that whenever God shows you something that He has put His finger on, you ought to break there, then. What is your repentance? Spurious or genuine. You say, Well, how can I look? How will I go? It is too far back. I am not interested in the past. I am interested only in the present. What is your attitude toward yourself tonight? What is your attitude toward His Word tonight? What is your attitude toward sin tonight? This is the evidence of the genuineness of repentance. The thing that Jacob did not do all those years proved that it was counterfeit. It was make believe. And if you have had unconfessed, unforgiven sin in your life, and you have been willing to deal with it, and allow it, can you not see the fact that this would indicate that there is something radically wrong with your profession of faith in Christ? For if to believe on Christ is to turn to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from Heaven, does this not have to be permanent? Doesn't it have to continue? It did in father Abraham's case. The one who is set forth in the Scripture as the father of the faithful. Ah yes, he was overtaken in a fault, and he fell into sin with Hagar, but he obeyed God. He was overtaken in a fault and he fell into sin when he denied that Sarai was his wife, and pled some remote relationship to a distant way that she was his sister; but he dealt with this. He accepted the consequences of it, and the guilt of it, and God forgave him. But oh, how different is his attitude from the attitude of Jacob. Jacob meeting God one night, and God touching him, and crippling him, and the next day, lying.

I want to ask you, Did you turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God? after the order of Abraham or Jacob? How real is your profession of faith? How genuine? How sincere? Do you know how you will tell? By what you do. What was it that he did? He allowed himself to become involved in bitter animosity and enmities, and vain ambition, and a desire for things, and experience, and possessions, things that grieved God. The evidence of the genuineness of God's work in your heart is the fact that you are prepared to meet Him on His terms tonight, and bend before Him, in anything and everything He shows you.

And so, ask yourself, Do I have this kind of a heart? Do I have the kind of a heart that is sensitive? Do I have the kind of a heart that wants to please God? more than anything else in all the world? Am I willing to just allow Him to speak, and when He speaks obey? This is the evidence, this is the picture of repentance of Abraham in contrast with Jacob, who heard God speak and straightway forgot what he heard. And as I see you tonight, and know that some of you have never been with us before, and others perhaps will never be again, my heart cries out to you. Perhaps there is someone here who is like Jacob. You have the name to live, but in your heart of hearts you know you are dead, that you have never been born of God. You have seen the plan of salvation, but you have never really broken before Him. I plead with you tonight to do it tonight. Repent now. Because the only thing that can happen is greater tragedy, and greater heart ache as God pursues you out into the future. Or, the greatest tragedy of all would be if He should cease pursuing you, and your heart not be stirred again.

But to you who would have every reason to believe that you are Christian, the evidence of the genuineness of your profession is the sensitiveness of your heart to anything and everything that grieves God. For it is not just a work of a moment. It is the attitude of a lifetime. It does not mean that you have arrived. But it means that you have turned to go up from idols, to serve the living and true God; and anything He shows you, whenever He shows it to you, you will deal with it, because you believe God.

Let us bow in prayer. With our heads bowed and our eyes closed, we ask ourselves tonight, Where am I? Where am I? Am I with my father, Abraham? I have turned to God because of who He is, because I realize that He is worthy to be obeyed, and loved and served, and that His promise He is able to perform, and that He will both bless me and make me a blessing, and that

I want the world to be blessed, and Him to be glorified as well as my own need met. Fear may have awakened. I am sure that Abraham was afraid when God spoke to him, but fear just prompted him to listen. He did not leave Ur of the Chaldees because he was afraid. He left because he had heard God speak. Have you heard God speak? Have you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God? Or have you just run because you have been afraid of hell, afraid of the avenger, afraid of suffering and loss, and you have made a covenant when you saw that someone was descending and ascending, when you saw the Gospel you made a covenant; but you have been going on ever since living your own life, and in your own way. Oh, perhaps tonight God has cornered you. Oh, dear friend, perhaps tonight He has cornered you, and you are at Succoth, and you are willing to put away the idols and put away everything that grieves Him, and actually break before the Lord for the first time in all your life that you have ever broken before anyone, including God.

I wonder tonight if there are not those here who will say, Yes, yes. I have been like Jacob. I have had truth and light and experience, and I have done everything but break before God; but tonight I want to break. Tonight I do. Would you raise your hand and thereby indicate your intention. Tonight, to turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God, would you do it? And by your upraised hand say, Yes, now, this moment, where I sit, I am doing that, I am turning to God to let Him rule, and govern, and control, and be everything He wants to be. I am meeting Him on His terms tonight. Would you raise your hand right where you are? I see it. God bless you. Are there others? Well thank God for one that has raised her hand, indicating tonight is the night of breaking. One more? Anyone? Yes. I have never bowed. I have never broken. I have never abandoned myself to Him, but tonight I do. Would you raise your hand?

Now listen. I am asking this before we close. I know I have been born of God. I know I have passed from death to life. I know that. But I also know that I have not been as sensitive as I should have been. There have been attitudes, imaginations, there have been actions, there have been things that have grown up in my life which have grieved God, and I see that. And tonight I am evidencing the genuineness of that repentance and faith when I turn to God from idols to serve the living and true God by acknowledging that God has shown me things in my life which grieve Him, and I am dealing with them now.

My dear, if you want God to bless you, there are three things you must do. *You must become absolutely honest, transparently honest, and just completely honest about sin, a break with all sin, with everything that is doubtful, with everything that is questionable.* God has nothing that He can bring you, or give you, or show you until you are prepared to deal with sin as honestly as He demands.

Secondly, you must absolutely surrender yourself to Him. Wholly, completely, abandon all you are and have to Him.

And thirdly, you must believe that what you surrender and abandon He receives. This is to turn to Him and evidence the genuineness of what He has done in your heart.

I am going to ask it so that no one can misunderstand. I know that I have been forgiven of the past, but I also know that there have grown up in my life things that have grieved God, and tonight I am absolutely breaking before Him, as best I know how and by His help. I want to deal completely honestly with everything that grieves Him. I want to surrender all that I have to Him, and I want to believe, and do believe that He takes that which I surrender. If this is your heart cry tonight and you mean it, I want you to stand right where you are, right now. I hope I have made it clear. Thank you. I see you. God bless you. Thank you. Yes. Yes. An absolute break with sin, an absolute abandonment of everything I have, a full surrender of all I have to Jesus Christ, and childlike confidence that He takes that which I bring and will receive it. For what touches the altar is sanctified by the altar. Will you stand if God has spoken to your heart? Are there others? God is pleading. Mind Him now. You to whom God's Spirit has spoken stand now, join these that are here. If God is speaking to your heart stand and join with these. If you are prepared to deal that way, utterly, transparently, and absolutely honestly with everything that grieves God, and surrender and abandon all you are and have to Him, then you stand. Just a moment. We will wait. I want the elders and deaconesses that are here to go into Wilson Chapel, and I want you that are on your feet to follow them; just go out to the end of the aisle, and go to the rear of the church, and follow the elders and the deaconesses into Wilson Chapel and find the place of prayer. Now will you do that? Please. Just step out. Go to the back.

Invitation.

Thou knowest the hands that have been raised, our Father, and the ones that have said, If I had done what I ought to have done, and what I felt God's Spirit was dealing with me about, I'd have gone. We pray for them. Thou knowest, Lord, the hearts that are there, and the issues with which Thou art dealing with them, and our heart's cry is that Thou wilt just continue to let Thy loving pressure abide until they have met Thee on Thy terms. And now as we part, we pray that we may do it, having seen from the life of Abraham and Jacob something of what repentance means, something of what a change of mind and a change of direction, a change of action means, and we pray, Father, that there may come to our hearts tonight a deep desire to be all Thou wouldst have us be. We thank Thee for those who on Wednesday night past met Thee, broken before Thee. We thank Thee for those this morning who by their raised hands said they were meeting Thee before they went to the Table of the Lord. We thank Thee for those tonight that have come. O God of Grace, grant that Heaven's blessing shall flow upon us, not because we are worthy, but because He is worthy. Revive us again, O God. Revive Thy work in the midst of the years. Stir Thy people up to seek Thee. Stir them up to pray. Grant Father that Heaven may open, and Thy glory shall come upon us, and that everything that grieves Thee shall be put away, that Thou canst meet us and bless us. Now go with us as we part.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus, the love of God the Father, and the communion and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be and abide upon all who are walking in the light of obedience to the truth. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

* Reference such as: Delivered at The Gospel Tabernacle Church, New York City on Sunday Evening, August 12, 1962 by Paris W. Reidhead, Pastor.

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