

Humility & Accountability in the Church Brotherhood

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[0 : 00] Thank you, James, for that prayer. Prayer this morning is that God would indeed speak to us! And have a long message.

We won't go by at the time, but I just looked at the clock, and it's only 20 until 11 or so. Seems early, but thank you for being here.

It's good to see Dan and your family back on the long trip. Welcome back. I was asked recently, several times, and I do this a lot.

Often my messages come or are born from a conversation or something that made me think, and then I start thinking down that line, and eventually I'm like, well, I think we should just preach on that.

So I had the question asked recently several times, what is accountability, and why is it necessary? Or is it necessary? I forget how it was worded. So I want to talk about that some today.

[1 : 34] With God's help, we want to look at that and say, maybe we can come closer to answering that question. The title is, Humility and Accountability in the Church Brotherhood.

Or you could say, or you could say, in the Church. Because that is a fair question. We often don't see much of that in our day, where that's very important.

And I do take that question seriously. We don't always do a good job in answering those questions. You know, questions like these.

But we want to try to look at that at least. Maybe it's a question that I need to answer in my own heart. Is it necessary? One thing I want to say, too, in the beginning, is that we recognize, I believe, that the subject of accountability can be abused.

We can make it a thing of just nosiness or meddling in other men's affairs. Or, you know, there is that side as well.

[2 : 55] Where, you know, I've known situations where a man couldn't even buy a used truck without going to the church and having to get approval.

And things like that. And I don't see that. Although I will say that, in fact, I mentioned this to the brother, that finances is probably one of the areas that we are the least accountable to each other in.

Think about that a little bit. And yet, the Bible says a lot about our money and how we spend money and how we live. And yet, maybe it's because that's where we're the most vulnerable in.

And, you know, I don't want to know about your money and how you do things, so you don't know about how I do things, right? So we become less accountable in that area. Not throwing that out.

But I'm just saying we can, we can, as people, abuse this subject. And most things that are true in the Bible can also be misused or can be done in a wrongful manner, wrong way.

[4 : 06] The church is the family of God built on humility and truth.

Humility. It is a foundation of a Christ-like, for a Christ-like brotherhood. Humility is a commandment.

Yes, we are called, we are commanded to walk in humility. But what is it and what does it look like? Is humility just a feeling that we have or what is humility?

Those are some of the things we want to look at today, Lord willing. Likely, we all have an idea of what it is.

But, let's just, let's see what the Bible says about this. Oh, here I have what I was saying earlier in my notes.

[5 : 13] What is, what about the error of accountability? And I just wrote down controlling or abused accountability. Yes, of course. That exists.

Is that still on or something? Amen. Now, here's a statement that I want you to think about. And maybe this is one of the only statements you really need to remember in this message. But you cannot, just so we have this clear right from the start, what I believe is truth.

You cannot be accountable without humility. And you cannot be humble without accountability. Let that sink in a little bit.

And I want to prove that to us. These are not, I don't want to just say something without any backing. but I repeat that. You cannot be accountable without humility.

[6 : 21] How would that look like if I was accountable to you with my life, but I have no humility. It's not going to work. But if I have humility in the body of Christ, then I become accountable to you as well.

That's what I'm saying in that. Let's remember that statement as we go through this.

Because it could change how you are living and it could change the destiny in your life. Let's turn to Philippians. Very familiar chapter that we're going to look at.

Philippians 2. Talking about Jesus and His example of humility. I'm going to read maybe the first 11 verses.

Philippians 2. If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels of mercies, fulfill ye my joy that you be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

[7 : 40] Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. You know, this kind of a humility imitates Christ. It's the mind of Christ.

For this kind of humility. Where we, in fact, we heard about it in the children's class, about where we look or we serve someone else instead of ourselves. We look at the things of others, the needs of others, maybe the burdens of others, maybe the grief of others.

And we see that and we act upon it, even if it means washing dishes. probably a lot of young men needed to hear that.

But, and that may be a small thing, but it isn't a small thing, actually, if it's from the heart. But there's a humility in seeing the needs of others and acting upon it rather than just being self-centered or even doing, you know, the first part of verse 3 where it says, let nothing be done through strife or vain glory.

[9 : 10] Bringing glory to ourselves. you know. And then in verse 6, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery, talking about Jesus, to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Wherefore God hath also highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.

Every knee should bow, I'm sorry, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Now let's turn to Peter, 1 Peter, chapter 5. I know this is more of a topic message, but there's quite a few different verses that I want to look at.

But what an example there in Philippians of our Lord Jesus that humbled himself. Think a little bit about what he did to humble himself.

[10 : 40] He actually came down and I was thinking, I had a new thought this morning as I was thinking about that passage, how Jesus humbled himself and was obedient even to the cross.

He actually went and obeyed those evil men. When they told him to come, he came. When he told him to carry his cross, he carried his cross. He didn't resist them.

And here he was God. That's humility. He obeyed men that we would think you would never obey them.

Without humility, Christ wouldn't have been crucified. 1 Peter 5, starting in verse 5. Likewise, you younger, submit yourselves unto the elder.

Yea, all of you be subject one to another and be clothed with humility. For God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.

[11 : 50] Amen. I believe this morning that God does not see me as humble or you unless he sees us being humble to our brothers.

Almost all the scripture we're looking at talks about each other. And so, it says here in verse 5, yea, all of you, not just the younger, yes, the younger submit, but not just the younger.

Here it says, all of you, the whole body, be subject one to another and to be clothed with humility. Now, we know what, you know, some people use that verse quite literal and they think just their clothing is humility, but it's not talking about the clothing.

It's talking about humility and being clothed with it. Right? We are clothed with, not saying it won't affect your clothing, but that's not what this is saying.

We are clothed with, the subject is humility. What does that look like? And then God says he resists the proud, or it says about God, he resists the proud and giveth grace to the humble.

[13 : 18] Do we need more grace in our lives, in our day, in what we face? We need grace and maybe, maybe grace is hindered because of the lack of humility.

Here are a few marks or, yeah, marks of humility, I guess. You could call it that. One is a willingness to listen.

Another one is an openness to correction. And the other one I had was serving instead of seeking status.

We heard that a little bit. Again, this referring to the children's class. Serving instead of, well, that doesn't make me, that doesn't put me up here when I'm just taking out the trash or doing somebody else a favor.

It doesn't really give me a lot of status, right? But a sign of humility would be serving instead of worrying about our status. Believe that humility opens the door to accountability.

[14 : 32] And someone said that accountability is God's protection for the brotherhood. Proverbs says in 27, 17, Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

We know this, I mean, even the world knows that statement, iron sharpens iron. Right? One person's influence sharpens somebody else.

And this is referring to in a good way in James chapter 5 is another passage, a verse there.

We could go to that chapter actually, but I think I'll just pull this one verse. James 5, 16, Confess your faults one to another and pray for one another that you may be healed.

The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. You know, we often look at that verse and it's right that we pray for each other that we would be healed.

[15 : 42] But the first part of the verse says to confess your faults one to another. It's a voluntary confession. Humility is not something you get somebody else to do.

Humility, forced humility is not humility at all. Just like forced submission is not submission at all. All these things are voluntary.

You can't make me humble. I can't make you humble. I can't make you submit because as soon as I do, you're not submitting. It's all voluntary.

In fact, all of Christianity is voluntary. Is it not? It's a choice. But is it necessary is the question today.

Confess your faults one to another. What exactly was James talking about? Confessing our faults.

[16 : 51] Does that include our sins? Our sinful thoughts sometimes? Our struggles? We're commanded to do it. Or maybe if you're not confessing, maybe you have no problems.

Maybe we don't have anything that we struggle with. You're a better person than me if that's your case.

Confess your faults. You want healing? You want victory? I think it was last Sunday we heard a message. I have some of the notes here with me of what James preached and some of the...

I felt like it was very much a warning message for us. Maybe God's doing a lot of warning for us the last while, but... Two Sundays ago I think I made this statement about...

And I shared this yesterday with a brother that... as well because he needed it. And that was that we fight from a position of victory.

[18 : 08] We're not fighting for victory. As a Christian, as a believer, we're fighting from the position of victory if we're in Christ. He's already won the victory and that's where we stand now.

That's the position that he gave us. So as we fight battles, let's remember that. We have the victory. It's a promise. Another one is in 1 John 1.

I want to look at what he says about fellowship. And one of the areas of accountability is to walk in the light.

And John is very clear on that. Walking in the light. 1 John 1 verse 6 through 8. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.

Now, what is walking in darkness? Does that mean that if we sin, that's darkness?

[19 : 21] Of course. Could it be more than that? Could it also be where we just said that other verse, confess your faults one to another?

If we refuse to do that, is that walking in darkness? Verse 7 says, But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.

And the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. I just love how these verses end up with a promise.

the blood of Jesus cleanses us. Why? Because we are walking in the light. And that walking in the light opens the fellowship of other believers.

We have fellowship one with the other, with another. And then in verse 8, He says, If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

[20 : 25] So accountability is walking in the light. A proud person walks in secret and is not accountable because he or she thinks themselves better than others.

Or maybe they just think they know better than others. And others don't know what I know, so they become less accountable without realizing that they have become proud and deceived their own selves according to these scriptures.

Sometimes the light, well actually always, the light brings discomfort when somebody is walking in darkness. I mean, we've experienced that, have we not?

Those of us that have been born again, we've experienced the darkness. And we've experienced how it feels like when we walk into the light. When you're around people that are in, they're free and they're happy and they're joyful and they're full of the Holy Spirit and you just want to get out of there.

It's because your own heart isn't right. And so, the light brings discomfort. But then the freedom, once we allow that light to penetrate us, to come into our heart and set us free, and that's why I believe John is saying, then you have fellowship.

[21 : 57] You have fellowship one with the other because you're walking in the light. I want to look at a few little more practical ways maybe of accountability.

In Galatians 6, Galatians 6, verse 1 and 2, Paul says, Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

And then verse 2 is a precious verse. It says, bury one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. again, humility is always brought out in these accountability verses.

Now, in verse 1 there, I've thought about this verse already. you know, it says that if a brother or a man be overtaken in a fault, maybe he sinned or maybe he just did something wrong.

It says, you which are spiritual, now which of us would rise up and say, I'm spiritual, I'll help. That's what it says.

[23 : 24] You're supposed to be the ones restoring. And maybe maybe sometimes before we are spiritual enough to help, maybe we need to look at ourselves first.

Because it says, consider yourself. That, you know, you might be tempted too. You might be right on the verge of falling. And so you think you're spiritual and you want to help, but make sure that you're walking right, you're committed, you're walking in the light before you try to help somebody else.

It'll never work out well if we don't do that. But then in verse 2, bury one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ. Do we do that?

Somebody has a burden? You know, sometimes in churches, we're so quiet about our burdens. we don't even know that it exists. Maybe we feel like somebody's maybe carrying a burden and you even ask or whatever, but so often, I believe church people would more often be willing to walk with each other if we would know.

If people would be open and share like we read earlier. if the first part of the message would be true, that we would be that open and we would be vulnerable and share our faults, share our life with each other, and yet we do, we want to fulfill the law of Christ by carrying each other's burdens. [25 : 11] Sometimes I have a burden, I just want to kind of keep it. well, how am I going to get your help? Right? In Hebrews chapter 3 verse 13 it says, but exhort one another daily, while it is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

We are to exhort each other. The Bible says daily. We might say, well, we don't see each other every day, but what about when we see each other? Spend time together.

Do we exhort one another? That is to encourage each other in the word. Also in Hebrews 10 verse 24 it says this, I think I might have read this before or will later maybe, and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works.

Being considerate of one another. You know, sometimes it can be as simple as maybe at work, maybe there's one of us has an idea. I think we're going to do it this way.

And then the other one comes along and says, yeah, but that's going to really affect those people negatively. I'm just giving something that came to mind.

[26 : 43] Let's be careful how we do that because it's going to have an effect. That is, I believe, one way that we consider one another to provoke to love and to good works.

Is it loving? Is it good works? But if my idea that I just had is better than yours, then, well, I'm supposed to humble myself to my brother and say, thank you for that.

I didn't think about that. I needed to hear that. We can look at holiness in Peter, 1 Peter 1, verse 15 and 16.

that this is also our calling. These are some practical ways of accountability and brotherhood.

It says in verse 15, but as he which hath called you is holy, so be holy in all manner of conversation. That word conversation in the King James usually means lifestyle or how you live.

[28 : 09] We are to be holy in how we live because it is written, be holy for I am holy. The Lord God is a holy God. holy. These are areas I believe that we need each other in accountability in that way, in the body of Christ.

We also have direction. There's so much direction in the Bible if we want it. Is there not? It's all there. There's a place for private or personal however you want to put it correction.

We know Matthew 18 verse 15. Maybe I'll just read that. Matthew 18 verse 15 through 18 or 17.

Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.

If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.

[29 : 31] Jesus speaking. I have also seen this verse abused. It says, moreover, if that brother shall trespass against thee.

Okay, so let's say that I've heard this quite often where a person might share a concern or maybe it's even just a simple thing of a directional thing in the church that some people are doing and this brother has a burden but somebody says, oh, you can't talk about that because you need to go talk to that person.

That's not what this is saying. Although it could include that. We should be open to that. But it's not necessary. This says, Jesus very specifically said, that if a brother does something, he trespasses against you.

Before you run to somebody else, you're supposed to try to work that out. It doesn't mean that you can't talk about anything in the church because you always have to go to the one that makes sense. even though the other we need to be careful in that we don't turn into gossip either. There is also that. But this is specifically saying that if you've been wronged or something has happened in the relationship, you're supposed to go to that brother or sister and try to work that out before you go to.

[31 : 00] And then if you do, then hey, you've gained your brother. It's over. You're done. It's no more talk, right? So much direction for the church in these matters.

Again, just reminding us, confess your faults one to another and pray for one another that you may be healed. Bury one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Those are all verses that we had read. Some of the fruits of humility and accountability, humility. It takes humility.

And I think that one of the greatest reasons that people are not accountable is very simple. They're not humble. Now, I say that knowing also there are transition times sometimes.

Like, you know, Mike, I'll pick on you. You know, you left Michigan, you moved out here. Well, during that time frame of transition, who are you accountable to? You know, God's grace is with us in times like that when we make transitions and all of that.

[32 : 12] But the lack of wanting to be accountable is a lack of humility. Maybe we'll put it that way. In Ephesians 4, first three verses, Paul says, I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love.

There's a long suffering, a patience, forbearing with love. There's not a, accountability is not a thing where I see you did something wrong, I'm going to just deal with it right now, without even maybe praying or seeking the Lord or trying to hear our brother first, that type of thing.

It says that with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another. Isn't that how we want to be treated too? We don't, if we do something wrong or just make a mistake or have a failure, whatever, we don't want to be just immediately yelled at.

If you do that at work, you lose your employees, right? But let's look into the situation. Let's care enough about it to take it seriously.

But remember these verses, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. It's about unity, it's about peace, it's about humility.

[34 : 02] Remember those other verses, remembering that we too may be tempted to fall. I just love these verses. They're so clear.

They're so clear. And I didn't say them. I'm just reading that too. It's wonderful that we have an answer to the question. Is accountability important?

Is it necessary? In Titus, I know we're going through a lot of verses, but in Titus 2, verse 11, a few more things here.

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodly and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.

Think about that. 2,000 years ago or so, this was written. And we're reading it today in 2025. Still means the same thing.

[35 : 11] And it's still this present world, right? Looking for that blessed hope and that glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

These things speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee. what's the point of speaking and exhorting and rebuking with all authority if there's no accountability?

There's no, there's really no point. We just play games. That would be playing church, I guess. Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Are we zealous after good works, after doing good and helping each other and blessing each other, loving each other? But Titus was told to speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority.

Not his own authority, but God's authority through God's word. Christ's likeness in our relationships.

[36 : 46] In John 13, Jesus said in verse 34, a new commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you.

That also love one another, that ye also love one another. by this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another.

You know, we've already, when we go into prisons or places like that, anywhere, like to witness, you know, we recognize that, you know, if we go in as a group of men, we recognize that we better be nice to each other.

We better not be angry at each other as we go in there and try to witness. Why is that? And it's real easy to get along for a couple days, but how is it in our community or in our churches when people aren't loving each other?

We lose our witness very quickly. And Jesus was concerned about that and told them, the disciples, by this shall all men know that you are mine, you're my disciples, I'm your teacher, they're going to know that by how you love each other.

[38 : 15] So how is it with us? Do we need a call to action?

Do we need to pray, Lord, make me humble? humble. You know, if we don't humble ourselves, God will humble us someday. Do we have that in the word?

Do we need to say, brothers, keep me or hold me accountable? Build relationships out of truth and grace.

love love us. Yes, iron sharpens iron, so man sharpens another. So much would change in the kingdom if men and women would humble themselves.

So much more grace is available to us, but it can only be received through humility, because God resists the proud, but he gives grace unto the humble.

[39 : 32] I had to think of marriages, and I almost preached a message on that today, but in this whole thing of grace, of humility, of pride, I spoke with a man yesterday for almost two hours.

about their marriage, and this morning I was just counting between my wife and I, and you know, I think every marriage at times has struggles.

We do. I'll just be honest. Sometimes we have to work through things, but when a marriage can't be worked through and brought to a better ground, then that's a struggling marriage, and right now there's at least five that I would say are desperate situations.

And this man I talked to yesterday would be there. And I basically just listened for the first hour or so of all the struggles, and he's not from here.

And he was a good brother, and he still is, but he just said, I'm wore out.

[40 : 55] I don't have the fire. I don't have the life. all I'm doing is trying to survive. And he's become pretty useless in the kingdom.

But a right relationship will always enhance your usefulness in the kingdom. Let me ask you this. Does your relationships, our relationships, young people, some of you are getting married or want to, and more of you are planning to, right?

That's your goal. That's everybody's goal, I would think. I mean, maybe not everybody, but usually that's what you think about. Maybe more than you should even. But anyway, God gives you those thoughts.

God puts that desire in us. So it's a godly thing. And we don't discourage that, right? in a right way.

[41 : 59] That's awesome. But if your relationships will hinder you in your relationship with God or God's people, then you have a serious problem according to the word of God.

And some of the things that right now that we see in some of these five marriages we're talking about, they seem impossible to work out.

I would say all of them. They seem impossible. They are impossible to man. And maybe, I mean, it's always either one person or both.

Sometimes it's just one. That just doesn't have any humility. humility. And the Bible says that strife cometh, how is that verse?

I don't have it here, but only through strife cometh what? Contention? Or is it through strife cometh contention, I think? Only through pride.

[43 : 09] Yes. Only through pride cometh contention. So it's often people just being too proud. And, you know, it is weary when people are just trying so hard.

And they want to, this one person just seems to go to the wrong source. And they can't agree. They can't even agree on where to go to get help.

You know. And stuff like that. So, all I can say is that, but God. But let it also be a warning to you younger ones.

That I believe that marriage is instituted by God. Bible says it clearly. It was God's idea. And it is, I told my wife, I think it's the most beautiful thing on earth.

It's the most, the closest probably thing on earth that we get to. that is close to heaven. If it's a good, solid marriage based on truth.

[44 : 17] But if it's the opposite, then the opposite can be true. It's the most painful thing. And then ultimately, the real issue with a broken marriage, a broken brotherhood, a broken church body, is the shame it brings to the name of Christ.

Christ. And the lack of, you know, there's no glory there for Jesus. And ultimately our lives are to glorify him. He deserves all the glory he can get out of our marriages, out of our brotherhood relationships.

Sisters, sisterhood relationships, same thing. Is God being glorified in our relationships? Or are we too self-centered and caring only about my thoughts and my feelings?

And that came out yesterday over and over. But we feel this. Are we, you know, yeah, feelings. And I finally said, you know, how about you just let the feeling stuff go?

Let's just look at truth. Just the simple truth of God's word. That's where the power is at. Is in those simple truths. The things that we already know.

[45 : 37] Are we living them out? The practical things like her and the children. There's nothing too practical. And he was very appreciative of that because some of these things become so complicated and so confusing.

I was getting confused after a while. I was like, let's just go to the simple things in the word of God. the things that we know are to be true. Husbands, love your wives.

Wives, see that you reverence, you know, those simple things. Compromise on what we know is true.

trying to deal with surface issues all the time, but never wanting to go to the root because it's too painful.

Almost always, and all these, at least the five I'm thinking about, the issue, the root issue nobody wants to talk about. Selfishness, rebellion against authority.

[46 : 58] Amen. And, then, you know, whether it's our marriage, whether it's our business, whether it's church, God doesn't, or how did I want to say?

Is God's blessing, can God bless, can His blessing rest upon us? I'll just say this, if we are a church that is going to struggle in relationships and continue, I'm not saying we don't have to work through things, we do because I'm here, right?

We have to work through things because I'm here. And, I think if we would all say that, yeah, that I need help too, then we can work through things.

But if relationships are strained long-term, can't be worked through, then I don't believe God will bless a church like that. I don't think His blessing can rest.

We can't be one. We can't because it's all God and it's His Spirit. It's who He is. it's His body. And it is crucial that we work through things.

[48 : 18] Not based on our feelings, our emotions only, but on truth. I know I'm talking very clearly and bluntly, but we need it.

I believe that's God's heart. That's my prayer this morning was that God would speak to us. Not just my words, but that God would speak to us in these areas and that we could bring more glory to Him.

He desires to be the one that gets all the praise, all the glory, whether it's marriage, whether it's church, wherever we're at, wherever we find ourselves at, in relationships.

If God is not being glorified, what is it about anyway? It's just man. It just becomes a thing of self. Let's remember, you cannot be accountable without humility, and you cannot be humble without accountability.

The Bible intertwines these two things, attributes, as one and the same. I trust that at least this in part will answer the question, that a young brother, young man asked me, what is accountability and is it necessary?

[49 : 44] Let's not focus much on how people do it wrong. Let's focus on what God would like to see. How would God like to see it?

How does God view it? What is his heart in these things? So often we spend so much time about picking apart how people do it wrong that we actually miss what God's heart is.

So let's just open our heart to God and ask him, how can I be an asset in this whole subject? How can I exhort,!

encourage? I told this brother, I said, you need to go and start ministering to people again. that thing that's dead in him needs to become alive again.

And that's what these broken relationships do. It brings a death whether it's in a marriage or a church. and we need outflow.

[50 : 56] We need to be giving. We need to be serving. That's where life comes from. If we block that and God can't use us, then how do we expect to have life?

Or God's blessing? Let's stand together. And I just want to close with saying, you know, if I've been a part of causing somebody to stumble or causing somebody to be discouraged or walk away from

God or the truth, that I am sorry and I want to be humble enough to talk to you.
And I think if we just all lift up our hearts to God in that way and say, maybe I haven't been an asset in my marriage very much or in the church.
Maybe I haven't been bringing something to the table. I've just been trying to take what I can get. You know, the taker heart versus the giving heart.
We can change that. God can change that if we're humble enough to admit it and to ask him. So let's pray. Father, we thank you this morning that you are good, that you are God, and that both marriage and both the church are all your idea.
[52 : 36] It's all your plan, and you did it so that your name would be glorified here upon the earth to get glory and to draw people, more people to yourself.
So Father, I just pray that you'd forgive us where we have failed you in these relationships here on earth. And help us, God, to just see what you see, to see the big picture.
Father, help us to be humble enough that we actually need each other. Father, just help us to be who you call us to be, to make our calling and our election sure, and that it's not just about me and Jesus, it's about me and your kingdom here on earth as well, because this is where you have us for now.
So Lord, help us to live according to your will, your plan, your purpose. Father, I pray for our young people here that, God, that you would encourage their hearts, inspire their hearts.
Give them a vision, Lord, for the church. Give them a vision for their future. Help them, Lord, to just be a surrendered vessel to you, but not only surrendered, but to be used by you, Lord, to be willing to step out of their comfort zone and do those things that bring glory to your name.
[54 : 13] Thank you for each of them, and I pray your blessing could rest upon them and upon each marriage represented here today, Lord. May your will be done, and may we go deeper with our Lord and Savior.
Thank you, Lord Jesus, for who you are. We pray in your name. Amen. Amen.