

# FINDING AND ESTABLISHING WORTHY HOMES

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Richie Kaa, prepared for the Presbytery fellowship word, 29 May 2022

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## **A new understanding of house to house**

In the coming months, we are looking forward to the launch of a program that will co-ordinate fellowship from house to house. It is our aim that we establish this program, but not with a roster first in mind, such that every home is pragmatically allocated to a group.

Rather, we are endeavouring to *honour the principle of a worthy home*, which the seventy messengers were specifically sent to find, and then establish, with a view that these homes would be those who would *labour to bring in the great harvest*.

## **The twelve and the seventy**

During His earthly ministry, Jesus identified and established two groups of messengers: the twelve, and the seventy. Luk 9:10.

These two messenger groups were *part of the presbytery*. It is important that we make that point, nice and clear, right up front. These two groups were part of the presbytery, which was described as 'the angel', or *aggelos*, of the church.

They *brought the gospel of peace to worthy houses* or households within the Christian community, and to households in the world.

## **The ministry of the seventy**

In our present day, the specific ministry of the seventy within Christ's lampstand administration is to focus 'the light of the gospel of grace' that is ministered by those with ascension gift grace.

Furthermore, they are to be sent out to minister as 'lambs among wolves'. These are key phrases that you will know, and you will remember.

We are highlighting these again in order to focus on what we aim for here, this morning. With our focus upon finding a worthy home, we will begin by considering the work of the seventy, with a particular focus upon how they were sent by Christ, to find and establish worthy homes.

## **Are you a worthy house?**

To begin with, I want to provoke you with a very simple question right up front. It would not be like me to provoke you, would it? I am talking to every family, every couple; indeed, every person, who is hearing my voice today.

My question is this: 'Are you a worthy home?'

That is a simple question to remember. But I would love you to write that down, because I do believe the Lord wants us to give attention to this question as part of our daily devotions; as part of our prayer in our families; as part of the discussion at the *agape* meal, both today, and in the coming week.

I believe that the Lord is really wanting us to focus on what this means, and what this 'looks like' for us.

Then I want to assure you that it is *in the heart of God* that every home becomes a worthy home. Every home becomes a worthy home! This is the heart of God toward us.

It is not that there are some who are 'sub-worthy'. It is the heart of God that every household is a worthy home. It is important that we give urgent attention to this matter.

The Lord does not only desire that you find a Christian community, a place where you can be gathered, and cared for, and connected to.

His *great desire* is that you take *your place* within His community, and be *joined* to a network of houses where you are doing *your sanctified works*, as part of a worthy house network. That is His great desire for every one of us.

## **Uncleanness hinders us**

The primary issue that will hinder any home from becoming a worthy home is the issue of *uncleanness*.

A person becomes unclean when they *reject the word of Christ*, and give their ear to an alternative word, or an alternative conversation. That is the definition of uncleanness - rejecting the word of Christ, and then preferring an alternative word.

This causes us to be vulnerable to the impact and the oppression of the unclean. Alternatively, a person is described as being 'clean' through their obedience to the word of Christ.

Outside of their obedience to the headship of Christ, every person is inevitably subjected to oppression by unclean spirits, leading to all

manner of physical, emotional, relational, medical, and psychological ailments. We could add more to that, couldn't we? I want to give the sense that it is a broad and all-encompassing arena of ailments that we are talking about.

The apostle Paul further developed this point by explaining that many in the church had become weak - let me add there, 'weak in faith'; sick, and let me also add 'sin-sick'; and they even began to 'die spiritually', because they participated in the *agape* meal in an unworthy manner.

When we say, 'weak in faith', the capacity for *obedience* is hindered.

When we refer to being 'sin-sick', we mean the effects of all of the addictions, the temptations, and the allures of the lust of the flesh, that are both out there in the world, calling to us, or that we ourselves are drawn to.

Then, 'spiritual death' means that we have lost our consciousness and awareness of the things that the Lord is saying, and the things that the Lord is doing, right now.

It is not His desire for anyone that we should walk and live this way, because it does not sound much like life. The reason this occurs, of course, is because we participate in the *agape* meal in an unworthy manner.

### **Uncleanness comes from rejecting the word of God**

There is the word 'worthy', regarding our houses, that we are focusing on; but there is an 'unworthy' way in which we can participate.

Paul made it crystal clear that Christian people were coming under the judgement of God because of their uncleanness. I want us to connect the *judgement* of God to *uncleanness*. Perhaps we have not connected it like that before.

But we do need to register that uncleanness is the rejection of His word. It is the priority and preference for another word, which is why we come under the judgement of God.

Those ones had become joined to *another conversation* and were unable to be joined to the word of Christ and its fellowship.

When we are joined to another conversation, we give our sympathy to another cause. We give our energy and our priority to another matter. It is

not possible for us to serve two masters. We simply cannot serve two masters.

### **Our participation in the *agape* meal**

This is the matter that the Lord is highlighting for us. When we give ourselves to another word, we cannot 'discern the body', and are unable to understand and participate in the *agape* meal according to our sanctification, in the place where the Father had planted us.

I want you to register here that, when we talk about 'participating in an unworthy manner', we mean an inability to discern the body.

We do not hear. We do not understand. We do not register the illumination of the word. We do not know how to speak at the *agape* meal.

If you are quiet at the *agape* meal; if there is no initiative in your house toward establishing an *agape* meal - an initiative to have people in your home, where you can host and gather ones to the word and honour the word - can I suggest that the Lord wants your attention here, this morning? The Lord wants your attention.

There is no such thing as a *quiet* son of God at the *agape* meal. Can you say 'Amen' if you believe that is true? Amen! You were a bit quiet then. We have to get our voices open here, don't we?

### **God gives us over to our choices**

God gave them over to the consequences of the familiar and unclean spirits that they had prioritised.

This same principle remains true among us today. That is not a statement of this place. That is not a statement of our fellowship. That is a statement of *the church* at large.

We do need to register that the Lord wants to come, and He wants to call us, as His church, to be made ready. We sang that song right up front, didn't we? He desires that we be made ready.

### **Paul revealed the difference between worthy and unworthy homes**

It is worth noting that it was the apostle Paul who coined the term 'worthy' or 'unworthy', in relation to a person's response to the word.

Whilst ministering in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas grew bold, and said, 'It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first.' He spoke to the Jews. 'It was necessary that the word

[that we carry] should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.'

By implication, a worthy home is counted worthy of eternal life because they *receive* and *believe* the word, and are *joined the fellowship of the word*.

I want you to hear that statement: 'joined to the fellowship of the word'. To hear the word, and to agree with the word, is not enough. We know that, don't we? It is not enough to be 'a supporter' of the word.

He wants us to be ones who are joined to *the conversation of faith* which the word provokes. He wants our mouths open. He wants us to bring a confession of faith concerning the things that He has said.

But more than that, He wants us to be ones who minister the life and grace of the word to one another, building up His body, in love.

### **The sending of the seventy continues in our time**

Many among us will need to upgrade our thinking concerning the sending of the seventy, and the specific work they were sent to achieve. A common misconception is that the seventy were sent as part of a one-off, short-term, evangelistic initiative to prepare various homes for Christ's impending visitation to their towns. Luk 10.

At worst, this will assume that the work of the seventy ceased at the conclusion of Christ's earthly ministry. But let me be very clear. This is not the case. Rather, we must understand that the work of the seventy, which is to find and establish worthy homes, is a present and continuous labour that is active among us, even right here, today.

### **Worthy homes are the basis of a lampstand church**

The homes that they establish form the basis of a lampstand church in each city or region, in order to gather the harvest, noting that the harvest season is for the duration of the church age.

The sending of the seventy was, and continues to be, a key feature of Christ's administration that He initiated prior to His crucifixion.

### **How the 'seventy' messengers are sent**

In the Gospel of Luke, we are given the specific instructions of the sending of the seventy. The point that I want to highlight is that Christ instructed them to begin by looking for 'a son of peace'.

For some reason, over the years, as I have meditated on these precious Scriptures, I assumed that these messengers were knocking on the doors of random homes and engaging with people who were complete strangers to them. I even think that I might have gone out myself and done that kind of activity at some point!

But when you read, 'go your way', I suggest that they were not sent to a location, but they were charged with a *mandate*. The actual location of where they ended up was probably the cities or towns in which they lived, in order that they might connect with the people whom they already knew.

This is not unlike presbyteries of today who have been sent to find sons of peace, both in the congregation, and in the world, with their work to then establish them as worthy homes. That makes sense, doesn't it?

It is not going to random places of people who are not known; rather, it is seeking sons of peace. Sons of peace here, today.

We look to see the culture of fellowship established in your home so that you might grow to become a worthy home, and to be joined in order to do the work that is yours to do.

### **Sons of peace**

Jesus said, 'And when you enter a home, first say, "Peace to this house." And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it.'

A son of peace is a person who welcomes the messengers of Christ and willingly receives their word and its fellowship into their household.

Remember that *fellowship* is the outcome of a person *walking in the light*, which is surely aiding and supporting illumination.

They honour and value the fellowship of the word of present truth that the messengers carry to them, knowing that illumination will unlock the implications of the word for their home.

I want us to register here that *access* to the word - access to the word itself - is not enough. The Lord desires that we join the fellowship that that word establishes.

### **From sacramentalism to *agape***

This is the focal sense of the season that the Lord has been calling us out of, and into. It is *out* of sacramentalism, and *into* the *agape* meal fellowship.

This a culture; it is not an activity. It is a way of life, and it is a mindset. It is an attitude that we carry as sons of God. It is the way in which we wake up in the morning. It is the way in which we go to sleep. It is the way that the Lord establishes among us.

The sacramental mode allowed me to be independent. I could sit there, and I could take of the elements, and I could work through and process in my own time and in my own thinking, the things that I thought, and the things that I could imagine.

The Lord does not desire that any one of us should be lost in that space. He is joining us to a *conversation that He has initiated*. He has initiated the conversation. This is the great desire of the Lord.

### **A son of peace delights in fellowship**

Naturally, a son of peace will be eager to express care and hospitality toward the messengers who have brought the fellowship of the word to their home.

The point I want you to hear is that a son of peace regards the visitation of these messengers as a great privilege. It is a great privilege!

They are not threatened. It might become awkward. It might become uncomfortable, but not because the messenger is carrying the intent to harm.

There may be wounding, but it is not wounding to harm. Rather, it is the wounding of a faithful friend to see you freed; to see your eyes opened; to see healing come; to see you walk again; to have your ears opened for you to function, and for you to take your place.

This sense of privilege was conveyed by Christ when He instructed the seventy to remain in that house eating and drinking such things as that household was *giving* to them.

### **A new understanding of hospitality**

Please note that the hospitality I am referring to is the kind that *fosters fellowship*.

When we hear the word 'hospitality', it can sometimes provoke us to prepare our best quality meal, and our best table setting. All of that can run to a projection. All of that can run merely to performance.

The Lord is not interested in 'the performance' of hospitality. He greatly desires that we are joined to the *agape* culture, which is where we foster fellowship. This is what He wants to teach us. This is what He wants to show to us.

A worthy home demonstrates that the household has received the word and is joined to its fellowship, and then multiplies this same fellowship with Christ's messengers.

### **The labour of a worthy home**

Jesus referred to hospitality as 'an appropriate wage for their worthy labour'.

But what is their actual labour? Let us look at this.

It is, first, to 'eat such things as are set before them'. I do not mind that as labour!

But let us be clear. This is the acknowledgement that they had *been received as Christ's messengers*.

The joy of the seventy is made complete when they hear a home *speak by faith and confess the very same word* that they have carried to them.

They do not simply repeat the word, but speak with *illumination*. They appropriately apply the word that they have come to minister, with an understanding of its application in their home, in their marriage, in their family. That is a beautiful expression, isn't it?

This opens the opportunity for the home to receive *healing for those who are sick*. We connect those who are sick as being those who have been subject to unclean spirits.

Then it is to *affirm that the kingdom of God that had come near to them*, in the ministry of the seventy. It is to affirm that the word is now in the mouths and in the hearts of family members.

It is not enough for the word to only 'come near' to you. Today, in your attendance here, the word

has indeed come near, hasn't it! But it is not enough for it *only* to come near.

Additionally, it must be 'in your mouth and in your heart'. Rom 10:8.

It becomes our culture. It becomes our conduct and our conversation. This is the great desire of the Lord as His word is expressed.

### **Going from house to house as worthy messengers in fellowship**

Jesus then said to the seventy messengers, as He sent them, 'Do not go from house to house.'

That sounds wrong, doesn't it? Do not go from house to house. I thought that house to house gathering was a good thing. So why were the seventy not free to move from house to house?

The simple answer is that *their work was not yet complete*. There was a work to do. The messengers were engaged in the specific *labour* of establishing the household in order that the house be made useful in the administration of Christ.

The liberty and initiative to move from house to house belongs to those homes that are *already established as worthy homes*.

Once a home is established as worthy, they are joined to a network that becomes a house to house fellowship across a region.

That means that such homes will be entrusted to *remain in fellowship*, inviting the messenger to bring the message. They are also able to invite other households to join an *agape* meal in their worthy house, to also have fellowship with the messengers of Christ as part of the sheepfold.

### **Worthy homes receive the word, even if the messenger is not in their homes**

I want to highlight here that that does not necessarily mean that the one who is carrying the word is, literally, in your home.

When you are a worthy home, you have understood how the word is sent. The authority that is carried to you by that word then activates you to be the worthy home that you have been established to be.

### **The call to be worthy**

I will now move on to *the call to be worthy*. The word of the Lord at this time is to see *every* home established in the culture of fellowship, and to

learn to carry the fellowship of present truth from house to house.

These homes will be joined in one Spirit with the Lord and with His presbytery, in a proper offering model where they will put the body of Christ ahead of themselves, and where they will put His body ahead of their own family. This will demonstrate that 'blood is not thicker than water' in the context of this gospel.

Furthermore, as ones who have come onto the ground of fellowship, and as God-fearers, these ones will reorder the priorities of their homes to honour the word, and to exemplify the culture.

### **Three features of a worthy home**

I would like to show you to a great example of a worthy home, although I will not say much about it. It is the household of Mary, Martha and Lazarus.

You know the account, probably very well and, no doubt, this will be one that the children can follow up with mum and dad.

I want to quickly highlight this household. There are three key features of this home which are represented in a worthy home.

First, *the messenger was received*.

It is the priority, and the urgency, to give full attention to the messenger as he comes. We see this in Mary, don't we? We see this in her demeanour and her ordering, and in the priority that she gave to Jesus when He came.

Second, it is that they were *given to hospitality*.

I love the account where Martha was frustrated with Mary because there was a jarring and a misunderstanding of the place of hospitality and of receiving the word. What a lovely account that is! Jesus helped Martha and adjusted her to appreciate her place and the motivation of her heart, in accordance with her sanctification. It was absolutely proper. Hospitality was appropriate, but she needed to know where and how that belonged within the context of her house that Jesus visited. Mary was, apparently, not helping - and she should have been. And yet, Mary, as Jesus said, 'Chose the better thing.'

Of course, it is *the testimony of exanastasis*, or resurrection life, that is the third key feature of a worthy home. And that immediately draws our

attention to and focuses us toward a household that is absolutely *joined to the offering and sufferings of Christ*.

We must never misunderstand or confuse the fact that everything is built upon us being worthy, *in Him*. He is the One who is worthy, and we are found worthy in Him, joined to His offering journey each day.

### **Finding a son of peace**

I want to ensure that no-one sitting here or viewing with us today assumes that 'a son of peace' refers only to someone who is new to the church because that was the way it was spelled out to the seventy when they began their ministry. They were told to go and look for a son of peace. Luk 10:6.

In fact, you may have been sitting among us for many years, even born into this place as I was, but you can be a son of peace *today*. Unless you are a son of peace, you will never become a worthy home. I hope that doesn't 'jar' with you.

I want you to hear that the seventy were sent to find a son of peace, because there was work that the seventy were sent to do with these ones.

And what was that work? It was to find them and to *establish them in the culture of fellowship*, so that they could be joined to the great work of *gathering in the great harvest*.

The distinctive feature of a son of peace is that they are choosing this word. They are choosing those who carry this word, and its fellowship. And they are choosing to invite them over the threshold of their front door.

I want you to register that there is a significant choice that we must make to invite the ones carrying the word, and that fellowship, over the threshold.

As we welcome these ones into our home, we are welcoming them into the context where the gospel will make its greatest impact - where you live, how you converse, what you watch, what you listen to. This is the culture of who you are, and Christ desires to get right in to the place where you live - your private domain.

Surrendering every condition and removing any impediment to open-hearted fellowship, a worthy home accountably invites the messenger into the private domain where they live. They are inviting

*the light of fellowship* to fill their house, and they are no longer motivated to protect or defend their position or projections.

### **Discerning a house of peace**

When the seventy went looking for sons of peace, they said, 'Peace be upon this house.' I have often marvelled at that phrase.

What would you say if I knocked on your door, and said, 'Peace be upon your house.'

'What? Just say hello', you would say. It is an unusual phrase. I don't think the Lord is asking us to say that.

Rather, the Lord is asking for us *to discern if our house is a house of peace*.

Are you a son of peace? Do you desire to invite the word, and the ones who carry the fellowship of that word, into your home? Will you welcome them?

### **An open-hearted response to the fellowship of the word coming to our home**

We had a season of communion visitation. Who could forget that; what a precious time it was.

Can I ask you, without you having to make a statement out loud or rhetorical question, how did you go when you were offered to have brethren come and visit you? Was it something of a novelty?

How did you go with it? Did you think, 'What business do they have coming into my house?'

Did you find it intimidating? Did you find it awkward? Did you register that there was something a little unnatural about what was occurring? How did you go with it?

I know that, over time, people became more comfortable. Over time, in my family, we became much more settled even to request prayer.

But I want us to consider what our response was. You may not have offered an excuse, but did you have an excuse in your heart? Did you have a wall up, guarding? Were you nervous? What was running in you?

The Lord wants us to register that we be open-hearted and open-doored. I just made that up, 'open-doored'. It means that we receive the word and the fellowship that He is sending to us. This is what He desires in our lives.

## **We can remove ourselves from the book of life**

On returning to Jesus, the seventy reported that even the demons or unclean spirits were subject to them in Christ's name. Luk 10:17.

Christ then re-mandated the seventy for the duration of the church age and gave them 'authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing, by any means, would hurt [them]'. Luk 10:19.

That's quite a statement, isn't it?

Jesus then clarified, 'Do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.' Luk 10:20.

Jesus confirmed that their obedient participation in His administration was multiplying their mina, increasing the scope of their authority in relation to their works.

This also proved that they were gaining access to the tree of life, which is the book of life in which their names were written.

And Jesus was saying, 'I know you.' He was affirming them.

Remember, there was a company of folk who were casting our demons in His name, and Jesus said to them, 'I never knew you.' That's a haunting, hollow statement, 'I never knew you,' and yet they were doing something that looked very similar to the seventy. Mat 7:21-23.

They were independent, disconnected people who, in the name of Jesus, went out and began to define their own work, their names; and they began to actually remove themselves entirely from the book of life.

What a terrible situation these ones found themselves in!

## **An acceptable response and repentance are required**

For us, though, it ought to be a great reason for confidence, because Jesus was affirming the work of the seventy, particularly in relation to addressing unclean spirits.

Their ongoing work was that every home would be established as a worthy home, which required helping households to identify and address their uncleanness.

Please, be clear on this point: the seventy are not being sent to address, in the sense of exorcism, the unclean and the familiar spirits of your home.

That's not their job. No-one comes to exorcise a demon from your house or from your heart. That's not the way in which the word is being proclaimed to us.

The Lord desires that we each be joined to a fellowship of faith where we, ourselves, can accountably address the matters that we have allowed into our culture.

An *accountable response* and *repentance* are required.

## **The Lord's hand in cleansing our homes**

During the recent season, the Lord has come among us in a most sovereign manner. Who would agree with that?

He has come among us in a most sovereign manner, among our marriages, among our families, and among His church. There is a very real sense that these abodes have been swept clean and put in order.

Would you bear witness to the sense that much has been swept clean and put in order?

It's like the shake-up of lockdown has tidied us up and given us an opportunity to re-order and start again; and I think that's a good thing. I don't think there is anything wrong with that. In fact, I think the Lord is very happy with that.

To be honest with you, I like things when they are swept and in order. I quite like that, and I'm being quite literal. It feels right, doesn't it?

## **The unclean spirit will return**

This is how it should be, but we must understand that the unclean spirit that has gone out, will eventually return. Will you register that thought today?

The unclean, which has been unsettled out by the complete and dramatic change of program and change of routine because of what the Lord has done among us, will eventually return.

And we do need to be very sober on this point. We need to take this point very seriously.

I was commenting what a wonderful season that we have had in these last 6 months, and noted a couple of areas. What an amazing breakthrough

we are seeing; what amazing healing; what recovery!

But let us make sure that we understand the principle, which is recorded in Luke Chapter 11 and verses 25 through to 26.

If the word of God has not become your culture, and there has been no overcoming of the familiar or the unclean, then the state of your marriage, the state of your family, and even the state of the church, will be far worse than the beginning.

It's a very sobering point, isn't it? We must understand that 'the unclean shall not pass' there. Isa 35:8. Only the redeemed shall come. This means that the unclean will not gain access to the tree of life.

### **The unclean expelled, and the harvest comes in through our door**

Furthermore, the elect are supposed to be a *wall*, or a *protection*, and ones will come in and go out through the gates, or doors, that are in the wall.

It is *through your door that the harvest is gathered in*, and it is *through your door that the unclean are expelled*. And there is a fair amount of work that we need to do to get our houses ready.

The Lord is coming, by His word, to clean us up so that our children are sanctified and holy; so that they are not subject to familiar or unclean spirits.

Many of us will have to 'up our game' in relation to what we engage with, what we entertain and what we join and accommodate in our homes. We have to be much more deliberate, and much more accountable in these areas.

It is not enough to take the *laissez-faire*, easy going approach; 'She'll be right!' That is not enough; it will not work any longer.

Why? Because the Lord is opening our eyes and making it very clear that there is now obedience set before us to.

### **We need the Lord's wisdom to 'see' demonic activity**

I don't mean that we are to be cold, callous, rude, and every other word that might imply that, but I believe that the Lord wants to give us wisdom for the way that we are to navigate through some of these difficult situations. And I believe that the Lord is giving us wisdom.

In simple terms, we have to stop being naive and gullible, because no demon is your friend. Would you agree with that; no demon is your friend?

Now, our greatest issue is that *we don't actually believe there is a demon*.

That's our greatest issue, because the medical vernacular, modern psychology, and other professions, cloud and cloak the reality of demonic activity in this world. We have created a different way of viewing these things.

Will we open our eyes to these realities? Will we allow the Lord to penetrate our heart and cause us to see what actually is at play here?

The Lord wants for us to see clearly on these matters. This means that no-one who has walked away and rejected the word of the gospel, who is now being oppressed by an unclean spirit, has your best interests in mind.

They are only ever motivated to enslave you to their agenda, because a demon is always 'a victim'. The unclean is always running a victim agenda. Will you please note that?

### **A victim response points to a familiar spirit**

Even within your own familiar ways, will you please register the moment when you are 'put on the back foot' because someone comes to offend you, and the victim reflex in you is immediately engaged.

The victim reflex will take you directly to the familiar. And if you will register how your victim reflex works, and when you register where it takes you in your reaction, it will help you to identify what your familiar spirit is.

This is what the Lord has for us now in this coming season. He wants us to *see* clearly. Do not 'put your head in the sand' and hide from this. There is too much depending on this now.

It is in our houses, it is with our children, it is with our young people - it is the work of the Lord *to gather in His great harvest*. We must be serious and give urgent attention to this matter.

### **We are cleansed by obedience to the word**

Are you sitting here today as one who is bound to an unclean spirit? Or are you subject to the agenda of a person with an unclean spirit?



Let me remind you that your 'attendance' here does not make you clean. Coming to church each week will not clean you up.

Can I let you know how you are cleaned? It is only by *obedience to His word* that will you be cleaned.

Some of us are warring every day with a desire to be obedient, but the Lord is saying that that will be nearly impossible until we give attention to the familiar and the unclean.

That is the impediment. And our *accountability* is to give attention to it because, by the way, you are *not* a victim of the unclean and the familiar.

You have to accountably take ownership of it because you took hold of it. And you have to turn in repentance and mourn for the things that you have chosen.

You might look back to your dad or great grandfather, and whatever was before, but that is a pointless exercise, because they have their own accountability and journey of choice to make. So we do need to get serious on this point.

### **Deliverance from unclean spirits depends on recovering right relational order**

The deliverance of a household from unclean spirits is dependent upon the recovery of relational order within the family and within the church.

Within the *family* and within the *church*! I want you to register those two elements.

Through His word, the Lord teaches us how to relate with Him, with His messengers and within our own family.

This particular ministry initiative is described in the Scripture as 'the ministry of Elijah'. This prophetic ministry began with John the Baptist, and continues in every generation, through the presbytery of a lampstand church.

'He will also go before Him [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elijah, to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children," and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.' Luk 1:17.

What a beautiful passage - 'to make ready a people'.

### **Cleansing is dependent on repentance**

Accordingly, it would be an error to reject the word of the cross and, instead, to seek for a church leader to take authority over an unclean spirit through the action of exorcism.

This is because the Lord requires that we *accountably participate in addressing the unclean spirits*.

Cleansing is dependent upon repentance. Will you write that down for me today? *Cleansing is dependent upon repentance*.

The truth is that the fellowship of Christ's offering is the only way in which we can be delivered from the unclean spirits. This is the mercy of the Lord.

As the prophet Zechariah stated, 'In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.' Zec 13:1.

Therefore, the work of the seventy is to join every home to the conversation of faith, so that every son of God within that home can 'present their body' as 'a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God'. Rom 12:1.

Prior to the word of Christ bringing illumination to us, the spiritual oppression within our family will remain hidden from our understanding.

Can I just let you in on this helpful secret? No amount of *thinking* will help you to identify the familiar. It is so familiar that you *cannot see it*.

That is helpful straight away, because we are completely dependent upon the mercy of the Lord to come and meet us with His *illumination*. And we are believing today that, as the word is being proclaimed, and as the song of the Lord is being sung, and as we participate together in the fellowship of the word, He is desiring to give you illumination.

He does not hinder illumination; He desires to give that to you *today*, because these dynamics are so familiar to us.

### **Processing dysfunctional relationship in families**

The apostle Peter described these familiar ways as 'the aimless conduct received by tradition from our forefathers'. 1Pe 1:18.

So, how does the Lord bring to light the hidden things of darkness so that they might be cleansed?

It is helpful and necessary to *walk in the light of Christ's word in fellowship* with our families, even to three generations. This is because we have grown up with the traditions which we have received from them.

This is not to be pursued with the view of blaming anyone but, rather as an exercise for the purpose of processing the dysfunctional ways of relating which have made us vulnerable to spiritual oppression.

Do you see the outcome of what we are saying here today? There needs to be some conversations, some discussions - the opportunity to reflect and speak openly and transparently with one another.

Then it will require every individual to renounce these familiar spirits so that they are no longer loyal to them.

### **Receiving the capacity to mourn and repent**

Finally, *the word of Christ also exposes the thoughts and motivations of our hearts*. It reveals our accountability for living according to, or under, the dysfunctional relationships that resulted in oppression.

The apostle Paul explained that coming under the dominion of unclean spirits is the result of presenting our faculties as 'instruments of unrighteousness'. Rom 6:13.

What do we mean by 'faculties'? The most obvious one would be our mind, wouldn't it? Just our 'think time'.

What are we meditating on? What do we fill our mind with? Do we have control over that; or is the mind running us? Is that mind chatter taking over? We each have our own journey with this, but we all know that is a significant factor.

The motivations of our heart are exposed so that we can mourn alone for our relational dystrophy; for the damage that we have done in the ways that we have related.

The Lord wants us to see these things so that we will mourn. As we mourn - and I want you just to hear this - we are blessed with *the capacity to repent* of our sin and uncleanness.

What a great blessing - the capacity to repent!

By faith, we are able to obey from the heart the word of our sonship, and to submit to the lordship of Christ.

### **Renouncing the familiar before marriage**

Now I will make a comment concerning the bonding phase of a couple who are approaching marriage.

During this time, they will need to be delivered from the familiar and unclean spirits that are evident within their family history and upbringing.

Young men and women who are in faith for marriage in the coming season and seasons ahead, I want you to know that this is an important part of our journey of care towards you and of the nature of our counsel.

This will require a season of fellowship with your families, and with the messenger, so that your loyalty to familiar spirits can be 'unmasked' and forsaken.

You will need to renounce your former loyalties to these spiritual dynamics, so that the oppression of these familiar and unclean spirits is not taken with you into your marriage culture.

If you fail to give due attention to this matter through devotional connection to Christ, the curse that is associated with the spiritual oppression will be multiplied once you make covenant together before the Lord.

What a sober point; but what great mercy that the Lord is now showing us this, so that we can *walk in the fellowship of His love*.

However, if they do give due attention to this matter, a man's submission to Christ, and a woman's submission to her husband, will enable the blessing of Abraham to be multiplied within their household.

Many of you will be aware of the encouragement that Victor Hall gave at the recent Easter seminar in Brisbane.

It was for husbands and wives to pray and fast, and to lay their hands on their young people, in order that the unclean and the familiar be addressed, and that there be an overcoming of familiar ways so that their home is neither 'an easy target', nor 'a ticking time bomb' where, at any moment, something could 'blow'.

I encourage every home to give attention to this word.

