

# THE NATURE OF CONFESSION AND TESTIMONY

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Peter Hay, Easter Seminar, Saturday 4 April 2026

Transcription of recording, slightly edited

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It is a great privilege to be together, and a great delight to be fellowshiping in the word together. I want to pass greetings on to all those who are joining us via live stream, right across Australia and also throughout Asia, and of course our brethren in Papua New Guinea. I am a little bit disappointed to tell you that I am speaking in my shoes and in long pants. I actually felt quite liberated teaching and preaching for 10 hours in bare feet and shorts.

I am going to be speaking today out of the song that Kane wrote. It was beauty! It was quite a joy to see the rhythm section absolutely owning that song. I am going to be talking about the nature of confession and testimony, this being the culture of our conversation (or the conduct) that belongs to those who are gaining entry into the Paradise of God, and who are eating from the tree of life. That is where we are going to be focusing today.

We have been learning over this season that the kingdom of God belongs to those who receive and live by the commands of the King. The kingdom of God belongs to those who live by the commands of Christ the King and, because His word is a command to us, it ministers faith as we receive it. That faith enables us to believe and to obey as citizens of the kingdom of God. I will make the point that we have made many times - but it is important to not forget it: the evidence of believing is obeying. There is not a belief without obeying.

His word is a command; it ministers to us faith, and we demonstrate that faith by believing and obeying as citizens of the kingdom. The reason that we can obey the command of the King is because when He speaks His word, it speaks righteousness into existence in us. We were delighting last week in the reality that the same word that spoke light into existence, is the word that is being shone into your heart and my heart today if you will receive it. The Lord dignifies us with choice as the word is being proclaimed, and His word is full of power to accomplish His purpose; but we need to receive it. The way that we receive it is going to be demonstrated in a particular form of conversation. As the word is

speaking righteousness into existence within us, the question we have to ask is, 'What does that look like? What does it mean for the word to proclaim righteousness into existence?' It means that by the Holy Spirit, this word then becomes the expression of our identity and life as a new creation. The word that is being proclaimed to you now, if you will receive it; if you will believe it; if you will confess it, it is speaking that obedience in you, and it becomes the expression of your identity. The same word becomes a unique expression of your sonship. It is the same word, but it is like it is being multiplied by the myriads of people who are hearing it. That sounds like 'the voice of many waters'. You are part of the voice of many waters because of the way you first received the word. It then becomes the expression of your identity and life as a new creation.

Another way of saying that is that we are exercising the authority that belongs to our name as a son of God. If you want to know what righteousness being spoken into existence in you looks like, it looks like you beginning to exercise the authority that belongs to your sonship.

Right here, we are not to become deceived. The authority of your sonship is not the authority for self-expression. The authority of your sonship is the same authority that Jesus Christ had. What did He say His authority was? He said, 'I have authority [or power] to lay My life down and to take it up again. This command I have received from My Father.' If you are receiving the authority of your sonship, the authority and power you are receiving is the authority and power to lay your life down. Your obedience looks like revealing somebody else. That is going to be in the context of your marriage; in the context of your family and in the context of house to house as we gather as congregations together. That is what righteousness in existence looks like. It looks like that authority. It is the same authority that Christ the Son of Man demonstrated. It is the power to lay our lives down and the power to take it up again according to a command. If it is according to a command (the power to lay life down and the power to take it up again), it means that laying down life and

taking it up again is an obedience, because it was according to a command. We see that obedience as a son of God is the expression of love. Jesus said, 'For greater love has no man than this, than to lay his life down for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.' This laying of life down and taking it back up again is the culture of the kingdom of God.

What we are going to look at today is what the conversation and conduct of this culture look like. We have sung it today, and we are going to unpack this verse in terms of how we are to speak to one another, and then how that speech is to proceed beyond our community into the world. The word of faith that we receive is to be first in your mouth and then in your heart. When it is in our mouth and in our heart, it is producing the fruit of righteousness in us; but it is also producing the fruit of righteousness in those who are hearing us. What a privilege that is - when it is in your mouth and in your heart.

These two expressions of the word - mouth and heart - they are the evidence of our citizenship in the kingdom of God as a son of light and as a son of the day. Let us read this key passage. This is Romans chapter 10 verses 8 to 9. It says, 'But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth [We are connecting the word in our mouth to a *confession*] and in your heart" [The word in your heart is the expression of a *testimony*. That is because your heart is the meeting place of your being - body, soul and spirit. If it is in your heart, it means everything about you (your identity and your name) is expressing that word. It is testifying of it. You are a witness of it. It is first in your mouth as a confession, then in your heart as a testimony] (that is the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth... [the word in your mouth has to be confessed] ...if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus... [What does it mean to confess the Lord Jesus? It is much more than just saying that Jesus is your Lord, or that acknowledging that Jesus is the Lord. If you are confessing with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, you are confessing that the command of your King concerning you is true. Can you see that? If you are confessing that Jesus Christ is your Lord, you are confessing that His word to you is a command and it is true. That is what it means to confess. You are confessing what is true] ... if you

confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.'

We know of course that to be saved is not a position; it is not a static point of realisation. To be saved is a progressive attainment upon a pathway that Christ, who is the substance of your sonship and the substance of your faith, has pioneered for you. If you are confessing and you are believing, you will be walking in this way. To journey on the pathway of salvation is to walk in the light of the word. We are talking about a pathway of salvation; we are journeying on that pathway. To journey on that pathway is to walk in the light of the word. Many people claim to participate in this fellowship. We know that if you walk in the light of the word, you will have fellowship with one another. Many of us would say we are participating in this fellowship. However, for some people, their engagement with the word and the content of their conversation (particularly in *agape* settings) reveal a different motive. It is a different conversation.

For example, when we are sitting down having our *agape* meal together, whether it is in our house as a family, or whether it is from house to house, or when we gather publicly, some people often prioritise their own devotional focus or burden as they reflect with their spouse or friends. They have their own thoughts about different things, and it is their own devotional; and that is what is prioritised in the conversation. Others commentate on the word, communicating their own recollections of notable points or their reflections on a point that they believe is relevant to their life (but usually it is relevant to someone else's life). It is commentary. Often, these expressions (or the way that our conversation happens) are identified as, 'Yes, I am testifying.' I am either testifying of my own sort of burden, or I am testifying of something that I have thought about as I have been listening. This is not testimony because, as we have just read, testimony should follow confession. If what we are sharing is not coming after a confession, then it is not a testimony, which is the evidence of believing from the heart. Can you see that the content of our conversation is very important? This is not testimony, for testimony follows confession.

Here is my next key point about testimony: Testimony is demonstrated by a new conversation and conduct. Something new. It is the evidence of 'Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your heart.' You are able to forget what lies behind and reach forward to what belongs to today. We should have confession preceding testimony, and if we have a testimony, it is going to be the expression of something new. Now the most basic foundation of fellowship is confession. As I was thinking about this, I registered that this is true in the fellowship of Yahweh Himself. The Father confesses. He confessed, 'You are My son, today I have begotten You.' He is confessing something true that belongs to the word of Their Covenant. The Son - He confesses. He says, 'I will declare Your name in the midst of my brethren.' He is revealing the Father in a fellowship. The Holy Spirit is confessing when He is taking what belongs to the Father and the Son and makes it known to us. Can you see that confession (let us be clear) is not fundamentally just about your terrible deeds. Confession is the proclamation of what is true, and it is actually fundamental to God's expression of fellowship Himself.

The most basic foundation of fellowship is confession. Confession is the expression or declaration of the truth in the light of the word of present truth. If confession is what is true, it is going to be in relation to the word of present truth. The word of present truth is a whole season of the word. Let us be clear. I am not suggesting every time you are hearing something there is a new confession, although there might be. What I am saying is that within a season where the Holy Spirit is meeting us, there is a word coming, and we are to apply ourselves to that word and we are to share the illumination that we are receiving in the season. Every season should have a confession to it. The word of present truth is a season of the word. Confession will be the inevitable fruit of our application to a word in a season of present truth.

Think about it this way: Confession is the response that is necessary to the word that is coming to us that calls into existence what does not exist. The word is coming; it is calling us and it is actually addressing us in relation to the sonship glory we are to reveal today. If you do not confess that that word is true, that word

which has the power to become true in you will not be given to you. It has to be in your mouth as a confession, so that then it is in your heart as an overflow of expression.

The beginning of our application to the word that leads to confession is actually the demeanour of a hearer. We are directed to receive with meekness the word that calls into existence that which does not exist. This is the demeanour of a person who knows and receives Christ as King. He is King. If we know He is King, we are going to submit to Him. There is a meekness there; there is an entreaty; there is a presentation of ourselves to hear. Of course, each time we hear the word, we should be able to share the illumination and the conviction of the Holy Spirit that we are knowing as the word is being proclaimed to us. I am not saying we are not to do that. I am saying illumination and conviction are not the same as your own little devotional burden or your points on what you think is relevant or not. Illumination is the evidence that a breach has been made on your heart and light is rushing in. Illumination is not that you have comprehended something with your mind and it makes sense. Illumination is the evidence of something burning in your spirit. For your spirit is the light of the Lord, and the word, which is a light, is lighting that up. That is illumination. We are to share that. The conviction of the Spirit is the motivation of the Holy Spirit compelling us to a choice: Do you want what this word is bringing to you today? That is, do you want to be a son of God? This is the conviction of sin, conviction of righteousness and the conviction of judgement.

Illumination and conviction are the beginning of our conversation. Many of us should be jumping out of your chairs saying, 'Beauty, I am with you! My heart does burn when the word is speaking.' It is the start of the conversation. The conviction of sin, righteousness and judgement must then lead to a confession. The burning is great, but the burning... For Cleopas and his friends, where did that result in them seeing Christ and being able to testify of Christ? At the *agape* meal when they broke bread. There was a conversation happening. Conviction of sin, righteousness and judgement must lead to confession if there is to be an expression of faith through testimony which is the fruit of change.

Now, the Scriptures actually have a lot to say about confession. We are first directed by the Scriptures to confess our faults to one another. This is what James wrote in James 5 verse 16: 'Confess your trespasses to one another, pray for one another, that you may be healed.' We are going to be healed of our blindness, but it means we have to confess that we are blind. Jesus said that if you do not need healing for your blindness, you are going to remain blind. We are healed of our blindness; healed of the ravages of self-righteousness. The word is bringing these to light, but as we confess these with one another, there is an opportunity to pray for one another and to be cleansed - 'to pray for one another that we might be healed.'

The apostle John also talked about our confession to one another. This is 1 John 1 verses 8 to 9. He said, 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.' 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves... [This is a distortion of our perception] ...we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins... ['If you say you have no sin...'] -we know we are not to say that. This means we all have sin, but we are not all so great at confessing our sins. Without the confession of sins, really what we are saying is, 'I do not have any sin.']) ... if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.'

I want to give one of the key points to make sure that you get it. If you are someone who is forgiven much, you will be a person who loves much. You will be a person who is established in the *agape* meal. Confession belongs to those who are recognising their sin, who are happy to confess their sin, and are rejoicing that they are being forgiven much, and they are able to love much. This was the example of the woman who anointed Jesus' feet in the house of Simon the Pharisee. We have two conversations there. We have one conversation that is at the tree of life which is resulting in confession and believing; and we have another conversation that is resulting in bondage.

By directing us to confess our sins, James and John were not advocating confidential confession with a clergy figure. The expectation of confidentiality... (keeping things just between

you and the confessor-hearer - whatever they are called) ...the expectation of confidentiality is by definition a desire to keep matters in the dark. We are being a people who are walking in the light. We are wanting to be the word in our mouth and the word in our heart - as sons of light. However, at the same time, we are not saying that when we are sitting around our tables and around our *agape* meals, we are doing this introspective assessment of ourselves to drum up all the difficulties and patheticness of ourselves to load that off on others. That is not true. The word is not coming to tell you that you are pathetic. What is the word coming to do? It is coming to deliver you faith that is the substance of you being a glorified son of God. We are confessing what we are turning from, but the *focus* of your confession should be your *obedience*. It should be full of thankfulness and full of joy - not self-assessment and self-recrimination. That is all selfishness. That is not what we are saying about confessing our sins.

We are to confess our faults to one another... (we are not going to a clergy figure) ...we are going to confess our faults to one another in the context in which our sin, which has been illuminated to us by the word, has impacted upon those with whom we live. This application will have an expression in our marriage, our house and in the relational settings in the church. There has to be a confession - husbands and wives to each other. There has to be a confession in our houses - children to parents and parents to children. Then there has to be confession to one another in relation to the sin that the word is bringing to light. In these contexts, we are able to pray for one another and can obtain healing and grace for our pilgrimage together in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. This is really only part of the confession. I will flag this: the classic example for me of this is Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus is initially a man who loves a little. He is up in a tree, and he is a bit intrigued about Jesus. There is a lot of interest around and he is climbing a tree to get a look at this Man. You have to be pretty enthusiastic to climb up a tree. There is a bit of motive there. The Lord sees him and calls him down, and this is all He says to him, 'Zacchaeus, I am coming to your house today for dinner.' What is that? That is the word proclaiming to Zacchaeus, 'Zacchaeus, you are a

worthy house. You are a house of peace, Zacchaeus.' When the 72 are going out and finding houses of peace, Jesus says, 'Say to them, "Peace to this house." ' What is being said to those houses is, 'You are supposed to be a house of peace.' This is the gospel from the finished work of Christ coming to call into existence what does not exist in that man. Can you see that? The word is not coming and saying, 'Zacchaeus, I need to have a chat to you. You are dirty, filthy scum. For goodness sakes, give your money back.' He said, 'You are a worthy house, Zacchaeus. I am coming to it.' He said, 'I am sending the 72 before My face so that I might come to these houses.' This word is proclaiming the truth. The truth is he is to be a house of peace and what does he say? 'Lord, can I have a minute? I just need to go and pay back four times what I have stolen.' Confession. Is he pathetic about it? Not at all. This is a man who is full of joy. He has his Lord and Saviour coming to his house. He is a worthy house. What did the Lord say to everyone else who was a bit unhappy about this? (I love this) - Jesus confessed him before the people. He said, 'Salvation today ['Today if you will hear His voice...'] has come to this house.' This house.

Men, if you are willing to begin to start confessing, in relation to the light of the word of truth that is coming to you, salvation will come to your house. Why did Jesus say, 'Salvation had come to this house'? It was because this man was a son of Abraham. What had he received from his King? He had received the faith of Christ as a command. He was exemplifying now what it meant to be a worthy house.

This is happening right now. The word over this weekend is proclaiming that to you. We are to confess our faults, but as I said, that is not the focus. The focus is, 'I am letting that go because now I am confessing the word that is calling into existence my sonship.' We are to confess our obedience or righteousness. Paul called this 'the good confession'. We are to share this good confession as those whom Christ has made to be kings and priests to God the Father. It is the expression of a believer who no longer belongs to the kingdom of darkness, but who has been delivered to the kingdom of light as a son of God.

This is the very same confession that Jesus made before Pontius Pilate. He was confessing what is

true. 'It is true what you say. I am a King, but my kingdom is not from this world.' If you are making a good confession about your obedience as a son of God, you are saying 'I am not of this world. I am part of the kingdom of light'

This is 1 Timothy 6 verses 12 to 14. This is Paul making this point on the good confession. 'Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold on eternal life to which you were also called [this is the calling to do with your sonship] and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Jesus Christ who witnessed [or was a witness of] the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep this commandment [This is the evidence that you are under the kingship of Christ and you are keeping this commandment] without spot, blameless [not perfect. That is why we do confess our faults. We have to confess them because we are turning from something and we are being established in something new] until the Lord Jesus Christ's appearing.'

By confessing our faults to one another, and also making a good confession through faith obedience, we are confessing Christ before men (or in the presence of many witnesses). This is because Christ is the substance of both our repentance and of our obedience. Catch this point. You are confessing your fault, and you are confessing your obedience. But where did your capacity for repentance and obedience come from? It came from Christ who finished it for you. If you are confessing your fault and you are confessing your obedience in the light of the knowledge of the word that is shining from His face, you are confessing Christ Himself. He said, 'If you confess Me before men, I will confess you before My Father.'

This confession before men is not even first to the world. The confession of Christ before men is actually to your neighbour first. It is going to be to the person closest to you. I think we are all pretty happy to be confessing before men, but not quite so happy to confess to our wife. Do you see that the confession that belongs to the repentance that Christ finished for you and the obedience that Christ finished for you is right down to your day-to-day relationships? Confessing before all men is all the contexts of our relationships. It is

going to be in our marriages; it is going to be in our households; it is going to be in the church, and then it is going to be manifest to the whole world. That is testimony. It is the fruit of this confession.

True confession will always be followed by testimony, and testimony is the expression through our conversation and conduct of believing that we are raised *with* Christ and we are *in* Christ. It is the demonstration of living by resurrection life. We are confessing our faults for the sake of repentance. We are confessing our obedience. But the evidence of that obedience is going to be testimony. It is a demonstration in a new talk, a new conversation, a new conduct. Our testimony should be the fruit of the faith that we have obtained as we have responded with confession to the illumination and conviction of the Spirit. Such a testimony overflows with life to others because it comes from our experience of fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ. If you are fellowshiping in the offering and sufferings of Christ (that is the place of your obedience) it is not just that you are receiving life for your sonship. It says that your cup overflows. It is sufficient for your sonship, but it is multiplying for others. We have received faith which has become the substance of our hope. Our hope is to reveal or to be the expression of the glory of God. We are expressing the glory of God that belongs to the season of present truth. I am just pulling the threads together. This is believing. You have received faith. You are now demonstrating the expression of the glory of God. Paul said that if this is true, 'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, for by it, the elders obtain a good testimony.' That is the source of a messenger's word. If you are joined to that same conversation, you are joined to the same messenger administration. You are to proclaim the word that you have heard in the unique sanctification of your name as a son of God. It will overflow as life and compulsion through seven Spirits to those whom you speak to. That is the day we live in. This is the agency of kingship to which you have been called.

As we have been considering, a person's testimony will always be preceded by confession and without confession, our testimony will be little more than a commentary on the word of present truth or the expression of a self-righteous

despiser. A couple of weeks ago, Vic spoke about the despiser and I want to pick some of those elements up to contrast that, because the point that Vic was making was that this person who is a despiser (and we will talk about what it looks like) ends up being weary, distressed and depressed. But the person who is making confession and obtaining testimony, they are full of thankfulness. There is a joy that belongs to the confession. Look at Zacchaeus. He could not care less what anybody else thought of him. That is a man whose shame had been taken away. His projection is finished. That is a man who has found salvation.

Without confession, our testimony will be little more than a commentary on the word of present truth or the expression of a self-righteous despiser. A despiser... (and the Scriptures also use the word scorner - it is the same sentiment, same demeanour)...A despiser or scorner is a person who claims to be a believer, but who on account of their self-righteousness, is unable to receive the commands of Christ that are proclaimed by His messengers. This is why when they are sharing in the *agape* meal, they are not sharing the word of present truth; they are sharing some other thing that is sourced from themselves. They *hear* the commands; they are sitting here; but they do not *receive* the commands. Consequently, they are unable to lay hold of the faith that comes by hearing the word. For this reason, Paul said they 'will by no means believe'. This is the passage in Acts chapter 13 verses 40 to 41. It says, 'Beware, therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you: "Behold, you despisers, marvel and perish! [Now I am not wanting to talk to you so you that perish today. If this is bringing conviction, I am wanting to deliver you to a new conversation. But there is a warning] ... Behold you despisers, marvel and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work which you will by no means believe, though one were to declare it to you.'" ' That is a sad state; that is true deception.

The absence of confession is characteristic of the conversation of the despiser. Bereft of confession in the light of the word, a despiser assumes on the basis of their appropriation of the word (it may not even be the word that was spoken) to be righteous. This is *self*-righteousness. From this position, informed by their presumed

competence, their expertise, their experience or even their gift, they take the liberty to judge the word and its implications as well as the messengers. I was thinking about Vic's point yesterday on thankfulness and rejoicing in this and rejoicing in the fact that a person who is obtaining testimony will be thankful. But we had better be careful and be clear about what we are thankful about, because the despiser is also thankful. Their confession is, 'I thank you, God that I am not like this tax collector.' Still thankful. There are a lot of people who claim to be thankful, but they are just thankful that they are not like the idiots who are speaking. We have to get clear about our conversation together.

This is where they are beginning to touch cursing, because of the misappropriation of the Law or the word. Through their presumptive judgements, the despiser actually despises themselves. Hear this: They are full of self-confidence, full of presumption, but because they cannot hear the word of God that is coming to speak into existence their sonship, they are hating what belongs to them. They are despising their sanctification. They progressively become weary, discouraged and depressed or discontented, particularly when their own righteousness or expression is not validated or agreed to by others. They are looking for another covenant - an agreement. They can become a vengeful victim of others or of their unfulfilled expectations. This unrest and discontent, demonstrated in the content and tone of their conversation with others, is the evidence that a person is failing to enter rest and they are unbelieving. All the discontent - the gripe, the complaint, the concern; 'I am just worried about this' or 'worried about that' - that is the evidence that you are not entering rest. You are not entering rest. I was thinking that if you have a few despisers together talking like this - to try to get a bit of courage together - what would be the collective noun for a group of despisers? I was thinking a 'haunt of despisers' or a 'murder of despisers'. You might be able to come up with some better ones than that. But the point is, they are just bringing the whole tone down. We know that they are failing to enter rest and they are unbelieving because Paul said, 'We who have believed do enter that rest.' If you are finding rest today, you are a believer. You are a believer

because you have confessed what is true and you are entering rest. You are labouring to enter rest by your application to the word, and in the way that we converse together.

The scorner does not believe because they trust in their own understanding of the word as it is reasoned through the law of their mind. They are not believing because they are not listening. They are not believing because they are taking the word and they are reasoning it through the law of their mind. This means that the word is not going to their spirit. It is not bringing conviction. If the word has been reasoned through the law of our mind, that means that we have a problem with the other law because the law of your mind is the expression of that other law. Despising belongs to the other law.

As Dave mentioned yesterday, and Vic raised it as well today, I am going to speak a little bit about this point on the other law, and I will develop it further in the coming weeks. We have previously considered the other law to be fathered in us by Satan; and in fact, not only in *The Lampstand Church*, but also in *The Kingdom of God* in chapter 5. You will be able to find this yourself. We wrote, 'Our disobedience is the manifestation of another law in our members, which was fathered within us by Satan, the serpent of old.' Welcome to the light of present truth! Cross that out of your book as well. What unlocked this for us was getting clarity (or illumination) on the misappropriation of the Law, particularly the implication of cursing and blessing and how we misappropriate the Law for the purpose of establishing our own self-righteousness.

We have come to understand that Satan did not father the other law in man. He was the father of lies or the father of all the alternatives to our sanctification. We actually wrote on this a number of years ago, I think it was from 2022 - *Becoming the True Israel of God*, where we understood that what he fathered was all the alternatives from the void, from nothingness. It is no substance. What happened was that Eve, being deceived, then took the fruit in view of laying hold of these alternatives. The alternative was to name herself. That is all that Satan has fathered. He has fathered all the alternatives - all the lies.

What was fathered in us through Adam was another law when he was disobedient to God. The other law was fathered in us through Adam's disobedience, hence (and as we read today in Vic's notes). 'Through Adam's disobedience, another law was established in the heart of every person who would be brought to birth through procreation. This other law brings them into bondage to the law of sin and death. Explaining this implication of the Fall, Paul wrote, "Through one man... [not through Satan] ... through one man, [Adam] sin entered the world and death through sin, thus death spread to all men because all sinned." ' We know from Romans chapter 7 that we are in bondage to sin and death because of the other law. We all sinned being in bondage to the law of sin and death through the exercise of another law. As I said, we are going to develop this further in the coming weeks.

I want to highlight for us who are committed to receiving the word that is delivering us to the tree of life in the Paradise of God, that we are to choose this every time the word is proclaimed. We are to choose it every day, in every circumstance that the Spirit is leading us in, and we are to choose it every time the word is being spoken to us. To live by the other law is to remain a citizen of the kingdom of darkness. This is a choice that we make. That is to be carnally minded. You set your mind that way because you are born of the Spirit - born of God; so you can set your mind on the Spirit. It is a choice we make. The word, when it is coming to us, is delivering us to this choice. Also note, it is delivering us to the implications of our choice. It is quick and powerful, which is great in the positive, because if you just choose 'yes', that word is delivering you to faith. We can either harden our heart, or we can humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. To humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God means to 'receive with meekness the implanted word' or the word that plants you. If we do this (if we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God), it says 'He will raise us up.' We are raised up by joining the fellowship of His hand, which is the fellowship of the kingdom at the tree of life.

Peter wrote this in 1 Peter 5 verses 5 to 7. ' "God resists the proud [so that would be the despiser] but gives grace to the humble." Therefore humble

yourselves ['Humble yourselves.' It is a choice as the word is coming. 'Humble yourselves.' Humble yourselves where? Just to God? Just to the Father? No.] ... humble yourselves under the mighty hand.... [This is the hand from which flashes of lightning are coming full of power to proclaim the word of your sonship. Humble yourself under that. What better thing could you receive?] ...humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time... [That sounds like believing in the resurrection. That is where you are receiving resurrection life to walk in what is new.] ... He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.' We must choose faith every time the word is spoken to us and in every circumstance that we encounter. When we walk by the Spirit in the light of the word, change from glory to glory into the image of the Son depends then upon this faithful response.

I want to take an example here in relation to Paul and how we are to continue to interface with the word, particularly if we have been in the way for some time. This is from Acts chapter 18 verses 1 to 8 and I recommend you read this. I am going to pick some points out of it for today. In the course of his second missionary journey, the apostle Paul departed Athens for Corinth. When he came to Corinth, he stayed with Aquila and Priscilla, and he worked as a tent maker there. It says that every Sabbath, Paul reasoned in the synagogue. He is teaching and warning and persuading both Jews and Greeks. This is fantastic. Everywhere else he goes he is getting hammered by the Jews. Here he is in Corinth persuading both the Jews and Greeks. When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul was compelled... (this is straight from the Scripture). 'Paul was compelled by the Spirit to testify to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.' This was a word of present truth that Paul had been specifically directed by the Spirit to proclaim to them. He is teaching one season, and now a new season of present truth has come. Something new - a word that is fresh; a new season. 'Now when the Jews who had initially been persuaded opposed and blasphemed him, Paul shook his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads. I am clean. From now on, I will go to the Gentiles." ' These Jews were being persuaded. Then a new word of present truth was being

proclaimed and all a sudden, they were hearing it and they were opposing it and they were now speaking ill of Paul - despising.

Here is my key point: These Jews were righteous until they heard and rejected the word of present truth. They were righteous; they were being persuaded; they were convinced. They were righteous until they began to oppose and reject the word of present truth. That is true for us every time the word is being spoken. We are to choose every time. By particularly testifying that he was clean of the blood of the Jews in Corinth, Paul highlighted that he had been established in the right hand of Christ as a watchman. That is from Ezekiel chapter 3 verses 17 to 19, and then also Ezekiel chapter 3 verses 20 to 21. That is talking about the accountability that a watchman has to both warn and to teach. If the wicked turn from their ways, that is great; but if the wicked do not and they are condemned, the messenger who has proclaimed it is not guilty of their blood. That is true in relation to the righteous as well.

I do not want to finish there. You will be able to find that in chapter 5 of the book. I want to finish on 'loving much'.

Many of you will have read the content on the marriage covenant that we tabled as part of the discipleship training initiative. It is in chapter 4 of the book, *The Kingdom of God*. In this chapter, we described the interaction between Jesus and Simon the Pharisee, who was asked if he was able to see the woman who washed, kissed and anointed Christ's feet.

As I conclude in these final minutes, I want to draw one point from this lesson. That is an amazing account, and we need to take our time with it, but I want to take one point because this situation in this house demonstrated two conversations. I want to talk about how we join the conversation that belongs to the bride of Christ. Let us remember that John said, 'If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness [to deliver us, or to speak righteousness into existence in us]'

Let us read this passage. This is Luke 7 verses 44 to 47. Jesus speaking to Simon, says, 'Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me

no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in. You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore, I say to you, her sins which are many are forgiven for she loved much... [If you want to be at the tree of life and participate in the love feast of Yahweh Himself, you have to be one who loves much] ...for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.'

This woman is a picture of the bride of Christ. She is exemplifying the form of conduct and conversation of those who belong to the bride. She is all of us. What she did to Christ, we are to do to one another, for we recognise Christ coming in our brethren. It is not just to do this to Christ; it is not just to do this to the messenger; you are to do this to one another. Jesus said, 'Assuredly I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these, My brethren, you did it to Me.'

The expression of confession and testimony looks like washing one another's feet with the tears that belong to our repentance. If we are part of this woman, the bride, and we are doing it inasmuch to the little ones, we are doing it to our closest neighbour - our wife, our husband, our brother, our sister, our siblings, house to house - washing with repentance. It is the water of the word. It looks like washing one another's feet with the tears that belong to our repentance. It looks like drying them with the hair of our head through... (I know that is a bit graphic — but what does that look like?) ...through submission to the order of headship in the church, in our marriages and in our houses. Loving headship. It looks like kissing the feet of the messenger in affection - the same affection that we are to have to each other as we greet one another with a holy kiss. There is an affection we are to have to one another. This is the fruit of faith, because our faith is working by love. It looks like anointing the feet of the messenger, marking our fellowship and rest in burial. I want to commend that to you. It is a pretty straightforward point, but it is fundamental to the culture that we are to exemplify as those who are a kingdom of priests who are being sent forth to proclaim this peace which we are possessing, to others. They will

respond if they are a house of peace and responding with faith, they will respond in the same way. This is a fellowship in which life is going to be overflowing and multiplying among us.