

Strife – the snare of the Enemy – 4

I believe that in these last days the enemy will use strife to keep us from walking in the victorious (Kingdom) life God has planned for us as well as cause offenses between believers.

The Devil will use circumstances to kindle strife which cause us to think and say things we should not causing unresolved offenses. When there is a Spirit of offense operating it will cause us to betray one another. The seed of separation gets in when we get our eyes off Jesus and start to look at the wrong things.

The Devil is called “The accuser of the brethren”

– No Slide: Revelation 12:10

Matthew 24:10

10 And then many will be **offended**, will betray one another, and will hate one another. NKJV

- Offend – “*skandalizo*” – to set a trap to ensnare something
- This is where we get the word, scandal

The deepest wounds can come from those we are close to that use their mouths to cut us to the core

Sometimes people can even smile to our face and behind our back be talking to others about frustrations, etc

Judas was the ultimate example of betrayal from an inner-circle friend

Judas used his mouth to betray – a kiss

Freedom through confession

Matthew 5:21-26

21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26 Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny. NKJV

- Holding on to an offense is sin
- Freedom can only come through confessing
- Bring our offense to Jesus
- He is our advocate (attorney)
- He makes intercession for us – Defending us!

– Hebrews 7:25

1 John 2:1

1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. NKJV

The “Heavenly Court” is the only court in the universe where, when a guilty person stands and confesses, “I am guilty. I am a sinner; I have sinned and done wrong,” that person can ask for a pardon after admitting his or her guilt and receive a pardon instead of a penalty!

Perry Stone – The Judas Goat

The pardon is initiated by something the Bible calls “confession”

This is the way that we first receive the Lord

Romans 10:8-10

8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that 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. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. NKJV

Colossians 2:6

6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, NKJV

1 John 1:9-10

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. NKJV

Many people believe that once we initially repent and receive Jesus as Lord we never have to ask for forgiveness again. Some believe that your past present and future sins are all taken care of.

It is true Christ has paid the price for all of our sins but we need to confess our weakness and sin to receive forgiveness and freedom to live our lives in victory!

1 John 1:6-8

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. NKJV

- Who here is without sin?
- Have I applied the truth to every dark area of my life?
- Truth is what brings freedom

John 8:31-32

31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." NKJV

- Abiding in the Word brings truth
- Truth brings freedom
- Freedom is a process
- *Being transformed* into the same image from glory to glory – 2 Corinthians 3:18

John 15:1-2

1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. NKJV

- Repenting and asking forgiveness is the way we are pruned
- We change the way we think and allow healing to take place

In the book of Revelation 7 Churches are **commanded to “Repent”**

Only 2 are commended and given special blessings
Smyrna and Philadelphia – **Revelation 2:8-11; 3:7-11**

The other 5 Churches (Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis and Laodicea) were all encountering serious spiritual issues and impending judgment – **Revelation 2:5, 21, 23; 3:3, 19**

In 4 specific places Christ tells the church or an individual to repent or He would remove their lamp stand

Yet some think we never need to repent
It doesn't matter how I live – HMMM?

We see in our text **John 2:1** that John is teaching that we should not practice a lifestyle of sinning. If we do sin we have an advocate – attorney

Why would we need an advocate if we never had to confess or repent?

Two Greek words are used for **confess**

Homologeo – to speak the same thing

Exomologeo – to verbally acknowledge something

So we need to “admit or verbally acknowledge something and then come into agreement with the Lord”

When we confess our guilt we are released from the condemnation of sin – we then agree with the promises or blessings of God over our lives – repent

In the book of James we are taught that we need to confess our thoughts to one another.

James 5:14-16

14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16 Confess your **trespasses** to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. NKJV

- **Faults** (KJV) – to deviate into some type of error
- To deviate from something you must first be following in a certain direction – A Believer
- Any form of contention, discord, strife, bitterness, unforgiveness, or jealousy
- You don't want to grieve the Holy Spirit

– **Ephesians 4:30 – bitterness, rage anger, slander**

Confession is a God-given procedure to remove spiritual roadblocks out of our spirit.

Remove the root of bitterness

Hebrews 12:15

15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; NKJV

Consider King Saul:

He became bitter and jealous of David and was unwilling to forgive. He eventually lifted himself up in pride and his kingdom was taken from him.

1 Samuel 16:14-15

14 But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him. 15 And Saul's servants said to him, "Surely, a distressing spirit from God is troubling you. NKJV

The root of bitterness produced rebellion and defiled him

1 Samuel 15:23

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king." NKJV

- Many times we don't consider the unwillingness to forgive as a rebellious act
- We see here how unforgiveness produced rebellion

We see here how the rebellion in Saul's heart brought a distressing spirit that tormented him.

Proverbs 17:11

11 An evil man seeks only rebellion; therefore a cruel messenger will be sent against him. NKJV

- Messenger – Meaning: God, an angel, a prophet or priest carrying God's message or a teacher
- For some that could be me right now

When Pharaoh and the Egyptians rebelled against God He sent a “destroyer” among them.

Psalm 78:49

49 He cast on them the fierceness of His anger, Wrath, indignation, and trouble, by sending angels of destruction among them. NKJV (*destroying angels*) NLT

- Do I feel like something's opposing me?
- Do I always place blame on my situation or others?
- Has the presence of God slipped away?
- Am I bitter and angry?

Exodus 15:23

23 Now when they came to **Marah**, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah. NKJV

- **Marah = Bitter**
- Gen. 27:34, Num. 14:9, 1 Sam. 12:14, Ps. 64:3

Take it to the Cross

Exodus 15:24-25

24 And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" 25 So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. NKJV

- The cross of Christ will remove the bitterness and give you rivers of living (sweet) waters
- Drink freely

Revelation 22:17 NKJV

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Romans 12:19

19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. NKJV

Exodus 14:14

14 The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace." NKJV

James 5:16

16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. NKJV