

The Holy and the Profane

For the Archive Part 1

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Chapter 1 – The Issue

One of the important calls of God upon the church today is that we become ministers unto the Lord. He is looking for men and women who want to know His place, His heart, His ways, and what He wants. This is made very clear in chapter 44 of the book of Ezekiel. In this comparison of priests, the sons of Zadok are those who are chosen to minister unto the Lord. One by-product of this ministry is that “*they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean.*” (vs.23).

I have quoted that verse and alluded to it for many years. One day, the Holy Spirit asked me, “What do you call profane?” I replied, “God, it really doesn’t matter what I call profane. What matters more is what You call profane?” The Lord began to reveal to my understanding what He called *profanity* and it was a bit of a shock to me. Rather than dealing with iniquity (sin or evil) versus good, for Him what is important is **differentiating between God and anything He has not purposed**, even if something is good in and of itself. With that in mind, most of our traditional religious practices would be classified as profane!

In the passage in Ezekiel, the priests who were *not* the sons of Zadok had compromised in what God had told them was holy. Let me bring it into our daily language. The people came to the priests and said, “Priests, we know that our God is somewhere up there, but we can’t see Him. The other people’s gods – well, they can *see* them. They’re just images but they can put them right out in view to be seen, and we would like to incorporate this practice into a new worship session. We’d like to be able to bring in idols and utilize some of the ways of these other people’s worship – so that our service will be palatable to everyone.”

Sad, but true. The majority of the priests decided, seemingly logically, that it would be a good thing to do this – for the people. They reasoned: “We see nothing wrong with this because we will, of course, continue to worship the true and holy, living God.”

God pronounced a sentence of judgment upon these errant priests. He said, “They are still priests, but they shall not be ministers unto Me. They shall not come near unto Me. They shall be ministers unto the people.” What a picture of mercy that He didn’t just strike them dead!

To clarify why God said in: “They shall not come near unto Me,” I relate this personal experience. One day, when I was feeling sorry for myself because I was unsuccessful in my efforts to please everyone, the Lord said, “Iverna, I’m going to tell you something. If you insist on taking your direction from people, then you must also take your rewards from people.”

How many of you know you don’t want your rewards from people? The instability of popularity is demonstrated by: “today you’re in; tomorrow you’re out.” The Lord added, “If you want your rewards from Me, then you must learn to take direction from Me.”

But the sons of Zadok, although they were a minority, were allowed to minister unto the Lord because they had not followed in this action of compromise. Further, Zadok was the priest who remained faithful and true to David when Absalom came in to usurp the throne (2Sam.15). God said these sons of Zadok *refused a compromising position*. That’s important for us to remember. It needs to hold great influence on us.

Today, these “faithful” would be pastors, or leaders and teachers, who hear the suggestions of “Let’s not worship aloud in our services; Let’s not sing new choruses; Let’s not allow there to be messages in tongues because we want the service to be acceptable to everyone.” They might listen to the voices of the people, but then declare: “Let’s go to God’s Book and discover together what God has said He wants in our worship. Then we will follow what God says.”

The sons of Zadok refused a compromising position and insisted on doing what God had said He wanted them to do. Of these brethren, God decreed: “*They shall be ministers unto Me. They shall come into the Holy Place. They shall partake of the Shewbread. They shall be in My presence.*” In other words, those who refused to compromise according to the people’s requests would have personal fellowship with the Lord. Wouldn’t it be exciting to you if the Lord intimately and personally used your name and said, “You’re going to minister unto Me. I want to break bread with you this morning.”

Then He continued: “The people who can break bread with Me, are those who know Me, and know My ways, My desires, My intentions, My testimonies and precepts and concepts, those whose own concepts of Me are daily increasing – *they shall be My ministers.*” The results are found in verse 23: “*They shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the profane.*”

There’s never been a time, dear friends, in all of Church history, when the people of God have more earnestly sought the answer to that particular dilemma than today. People are crying out to know the difference God means but we can’t help them because our *minds* hold the concept that profanity is taking the name of the Lord in vain, or we believe it’s some outwardly immoral act of sin. Only as we enter the Presence of the holy God can the Holy Spirit reveal to us that profanity, in God’s sight, is ***anything which deals lightly with what He calls holy.***

What a shock it is to realize that there are many areas in our lives of profane approach to things and circumstances. Yes, even to worship. Let us go to the Book of Obadiah, the shortest book in the Old Testament, and see if we can unravel this truth.

The Text of Obadiah New Living Translation

“This is the vision that the Sovereign LORD revealed to Obadiah concerning the land of Edom. We have heard a message from the LORD that an ambassador was sent to the nations to say, ‘Get ready, everyone! Let’s assemble our armies and attack Edom!’

2 The LORD says, “I will cut you down to size among the nations, Edom; you will be small and despised. 3 You are proud because you live in a rock fortress and make your home high in the mountains. “Who can ever reach us way up here?” you ask boastfully. Don’t fool yourselves! 4 Though you soar as high as eagles and build your nest among the stars, I will bring you crashing down. I, the LORD, have spoken!

5 “If thieves came at night and robbed you they would not take everything. Those who harvest grapes always leave a few for the poor. But your enemies will wipe you out completely! 6 Every nook and cranny of Edom * [*Esau*, here and in 8b, 9, 18, 19, 21] will be searched and looted. Every treasure will be found and taken.

7 “All your allies will turn against you. They will help to chase you from your land. They will promise you peace, while plotting your destruction. Your trusted friends will set traps for you, and you won’t even know about it. 8 At that time not a single wise person will be left in the whole land of Edom!” says the LORD. “For on the mountains of Edom I will destroy everyone who has wisdom and understanding. 9 The mightiest warriors of Teman will be terrified, and everyone on the mountains of Edom will be cut down in the slaughter.

10 “And why? Because of the violence you did to your close relatives in Israel (*your brother Jacob*). Now you will be destroyed completely and filled with shame forever. 11 For you deserted your relatives in Israel during their time of greatest need. You stood aloof, refusing to lift a finger to help when foreign invaders carried off their wealth and cast lots to divide up Jerusalem. You acted as though you were one of Israel’s enemies.

12”You shouldn’t have done this! You shouldn’t have gloated when they exiled your relatives to distant lands. You shouldn’t have rejoiced because they were suffering such misfortune. You shouldn’t have crowed over them as they suffered these disasters. 13 You shouldn’t have plundered the land of Israel when they were suffering such calamity. You shouldn’t have gloated over the destruction of your relatives, looting their homes and making yourselves rich at their expense. 14 You shouldn’t have stood at the crossroads, killing those who tried to escape. You shouldn’t have captured the survivors, handing them over to their enemies in that terrible time of trouble.

15 “The day is near when I, the LORD, will judge the godless nations! As you have done to Israel, so it will be done to you. All your evil deeds will fall back on your own heads. 16 Just as you swallowed up my people on my holy mountain, so you and the surrounding nations will swallow the punishment I pour out on you. Yes, you nations will drink and stagger and disappear from history, as though you had never even existed.

17 “But Jerusalem (*Mount Zion*) will become a refuge for those who escape; it will be a holy place. And the people of Israel (*house of Jacob*) will come back to reclaim their inheritance. 18 At that time Israel will be a raging fire, and Edom, a field of dry stubble. The fire will roar across the field, devouring everything and leaving no survivors in Edom. I, the LORD, have spoken!

19 “Then my people living in the Negev [south to Eilat and the Gulf of Aqabah] will occupy the mountains of Edom [south of the Dead Sea]. Those living in the foothills of Judah (*the Shephelah*) [ancient Philistia, the foothills inside the coastal plain, including the Gaza Strip] will possess the Philistine plains and take over the fields of Ephraim [south of Mt. Gerizim, a major part of today’s West Bank] and Samaria [also part of the West Bank]. And the people of Benjamin [the part that includes Jerusalem up and over to Jericho] will occupy the land of Gilead [east of the Jordan River and north of the Dead Sea, now Jordan]. 20 The exiles of Israel will return to their land and occupy the Phoenician coast as far north as Zarephath [a city between Tyre and Sidon, now Lebanon]. The captives from Jerusalem exiled in the north (*in Sepharad*) [possibly in ancient Media-Persia-Assyria-Babylon] will return to their homeland and resettle the villages of the Negev. 21 Deliverers will go up to (*from*) Mount Zion in Jerusalem to rule over the mountains of Edom. And the LORD himself will be king!”

Note: Use of the spelling LORD is the editors designation for YHWH, Jehovah God; highlighting added; italics in parentheses are alternative translations of the original. [brackets] are added for clarity the modern geographical locations.

Chapter 2 – The Profane

How exciting it is to see the way in which all Scripture fits together, like a jigsaw puzzle that has been worked on generation after generation. Have you ever worked for a long period of time on a jigsaw puzzle, and when you get down to the last twelve pieces, everyone who’s been a spectator wants to help you finish it? Perhaps we’re a bit like that as the Word seems to be opened to us today with greater clarity than ever before.

Maybe we are in that generation Jesus spoke of in Matthew 20:1-16: In the morning, a man hired people to go into the field and work for a penny a day and then in the last hour, he hired another group for the same pay, a penny. They worked one hour and when paid, the group that had worked all day complained to the master, “That’s not fair!” And the master inquired, “Tell me what’s unfair about it.” “Well, we worked all day long and got one penny.” And the man asked, “How much did I promise you?” “Well –

one penny,” they declared. “Then, you got what you were promised.” “Yes, but this last group only worked one hour and got the same wage.” And the master replied, “That’s what I promised them.”

I believe we can be that final generation – the ones who come in the last hour and get the same pay. We are picking up the last twelve pieces and are about to fill in what we’ve thought was a great puzzle, the Bible. There are sixty-six books, thirty-nine in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit through over forty authors. We look at that whole and say, “I’m into the New Testament. It’s a day of grace; it’s the day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; and, praise God, the Old Testament is past and gone.”

Well, why don’t we just rip it out then? We don’t because in the New Testament there is a statement that says the Old Testament is written so that we can understand the teaching and principles found in the New. By studying the New, we begin to see the whys and the wherefores of the guidance of the pillars of the cloud and the fire for the children of Israel throughout the wilderness wanderings, and the whys of Joshua being raised up as a leader. When we walk through the Word of God and apply the Old Testament to the New, we become excited about how it all correlates as a single revelation.

Let us go back to the first book of the Bible, Genesis, and bring clarity to what we call one of the Minor Prophets. We just read Obadiah and found that he deals with the conflict of the two nations: Edom and Israel. The key to understanding this is found in Genesis 25, beginning with verse 23. “*The LORD said unto her [Rebekah], ‘Two nations are in thy womb and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels.’*” That’s Edom (also known as Esau) and Israel (the twin, Jacob).

‘The one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.’ And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau’s heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bore them. And the boys grew and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison; but Rebekah loved Jacob. And Jacob sod pottage, and Esau came from the field, and he was faint; and Esau said to Jacob, ‘Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint;’ therefore his name was called Edom.” (Gen.25:23-30).

The birthing of the nation Edom begins right here. Edom means “red,” and the pottage, the soup, was red like pinto bean soup.

“And Jacob said, ‘Sell me this day thy birthright.’” (vs.31). Jacob’s name means “supplanter,” or “one who follows after.” Jacob is a deceiver at this point and basically was saying: “I’ll make you a deal for this yummy food. Sell me your birthright.”

Remember, in their culture and times, the firstborn of the family always received a *double portion*, and the Letter to the Hebrews describes the Church as the firstborn (Heb.12:23). We are to have a double portion from the Father. What glory it would be if we would begin to claim just half of what we rightfully have coming!

Jacob rightly sees the value of the birthright, so he asks Esau to sell it to him. Esau replies, “What good will it do me? I’m about ready to die of hunger anyway” (vs.32). In verse 33, Jacob insists that Esau promise this to him, which Esau did. “Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright” (vs.34).

The great deception has taken place between the twin brothers. Much later, when Isaac was old and his eyesight dim (Gen.27:1), Jacob, under the conniving influence of his mother (vv. 6-17), has come in to fool his father and deceitfully receive the “father’s blessing,” which was, incidentally, already rightfully his by virtue of the exchange that was made earlier. God allowed the deception to be fulfilled for Esau had said,

“You can have all that goes with the rights of being the firstborn. You may have my birthright.” So, although the way that it was achieved was not pleasing to God, it was fair, the deal had been made, regardless of the cunningness involved.

Esau comes in and the whole plot is discovered (vv.30ff). Esau can only cry, “Oh, father, surely you have more than one blessing!” Isaac, his father, answered him: “Behold thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth and of the dew of heaven from above; and by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck” (vv.39,40).

From this we can see that in the very beginnings of a life is *a profane spirit*. Esau had one concern and goal in life: it was Esau. He wasn't a man who sought to be mean to people; he was not a man who was possessed of evil, or as we would say today, possessed by a satanic spirit. He was just a man. One who had not been transformed by the Spirit and power of God.

He was a man whose nature was what we actually would call normal. He had come in from a period of hunting and was searching for that which would satisfy him, and he was unsuccessful. He'd been looking for that which would satisfy him – searching, hunting, diligently longing, watching with a strong desire to get the meat.

Do you understand that this can be a trap for those who have a strong desire for spiritual meat that sometimes, they try to get it before God's timing to receive it? We demand it because there's a hunger within us, and we haven't come to realize that the very purpose of hunger sometimes accomplishes more than its satisfaction.

In the interim period of my being hungry for God, I learn more of the lessons of God than when He suddenly satisfies me with a hunk of meat. We miss some of the greatest lessons of the Spirit because we demand, beforehand, to receive from the Lord what He intends to give us – in His time – later.

Esau comes back from fruitless hunting and begins to smell an aroma. We know what that's like and how he felt. He was famished and coming in says, “Oh, what do I smell?” Beans are cooking. He makes his way over to his brother who seems to have what he's been looking for. He says to him, “I want what you've got, because I want to be satisfied.”

Jacob says, “If you want what I have, you have to give up what you have a right to.”

God has separated some of us out for meat but we see the satisfaction in those who are eating another portion of food and we want their satisfaction. Are we aware that when we are hungry for meat, beans will not bring us the satisfaction that they do for the individual who is hungry for beans?

What if Esau had argued, “Oh, Jacob, I can't give up what I know is going to be mine. I mean, I'm going to get *venison*. It's going to be mine. God has anointed me to be a cunning hunter, a successful hunter. I know that I'm going to find, one day, the total satisfaction of my craving. I can't give you my birthright.”

Jacob could have said, “Then take a look. I am satisfied, and you are dissatisfied. Which of us do you think is right?” Human logic sounds so reasonable, so right.

Time went on. You know the story: the result of the wrath that took place in Esau when he tasted the beans and realized what he had lost. The beans weren't what he was after. He was angry, turning to his brother to kill him, forcing Jacob to flee almost in exile.

But, one day, there comes a meeting of the two brothers, for Jacob has heard a word from God and is returning to the homeland (Gen.32,33). Realizing he's going to be face-to-face with one who hates him, Jacob is fearful. But he's heard from God.

The brothers come together and nothing dreadful happens. (We'll see that reunion with more clarity later). Esau seems to forgive Jacob – seems to anyway. Yet, over four centuries later, as the children of Israel were coming out of captivity in Egypt on their way to Canaan, arriving at this nation Edom, they requested: “Please allow us to pass through your land.” Edom said, “No way are you passing through this territory.” (see Ex.20:14-21).

What had happened? They had never *forgiven* Jacob. They'd never *forgotten* what their forefathers had told them. The bitterness, the anger and the pain of the *profane spirit* that possessed Esau with a right motivation and a wrong way of receiving, had been passed from generation to generation, progressing until the nation of Edom literally hated the nation of God.

As the years passed, the people of Edom became known for their wisdom. They encamped, making their dwelling in the clefts of rocks and in higher places. They were well known for being very wise and wealthy and cunning in their ability to be warriors. Every time they joined with wicked nations, they became a part of them. The rest of the time, they were very passive (Obad.1-9).

The *profane spirit* begins to show very early in our lives. The world has a song from a light opera entitled: “I Want What I Want When I Want It.” There's no better description of a profane spirit than that. We live in a world of instants – instant soup, instant coffee, instant tea, instant noodles, instant anything and everything. It's easy to imagine that soon we'll carry our cars in our purses! ☺ inflating them for instant transportation. We're accustomed to having everything in an instant.

And, whether we want it to or not, my friend, that has a bearing on our approach to spiritual things. Once we see what God has for us, we have a tendency to want it immediately. I have often shared about my son at age four sincerely believing he could drive a car. He had watched me drive for a period of time and knew certain things that mother always did, so he figured if I could do it, he could do it too.

We do the same thing with our heavenly Father. We begin to see patterns in Scripture and people quote rapid fire Scriptures at us, like bullets. “If you say this and do that and if you appropriate it this way, this will happen.” So we say and do as prescribed, and endeavor to appropriate whatever it is we want and it doesn't happen instantly. We become “antsy.”

For example, the Bible declares that if we seek for Him and search for Him with all our hearts, we will find Him (Jer.29:13). It's a promise. Some of us have sought and searched for a day, a month, a year, two years, and we're disappointed today with what we have found – or not found. The reason for that disappointment is that no matter how much of Him we discover, we'll meet someone who seems to know more. Amen? Or, Ouch!

When we discover someone who knows more, has found more, and seems more satisfied, it is natural to ask for their formula. “How do you make your soup?” That is, “How did it happen to you? What steps did you take to get there?”

Let me illustrate from my life. People would far rather schedule me for meetings to come in with two things. Number one, what they call my “testimony” – that's when you hang out all your dirty laundry and tell how the Lord washed it; and number two – how I got from there to here. I could demand almost any price because everyone wants a quick answer – a formula.

But the Lord in His mercy is not passing out *instant maturity*. Instant cleansing, yes. Absolutely yes, immediately, the moment you say, “God, be merciful to me a sinner, and save me by your grace” it is done. Your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Every accusation is wiped out by the appropriation of the Lord Jesus Christ. To every accusation ever made about you, the Lamb says, “See Me about this.” Hallelujah! That's instantaneous.

When you say, “Lord, fill me with Your Holy Spirit. Your Word says if I ask the Father for the Holy Spirit that’s what He’ll give me.” And you are immediately filled with the Holy Spirit. You have, placed within you, a well. You are filled. But as you grow in grace and in knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the well goes deeper and deeper and deeper and deeper and the river that flows out of you becomes clearer and clearer and clearer.

The *profane spirit* says, “I don’t care what method I have to use to get it, and I don’t care even if I have to give up this to get that – I think that would be better than where I am now.” So the basic position is the *self* position.

We can observe the first step of growth or progression of profanity in Obadiah 11. Time has gone on. The Chaldeans, one of the most cruel nations, have joined with the Assyrians and other wicked nations against Israel. Not only have they come against Israel, but they’re winning.

We need to recognize that God’s paydays are going to come. They may not be on our Friday, but God has a payday. One of the most complex things for God’s people to accept (we never understand it) is that the enemy prevails over the Church at certain periods.

Whenever there is a majority of evil and wickedness that prevails against the Church that is the approach, the time, and the preparation for false doctrines to come into the Church. If the enemy appears to be winning, we are vulnerable for anything that will change the status quo. “You see what’s happening? The reason it’s happening is you didn’t do this, you didn’t go this way, you aren’t doing something. You aren’t this, that, and the other thing.”

What should a nation do at a period of time when it is seemingly being overtaken by evil? We have sung it for years: “Turn your eyes upon Jesus; look full in His wonderful face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.” But no, for most of us that’s too slow, so we accept false teaching.

Finally, in a period of “the last ditch stand,” as the people are endeavoring to protect Jerusalem, it says, in verse 11: “*in that day*.” Edom, descendants of Esau, “you stood on the other side.” So the first step of progression in profanity is *indifference*.

I read a statement by James Hastings who said, “No man can live unto himself except by forfeiture of his birthright.” We need to think about that. God has made us to be together. Male and female created He them. And the New Testament says you’re My family: you are members, you are a body, you are an organism, you are a unit, you are one, you are a people.

How many times, how many ways does God, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in the written Word declare unto us: “You’re not alone.” It isn’t just Jesus and me. It’s Jesus in me holding the hand of Jesus in you, and Jesus in another and another, as a unit – the Body – the family coming together. And yet, we just don’t see that.

I was once in a situation where a pastor came to me and said, “Iverna, if you’re within a thousand miles of me in a meeting, call me ahead of time. I will pay my own way into that city. I’ll put myself up, and if you like, I’ll carry your bags for you. I just want to watch you and hear you. I want to hear God speak through you.” Do you know why I was unimpressed with his request? Because I had ministered three times within a hundred miles of him in the previous month and he had not been at one meeting.

How important it is for us to be able to come together jointly, rather than holding ourselves apart as separate entities. May we, as the Body, the Church, learn to work together so that when one is down the other stands on the opposite end of the teeter-totter to bring balance instead of loading our guns and sitting on the opposite side with a spirit of competition, trying to outdo, or closing our eyes hoping the other will fall and then we’ll be number one.

God tells you exactly how He feels about indifference. “In the day I pronounce a curse on you, you’re going to be wiped out, because in the day that your brothers were being overtaken, you stood over to the other side.” (vs.11).

More explicitly, prior to the Charismatic Movement was a move of God called Pentecost. At that time, the classical organized denominational churches stood back, folded their arms and said, “We’ll watch this. It’ll never last. It’s a bunch of foolish, lower socio-economic level personalities who have gotten together and lost their emotional responses to funny fits and visions. It will pass; and when they return, we’ll straighten them out.”

Pentecost became the fastest growing arm of the Church in any period of history. It outgrew any denomination numerically, financially, and spiritually, because Pentecostals were unashamed to meet in storefronts and bank buildings and so on. They grew and grew and God’s blessing, anointing, and power became a reality to them. But their brethren stood on the other side and said, “We’ll watch this thing.”

Seventy some years went by and Pentecost had become quite secure in itself. “We know what we’re doing and we’re organized and we have this and this and this.” Then God began to pour out of His Spirit anew. Some who were sitting in the classic protestant churches, not even knowing about the reality of the Holy Spirit, were saying, “Oh, God, there’s got to be more to this walk than this.” And God heard that prayer. Subsequently He put that well of His Spirit within thousands of earnest seekers.

God began to move – as though unaware of and certainly unafraid of denominational walls – filling thousands of diverse people with His Holy Spirit. The Roman Catholics seized this fresh opportunity. The Protestant denominations never got together so He had to move powerfully and supernaturally in individuals within them.

Observe the pattern so we can be aware of the error and escape it. When this happened, Pentecost stood on the other side saying, “This will never last, it’s just a group of higher socio-economic level personalities who will not stoop to the Pentecostal message. They have lost themselves in fits of emotional response.” But it isn’t going away. It hasn’t been “lost.” Hallelujah! The reality of the Spirit of God within a man, within a woman, is there! It’s real! It’s undeniable! It’s a lasting thing.

Can you imagine what might have happened had all of the organized churches (denominations) discerned the move of Pentecost? All the brother nations, so to speak, would have come together and said, “Let us be workers together with Jesus Christ!” I’d have been raptured as an infant! ☺ Am I aware of schisms in the Body? Of course, I see it. But I am more aware of something else. They are the result of a *profane spirit* that begins with *indifference*.

I saw myself edge toward indifference several years ago. In fact, there’s a slogan that I adopted in my speech. I didn’t know for quite a while that this disturbed my colleague, my secretary. I developed a habit of breathing in and out in a wrong fashion, getting up and saying, “Well, I gotta just keep truckin’.” I didn’t even realize this thing had overtaken me. I was weary in body, spirit, and mind – doing my thing for Jesus. Isn’t that foolish? But I was *doing my thing*, shifting gears: “Here we go; I’ll do what He called me to do. What’s your problem? Just keep truckin’! Someday I’m gonna have a great big crown.”

Then along came God, saying, “I didn’t call you to ‘truck.’ You get tickets just driving a car! ☺ What I’ve called you to do is to *share My heart with My family!*”

I began to pray. To be honest, if I had realized the result of my prayer, I’m not sure I would have been committed enough to pray it! But without much forethought, as soon as the Lord shared that truth with me, I began to pray: “Lord, grant me Your heart and grant me Your compassion.” My friend, that’s a heavy load.

That reminds me of the last part of First Chronicles 15 where the historian relates the story of those priests who went back to get the Ark and carry it on their shoulders. The Bible says, “And the Lord helped them bear the burden of the Lord.” So it is today, that without His help, we could not endure His compassion.

God says, “I don’t want indifference.” We’re not to have this attitude: “Que sera, que sera – Whatever will be, will be.” That’s for the world, not the Church. We dare not stand back to see what will happen. “The other side of the mountain” or “I was looking back to see if you were looking back to see if I was looking back to see if you were looking back at me.” We do that, don’t we?

Do you ever feel like a domino placed in a stack? Waiting for someone to push the first one over so all fall down, one after another? That’s exactly the position of Edom. They were totally indifferent. But **neutrality is not permitted to exist when the cause is between right and wrong.** Neutrality is allowed when we’re dealing with *methods* in our walk with God – not everyone has to do things just the way we do. We can leave it to God to lead His people His way.

The ultimate goal and position of the Assyrians was destruction of the nation and the people of God; to bring them into bondage and slavery. The Edomites stood back and said, “Well, we figure it this way: If their God’s going to deliver them, let Him deliver them. If He doesn’t deliver them, what can we do?” But God says, “You shouldn’t have even looked at them.” What’s He actually saying? He’s saying, “You saw the dilemma and refused to get involved.”

In the book of Habakkuk, the writer cried, “Why do You let me see it? Why do You show me iniquity?” **When God allows us illumination concerning negatives that are occurring, it’s because He wants us involved.** Involved to do what? To set up our guns and kill the enemy? No. To support the family of God; to be with God’s people. He wants us to *stand*.

The **second step** toward a *profane spirit* is verse 13: ***injury. Indifference leads to hostility.*** A neutral position progresses to hostile feelings as we defend our own positions. “They’re just getting what they have coming. After all, remember the story of Jacob and Esau. Now God’s showing them. He’s shown them before and He’ll do it again.”

I’m afraid we have seen indifference in the hearts of some of the family of God today, and it’s turning to hostility. Now they’re declaring our walls will be totally torn down, so they can win. How do we do that? By **criticism, innuendo**, and the approach that certain sins are unpardonable sins.

Let me illustrate. I’m not defensive for the divorcee. I don’t feel that need anymore, thank God. But – I don’t think I go to seven out of ten churches where I don’t meet at least one divorcee who has been eliminated from social fellowship and spiritual duties that she(or he) had when married. Sunday School teachers who taught for twenty years, ten years, two years – their homes break up, for whatever reasons, and they are out – just out. I don’t look for the innocent party because I don’t believe there is one. If it takes two to make a marriage, it takes two to break it. Until we come to that realization, we can’t be set free. Until I say, “Lord, I have sinned,” it can’t be forgiven!

For whatever reason the home broke up, the Church takes a stand: first of indifference. Did you ever try to get counseling while going through a divorce? The Church is scared to death to say anything because if it ends up in divorce, they might get the blame. So, it’s indifferent.

Then, it turns to hostility. I hear pastors say, “Uh, listen, uh, we’ve got – I’ve never seen anything like it – I don’t know what to do. We’ve got twenty divorcees in our church and I guess we can’t just kick them out.” True statement. What are they saying? They’re saying they put a premium on some sins. This can be forgiven, but that can’t.

A man came to me in a singles' meeting and asked if I would understand if he said he wished he had murdered his wife. Instead, he divorced her and lost his position in the church, etc. He went through the whole usual scene. I could almost sing the background tune. My response was: "Yes, my brother. I would understand what you're saying to me. The Church would forgive murder; that is not one of their 'unpardonables.'

We must be careful that we do not shoot our wounded. Who knows? God might take the wounded and ripped-apart life of some spoiled rotten Iverna and put her back together with His grace and remold and reshape and refill and even be able to use her as a platter on which to serve His bounty. Who knows the grace of God? Who knows the extent of the mercy of God?

Certainly, I see leaders who are teaching some things I don't agree with. But whether they claim me or not, I claim them. They are my brothers and sisters – and I see some wounds. I don't know who God is going to remold, but *I dare not become indifferent lest I become hostile. If I become hostile, I will injure.*

The family is the Lord's; I'm a member of it. He is the Father. His correction methods are superior, supreme, divine, supernatural. His grace exceeds my comprehension and His mercy is renewed from day to day. His compassions fail not. I don't know why He lets some individuals go on certain paths for periods of time. I'm not God. But I don't want to stand aside when I see them hurting and say, "Raze them! Clear down to the foundations!"

I want to be one who is ready at any time to *respond* to any brother or sister should they glance toward me. When they say, "Sis," I want to be able to say, "Yes, can I help you? Can I pray? Can I support? Can I encourage? Is there any place in your life I can be strength alongside of you?" Oh, Church, do you see it? We've got to be delivered from the *profane spirit* that demands that things be done "our way or you're out."