

Sixth Commandment

#0557

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—August 7, 1964

Well, we've been having a good time together from evening to evening studying this great threefold message, haven't we, friends? And I'm sure that we're all agreed that there's a great deal more in this message. I trust that what we have studied together in these last few weeks will encourage us all to keep studying Revelation the 14th chapter. Because the great purpose of this message is to prepare a people who will welcome Jesus when He appears:

“...Not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing...”
Ephesians 5:27.

Now this evening, I'm going to ask you to read or repeat with me again Revelation the 14th chapter and the 12th verse. This is the climax, the goal of the entire threefold message, the development of these people. All together:

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that
keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus”
Revelation 14:12.

Now, in connection with this study of keeping the commandments of God, we have noted several of the commandments. This evening, I'd like to remind you that God's great purpose in the new covenant is to write this law where? In our hearts, our hearts and minds. So that we will know His will fully and love it fully. Of course, if we know it fully and love it fully, we will do it fully, won't we? Yes.

The only reason that anybody ever fails to keep one of God's commandments is either that he doesn't know it, or doesn't love it. Am I correct? If you know it and love it, you'll do it, no trouble at all. That's why Jesus says:

“For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light” Matthew 11:30.

Now, with this thought in mind, let us meditate this evening on one of these Ten Commandments. And tonight, we're going to look at, not the First Commandment. We've looked at that. Nor the last, we've looked at that. Not the longest one, but the shortest commandment in the whole list.

What is the shortest commandment in the ten? Which one is it, the shortest one? The sixth one, that's right. Will you say it with me?

“Thou shalt not kill” Exodus 20:13.

And I suppose that my audience tonight, in reflecting on this, will say, “Well, I’m glad we’re going to study that commandment for that’s one that I know I haven’t broken.”

Well, let us see. The Psalmist says:

“...Thy commandment is exceeding broad” Psalm 119:96.

Jesus came to:

“...magnify the law, and make it honourable” Isaiah 42:21.

And I trust tonight that under the influence of the sweet Spirit of Jesus, our eyes shall be opened that we may behold wondrous things out of His law [a paraphrase of Psalm 119:18].

The Sixth Commandment:

“Thou shalt not kill” Exodus 20:13.

Now, the particular application of this commandment that I would like to study with you tonight relates to the matter of being noncombatants, noncombatants.

You know, we as a denomination are noted for our stand in reference to warfare. Is that correct? Yes. And when our men are called into army service, they decline to take a gun and shoot somebody, even though that person may be an enemy. Even though it might be somebody that was going to shoot them, you understand.

Now, why do our men take that stand? Well, it’s on the basis of this Sixth Commandment, isn’t it?

“Thou shalt not kill” Exodus 20:13.

And this evening, I would like to have you turn to Matthew the 26th chapter and note what it seems to me is perhaps the greatest example of fidelity to this principle. If there ever was a time when it was proper to kill somebody in defense of somebody else, it seems to me it was at midnight in the garden of Gethsemane when the mob came to take the innocent, kind, loving Jesus and carry Him away to murder Him. And that was what somebody thought. Do you remember what his name was? Peter. All right.

Now, the mob is there; they’ve surrounded Jesus. And Peter is anxious to do something about it. Let’s read Matthew 26, beginning with the 51st verse:

“And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus

stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear"
Matthew 26:51.

Do you suppose that's what he aimed to do was just cut the ear off? He probably had intentions to do more than that. But the man either dodged, or Peter's aim wasn't so good, or something. At any rate, all that came off was the ear. But that could be rather painful, couldn't it, to have your ear cut off?

"Then said Jesus unto him... " Matthew 26:52.

That's to Peter, the man that had taken the sword and cut off the servant's ear in the endeavor to defend Jesus.

"Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Matthew 26:52–54.

I call your attention to the fact that the Savior's words on this occasion are in strong agreement with the Sixth Commandment, which His own finger had put upon the stone long before:

"Thou shalt not kill" Exodus 20:13.

So, He says to Peter, do what with that sword?

"Put it back where it belongs, put it in its place. Put it in its sheath," as one of the other Gospel writers says [see John 18:11].

Peter thought, "Isn't that strange. I'm trying to help Jesus, and He doesn't appreciate it."

"Put up the sword, Peter. Don't use it. Don't hurt anybody."

In fact, Jesus went right to work as a medical missionary and did what with that ear? He healed it. He restored it. It was just as good as it was before. He undid Peter's work, blessed Jesus.

And was that man that Jesus healed a friend of Jesus? No, he was an enemy of Jesus. But He made no difference between friends and enemies when it came to doing His work of mercy. He loved men, and friends, the secret of the Sixth Commandment is love.

“Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” Romans 13:10.

All right. Now, you notice that Jesus goes on to give Peter three reasons for putting up the sword. It should have been enough for Jesus to simply tell Peter, “Put up the sword.”

But Christ was so anxious that this be understood not only by Peter but by all the disciples and by us today, that in addition to the plain command, “Put up the sword,” He gives three reasons. And I’d like to have you notice them tonight.

Somebody might say, “Well, Brother Frazee, why are you spending time on this commandment? None of us is going to kill anybody.”

Well, I hope you won’t, friend, but I’ll tell you frankly, somebody here tonight is going to be saved from breaking this commandment by listening to this study. I hope there are several here that will. So, open your eyes and open your hearts, and let’s ask God to help us. All right.

Now, what is the first reason that He gives Peter for putting up the sword and not using it? What’s the first? What does it say there?

“...All they that...” Matthew 26:52.

What?

“...take the sword shall...” Matthew 26:52.

What?

“...perish with the sword” Matthew 26:52.

In other words, He’s saying to Peter, “This whole idea is a futile one and a fatal one. Don’t use that sword because if you do, it’s only a matter of time till it’ll be used on you.”

How many a man has found that out? You know, in the days of the old west, there was many a man that lived by the gun. But what happened to him, finally? He died by the gun, didn’t he? Sure. Hundreds of men had that experience. And no matter how quick on the draw he was, someday somebody got him.

“...All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” Matthew 26:52.

So, that’s reason number one, Jesus says. Don’t do it.

Now, the next one:

“Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?” Matthew 26:53.

“Why Peter, you and the other disciples here, trying to protect Me. Bless your hearts. Don’t you know that My Father can give me a legion for every one of My twelve disciples? Why, I could have hundreds, thousands of angels here at a word to protect Me. Do I need your sword, Peter? No, no.”

“My Father is looking after Me, and He could send Me twelve legions of angels right now. So Peter, the sword is not only dangerous for you to use, it’s utterly unnecessary. The angels could do a better job.”

But as the disciples heard that, they thought, “Oh, why doesn’t He send for the angels then, and save Himself and us.”

And now, comes the third reason why Jesus tells Peter to put up the sword:

“But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” Matthew 26:54.

In other words, “Peter, your sword is not only dangerous to yourself sooner or later, and it’s not only unnecessary but it would be a definite hindrance. It’s an obstacle in the way of carrying out the plan and purpose of God.”

“And instead of helping Me, you don’t realize it, Peter, but using the sword would interfere with My plan and purpose, with My Father’s plan and purpose.”

So, there are the three reasons for not using the sword.

You know, Jesus was so settled in the fact that His Father’s will was the purpose of His life and that God could take care of Him in doing that, that He never did one thing in self-defense throughout His whole life here on earth. Even as a child, many times He met difficulties, problems, opposition, abuse, suffering. It was heaped upon Him. But under it all, He never resorted to retaliation. He never fought back.

And that same night that we’re studying here of Gethsemane, as He was taken in by that mob, all the way along they were hooting and reviling Him and beating Him, hitting Him, mocking Him. You’ll remember the terrible experiences that He went through before the priest, before the Sanhedrin, before Pilate, before Herod.

Speaking prophetically of this, Christ says in the 50th chapter of Isaiah and the 6th verse:

“I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not My face from shame and spitting” Isaiah 50:6.

Yes, He was like a lamb led to the slaughter, dumb, dumb. No retaliation, no fighting back, no anger, nothing of that kind. Why? Ah friends, He knew that His Father was looking out for Him, and He was more anxious that His Father’s will should be carried out.

And so, as John tells the story over in the 18th of John, the last thing that Jesus said to Peter as He told him to put up the sword was:

“...The cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it” John 18:11.

Yes, He was going to drink the cup that His Father had given Him.

Now, I want to read a comment from the book *Mount of Blessing*, page 71. This is wonderful, and oh, I hope that everyone here tonight will get the joy of it:

“The Father’s presence encircled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and it is for us. He who is imbued with the Spirit of Christ abides in Christ. The blow that is aimed at him falls upon the Savior, who surrounds him with His presence. Whatever comes to him comes from Christ. He has no need to resist evil, for Christ is his defense. Nothing can touch him except by our Lord’s permission, and ‘all things’ that are permitted, ‘work together for good to them that love God’” *Mount of Blessing*, page 71.

That, my friends, is why we’re noncombatants. That’s why if someone smites us on the right cheek, what are we to do? Turn the other, turn the other, yes [see Matthew 5:39]. And my dear friends, that doesn’t mean, turn it, hoping that they’ll get sorry and let you alone. It means turn it, expecting that perhaps you’re going to get slapped on that side, too, see. That’s the way they did Jesus. They didn’t get kind to Him as they saw how meek and yielding He was that night, did they? Did they? Not a bit of it.

And His older brothers, those stepbrothers back in Nazareth, as Jesus, as a little boy and growing up as a young man, as the abuse was heaped upon Him and the extra burdens and all that, did they now and then get relenting, and finally get to love little Jesus so much and appreciate Him so much that they didn’t abuse Him anymore? Did they? Not a bit of it! Read the story there in *Desire of Ages*, “As a Child” and “Days of Conflict,” those chapters.

Christ knew what He was talking about, my dear friends. He lived the life, and it's all the demonstration of this wonderful law, the law of love.

In other words, "Don't kill, even if you have to suffer. No matter what, don't retaliate, don't fight back. Don't fight at all."

Why? First of all, it's dangerous; second, it's unnecessary, God's looking after you; and third and most important, if you do, you will interfere with God's plan. You will interfere with the working out of His purpose. You will defeat (as far as you are concerned) the purpose of God if you take up arms in self-defense. You will spoil the revelation of His love.

"...The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink of it?" John 18:11.

"So, for all these reasons Peter, put up the sword again into its sheath."

All right. Now, I'd like to study with you for a few minutes another sword. Not Peter's sword, your sword. Let's turn over to the 57th Psalm and the 4th verse; Proverbs the 12th chapter and the 18th verse. Here's a sword that needs to go into the sheath, and it needs to stay there, friends. I'd like to have you turn to both of those texts. Let's see whether we are noncombatants or not. All right.

Have you found it? What's *this* sword? A what? A sharp tongue. Is that what it says? Yes. David is suffering under that—the 57th Psalm and the 4th verse. If you read the line just before the 1st verse, David composed this Psalm when he was in the cave. It says:

"...When he fled from Saul in the cave..." Psalm 57:1.

He was fleeing for his life. He says:

"My soul is among lions: and I lie even among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword"
Psalm 57:4.

Did you ever get pierced with somebody's tongue? Did you? Yes. All right.

Twelfth of Proverbs the 18th verse:

"There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health" Proverbs 12:18.

And I want to tell you, friends, every one of us is either like Peter, in the business of using the tongue like a sword to cut people's ears off, or else we're like Jesus, the

great medical missionary, trying to heal what somebody else has wounded. That's right. Everybody here is one, or the other. Oh, I hope we'll all get in the true medical missionary program. What do you say? Healing instead of hurting, saving instead of killing.

Can the tongue kill? Let me tell you something, friends, that I read not too long ago. I came across it in a very interesting testimony. Not long after the death of Elder James White in 1881, Sister White wrote to the Battle Creek church, and I have the printed testimony. She said that her husband died of a broken heart because of the things his brethren and sisters said about him.

You mean that that can kill a man? Yes, yes. It can kill a man, it can kill a man. And 23 years later at Berrien Springs, Michigan, Sister White took part in the funeral of Dr. Magan's first wife, and she told that audience that that dear woman lying there died a martyr to unsanctified tongues. Yes.

"There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword..."
Proverbs 12:18.

Let's take another text on this, Proverbs the 18th chapter and the 8th verse; Proverbs the 26th chapter and the 22nd verse. What does Proverbs 18:8 say?

By the way, what does it take to say words? The tongue, that's that sword again.

"The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly" Proverbs 18:8.

Peter's sword got a man's ear, but the tongue can pierce deeper down. And my dear friends, a deep body wound is a serious thing. Am I right, doctor? Yes. Listen, did you ever hear somebody say something, or did you ever have somebody tell you what somebody *had* said, and did it hit you right in the stomach, right in the solar plexus? Any of you ever had that experience? Ah, yes. The tongue can be a sharp sword. And Jesus is saying to every one of us, as He said to Peter:

"...Put up thy sword into the sheath..." John 18:11.

I wonder what the sheath is. My friends, there's a double sheath there: two lips that come together and two sets of teeth that come together. And the tongue is supposed to stay inside that double-wall, except to bring blessings. That's right. And whenever the tongue darts out, except for bringing blessings, then it's a what? It's a sword. It's a sword.

And Jesus is saying:

"...Put up again thy sword into his place..." Matthew 26:52.

And He adds:

“...For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword” Matthew 26:52.

Ah dear one, do you know why some of us have had to suffer under accusing tongues and tattling tongues and tale-bearing tongues and rumor-reporting tongues? Do you know why? Well, I'll tell you why. It's to teach us to quit that sort of business ourselves. That's right, that's right.

And remember, every time that somebody says something about you that isn't true, and what hurts worse sometimes is when they say something about us that *is* true, friend, am I correct? Oh, yes. But whichever it is that hurts us remember, that's either because you've already used your tongue in that way, and God is letting you see how it feels. Or else God looks ahead and sees that you're going to be tempted tomorrow, next week, sometime, to use your tongue to pierce somebody, and He wants you to feel in advance how it hurts and learn to not do it. That's it, friend. Be a noncombatant.

Say, “I won't kill. I won't kill. I won't use my tongue to hurt somebody. I won't take that sharp sword and pierce somebody with it. No, no. I won't cut off somebody's ear with it so they can't hear God's message. And I certainly won't pierce down to the innermost parts of the body and cause a deep body wound. I will not break somebody's heart.”

Do you see, friends, what I mean when I said that this Sixth Commandment is one we need to study? Wouldn't it be awful to stand by the coffin of somebody and know, or even think that perhaps *you* might have had a part in hounding them to their death? Wouldn't it be a terrible feeling, friends? But it has happened. And somebody here is going to have that experience unless we learn this lesson, my friends.

Concerning the 144,000, those that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, it is written:

“...In their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God” Revelation 14:5.

You see, that's the echo of James' statement:

“...If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body” James 3:2.

Ah friend, let's think over our lives tonight. What have we been using our tongues for, to heal or to hurt, to kill or to restore? God help us to be convicted by His holy law as we look into the mirror.

“But,” somebody says, “I know, *but...*”

Well, that's what Peter thought, "I know, but..."

In other words, "I don't just go around talking about anybody and everybody, but there are some things that have to be handled."

That's what Peter thought. That's what he thought. He thought he was doing it to help whom? To help Jesus.

But Jesus said, "Peter, don't do it, for three reasons. First, it's going to come back to you if you do. Second, I don't need it. The angels can do a better job. And third, if you do it you will interfere with God's plan."

"...The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" John 18:11.

"Don't get in the road and try to prevent it."

Jesus would rather suffer than cause others to suffer. How often friends we have the feeling that we will not use our tongues except in self-defense.

In other words, "I didn't say anything until *he* started talking about me."

Well, that was Peter's feeling. He wasn't running after that servant the day before, was he? He didn't do a thing to that servant until the servant came out there to try to hurt Jesus.

And then he said, "This has gone too far. I'm going to stop this."

I was interested in a little statement here in *Volume 1*, page 165. This is talking about some people in New York. I don't know whether there's anybody here from New York or not, but I'm going to read it and see whether you're from New York. Of course, I should tell you that this was given July 6, 1857.

And that was even before you were born, wasn't it, sister? Yes.

So, this is not talking about anybody here tonight. Or is it? Let's see.

"I saw that many in New York have had so much care for their brethren, to keep them straight, that they have neglected their own hearts. They are so fearful that their brethren will not be zealous and repent, that they forget that they have wrongs that must be righted. With their own hearts unsanctified, they try to right their brethren. Now the only way the brethren and sisters in New York can rise is for each to attend to his individual case, and

set his own heart in order” *Testimonies for the Church, Volume 1*, page 165.

And now comes two lines that I wish we’d meditate on:

“If sin is plain in a brother, breathe it not to another...”
Ibid.

“Well, that’s the time to tell somebody—when it’s plain, isn’t it?”

No.

“If sin is plain in a brother, breathe it not to another...”
Ibid.

Can you talk without breathing? How many here can talk without breathing?
Nobody? Well, that’s correct.

“If sin is plain in a brother, breathe it not to another...”
Ibid.

Will you say that with me?

“If sin is plain in a brother, breathe it not to another...”
Ibid.

“Well, it’s all right for me to tell my wife, isn’t it? It’s all right for me to tell the minister so he can do something about it. It’s all right to tell the church elder so he can get on the track of that man and set him straight. It’s all right to do *that*, isn’t it?”

“If sin is plain in a brother, breathe it not to another...”
Ibid.

Will you say it again?

“If sin is plain in a brother, breathe it not to another...”
Ibid.

Once more:

“If sin is plain in a brother, breathe it not to another...”
Ibid.

“Well, what *shall* we do?”

All right. I’ll finish the sentence:

“If sin is plain in a brother, breathe it not to another, but with love for the brother’s soul, with a heart full of compassion, with bowels of mercy, tell *him* the wrong, then leave the matter with him and the Lord. You have discharged your duty. You are not to pass sentence”
Ibid.

Ah, friends. Why, isn’t that just what Jesus had told Peter and the rest of the disciples in Matthew 18? Isn’t it there? Turn, let’s take a look at it, Matthew 18, beginning with the 15th verse, how to use the tongue to heal instead of to hurt, to save instead of to murder.

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell...” Matthew 18:15.

Well, let’s stop there a minute.

“...Go and tell...” Matthew 18:15.

“...Go and tell...” Matthew 18:15.

That’s where some people stop, isn’t it, right there?

“...Go and tell...” Matthew 18:15.

Now, there’s a verse that speaks about:

“...rightly dividing the word of truth” 2 Timothy 2:15.

I wonder why inspiration put in *rightly* dividing. Is there a wrong way to divide this Scripture? Would it be wrong to stop right here? Yes.

“...If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell...”
Matthew 18:15.

Would it be wrong to stop there? Did you ever stop right there? Did you ever read that far and say, “All right. I’m going to tell”?

And start out with a jet plane. But that isn’t what it says.

“...Go and tell...” Matthew 18:15.

What?

“...*him* his fault between thee and him alone” Matthew 18:15.

I wonder why Jesus put that in there:

“...between thee and him alone” Matthew 18:15.

Well, because that’s what He meant, that’s what He meant. Did you ever try it?

“Oh, but I couldn’t do that. They might be offended.”

Of course, they won’t be offended if they hear three days later that you’ve told the neighborhood. That won’t offend them at all, will it? No. They learn that you’ve told the pastor about it, told this one and that one and the other one. That won’t bother them at all, but it would hurt them awfully if you’d go and talk to them about it. Is that it, friends? God pity us.

Do you know what’s the matter with us? Well, I leave it with you to study. But let’s come back to what He said. If he has done the wrong thing:

“...Go and...” Matthew 8:15.

Do what?

“...tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee...” Matthew 18:15–16.

I wonder why Jesus put that in. Because sometimes they won’t.

Well, you say, “That’s what’s the matter. That’s why I’m not going.”

That isn’t what Jesus said. It says, “Go.”

And then, if they won’t hear you, then what? “Then”—what does “then” mean? After you did the first.

“...Then take with thee one or two more...” Matthew 18:16.

“You mean I have to go back to him again?”

That’s what it says. After all, he’s the one that needs help, isn’t he? Yes. The place to put a bandage is where the sore is, isn’t it? That’s right.

“...Then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established” Matthew 18:16.

Now, I want to ask you something. And I'm not going to ask you to raise your hands, for I don't want to embarrass anybody, except in your own hearts. It's all right for you to be embarrassed privately.

I want to ask you something. How many times in your life, whether you're 15 years old, or 50, or 100, how many times in your life have you taken one or two more and labored with somebody over something that you had tried to help them personally with and did not succeed? How many times have you taken this second step and taken one or two more with you?

And I'll tell you this, friends. I'm not a rich man as you know, but I think I'd be safe in offering a dollar to every person here tonight that's ever done that. I don't think it would break my bank. But this is one of the commandments of God, and the remnant are going to do what? Keep the commandments of God.

Now, I'm going to ask you another question, and again I don't want you to hold up your hand. How many of you have ever had two or three people, one of whom had come to you and labored with you over a point, and now they come and labor with you two or three together? How many of you have ever had that experience, friends? I venture to say that there are very few in this audience that have ever had that treatment. But friends, we need it, we need to give it, and we need to receive it. That's why Jesus put it in the book. It's not obsolete. It's not antique. It's right up to date. We need it. And listen, if we ever needed it, we need it in this last generation as we seek to get ready for translation.

Oh friends, let's become experts in using the tongue to help instead of to hurt. What do you say? And let us rejoice in our privilege. When we've tried to help somebody, and they haven't seen the point, or haven't yielded, then take one or two more.

Notice, Jesus doesn't say, "After you've tried to help them, then report it and hope somebody else will take up the burden."

"...Take with *thee* one or two more..." Matthew 18:16.

Take them where? Why, to the same man you tried to help.

You know, I've thought about it, friends. Some of us have things that really need to come out of our lives. I suppose most of us do. And I believe many of us would get a great deal of help if the people that talk *about* us would talk *to* us. I think we could just get educated fast.

Someone was showing me the other day some interesting rocks, just rocks, you know. But they'd been put in something and tumbled, tumbled one against another for a certain period of time. And you know how they came out of that tumbler? Polished, beautiful. Say, folks, let's be willing to get that kind of help. What do you say?

But listen, the only way that those rocks can get that way is to come in contact with one another. And the only way I can help my brother is to go to *him*, right? And the only way he can help me is to come to *me*. Let's practice it. What do you say? And let's rejoice in it.

And listen, friends, I'll tell you frankly. I think we ought to do everything we can to help people to do this because it's hard at best, especially for people to get started. And I'm not sure that Jesus meant that it should be easy to just go around telling this one and that one, you know, that they ought to do this and that.

Really, if you study the Spirit of Prophecy comment on this, we are to pray earnestly over this matter before we go to somebody, and we're to reach the place where we're willing to lay down our lives for the brother we're trying to help.

Well, thank God, friends, there's going to be a remnant that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Do you think they're going to keep the Sixth Commandment?

"Thou shalt not kill" Exodus 20:13.

Well, let's start keeping it. What do you say? All right.

Now, I come back to this thought of doing things to defend ourselves or others.

Jesus says, "Peter, put up that sword because My Father is looking after Me, and it's a part of His plan for Me to suffer this. And the cup which My Father has given Me, I'm going to drink it."

Listen friends, don't think that if you quit using *your* tongue to hurt others, don't think that that means and guarantees that from now on nobody will hurt *you*. No, don't think it. Jesus never did use the sword or His tongue in self-defense, and we've gone over that ground. Did it ensure Him an easy life? No. No one was ever so persecuted as Jesus was.

Listen. Settle it in your heart tonight, two things. First, you're not going to use your tongue to hurt others. Second, you're going to be willing to accept whatever hurting your Father permits to come to you from the tongues of others. And you're not going to rise up in self-defense and start accusing others because they accuse you. Settle it in your heart.

Let me read it to you in a little poem that I love. This is on Jesus' statement:

"...The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?" John 18:11.

"I will not take that bitter thrust which rent my heart today,
As coming from an earthly soul, though it was meant that way.
But I will look beyond the tool because my life is planned.
I take the cup my Father gives. I take it from His hand.

He knows and even thus allows these little things that irk.
I trust His wisdom and His love. Let patience have her work.
Though human means have brought the sting, I firmly take this stand.
My loving Father holds the cup. I take it from His hand.

Now those who watch may wonder why these things do not disturb.
I look right past the instrument and see my Lord superb.
The trials which would lay me low must pass through His command.
He holds the outstretched cup to me. I take it from His hand."
Author unknown.

Oh friends, if we'll settle that tonight, we'll be true noncombatants. We won't kill.
We may be killed, but we won't kill. And Jesus was killed, but He rose from the dead.

You know, I was meditating on it today, really after it was all over, don't you
suppose Peter and all the disciples and Jesus, seeing the whole thing work out, don't
you think they were all glad that the plan was carried out and Jesus died, rather than kill
those people that came to kill Him? Don't you think they were?

And listen, if you and I will be willing to suffer rather than get that sword out and
start using it, in the end, friends, we'll be so thankful and so happy.

Friends, you know, as I think about this, I'm sorry for every word I've ever spoken
to hurt others, even when I was trying to defend myself and my reputation. I'm sorry. I
wish I hadn't done it. And I'm thankful, so thankful, that I've lived long enough to see
that when God has helped me not to do it, eventually God had His way of working
things out. And He's a much better manager than I am.

"...The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not
drink it?" John 18:11.

I'd like to ask you a question tonight. And this one I'm going to ask for a
response on. For my dear friends, there is a time, there is a time to make a decision,
and there is a time to make a confession. And there's a time before men and angels to
express ourselves. And I'm going to give an opportunity here tonight on a very specific
question.

If there is somebody here tonight that says, "God has spoken to my heart. I see
that I have used my tongue to hurt others, and I'm sorry, and I want God to forgive me,
and I want others to forgive me, and I want to take my stand tonight. With God helping
me, I'm not going to use that tongue to hurt others, and I'm going to be willing to be hurt

if others hurt me. I'm going to leave that with God and not scurry around trying to fight back. I'm going to settle those two things."

And I'm not making this as a general call, but specifically, if God has spoken to your heart and you say, "The Holy Spirit says to me, 'thou art the man'" and you want to make that confession and that dedication, that repentance and that consecration tonight, just stand where you are, friends if that's what you want to do, and let the Holy Spirit write these things in your heart.

Ah friends, thank God for His wonderful love, thank God for His wonderful love.

"Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole;
I want Thee forever to live in my soul;
Break down every idol, cast out every foe;
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.
Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow;
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."
Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, #318, first stanza.

Dear ones, if the Holy Spirit brings to our mind someone that we've wounded with the sword, let's go and ask Jesus to help heal that wound we've made. What do you say? And listen, if somebody has wounded us, do you think that Jesus would be glad if we'd forgive them? What do you say?

Now, if it takes the Holy Spirit 10 years to bring them around to the place of asking us to forgive them, shall we hold that for 10 years, or shall we forgive them right now? That's right. Jesus, when those cruel soldiers were nailing Him to the cross prayed, what was it?

"...Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do..." Luke 23:34.

"Well," somebody says, "why they knew what they were doing, driving nails through a man's hand."

Ah dear ones, let us get that spirit of forgiving love from Jesus. What do you say? We can't manufacture it, but if we look at the One who was the living law in whose life this law was fully displayed and revealed and manifested and demonstrated, He will reveal Himself to us and in us and through us. And with His love, we shall be able to love others as He loves them.

And when that work is done in us, then we're ready for heaven, when we love people as He loves them. Thank God for the blessed work that's been done in our hearts tonight. And if we'll keep looking, we'll keep living, friends.

So, may the Lord bless us as we go out from this little vesper service tonight, that

we may seek to heal every wound that we have made, and that we shall also forgive anyone who has wounded us.

Our Father in heaven, with all our hearts, we thank Thee for the privilege of being noncombatants, of standing with Jesus not to resist evil men with their swords, but to receive the thrusts in love and forgiveness, in mercy. Oh Lord, teach us Thy sweet way, we pray. Write Thy holy law in all our hearts tonight. May we love men, those who love us and those who hate us, and may these swords stay within their sheaths. May these tongues issue from their place only to heal and help. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

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