

# The Life of a Man Who Lost Something

by David Ravenhill

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual growth and progress, and how it requires evaluation, examination, determination, and submission.*

**Duration:** 42:55

**Scripture:** Luke 15:8

**Topics:** "Spiritual Restoration", "Faith And Repentance"

---

## Description

This sermon focuses on the story of a man who lost his axe head and the process of restoration, emphasizing the importance of acknowledging where we have lost our spiritual cutting edge, confessing our sins, applying the cross to our situations, and reaching out in faith to receive restoration from God.

---

## Transcript

This morning I want to change gears. I was speaking on spiritual warfare in the first service this morning and I will pick that up again tonight if you are interested in that topic, which everybody should be because we're all in the same battle. We all have the same adversary.

The Bible says he's your adversary and he goes around seeking to undermine, destroy everything that God is trying to do in your life and my life and in the kingdom. This morning I want to look into the life of a man who lost something. I've often thought, you know, if we could change the Bible, we could call it or put a new title on it, Lost and Found Department because it's full of lost and found individuals, isn't it? We were all lost, we've been found, at least by the grace of God.

But it's amazing how many situations or how many stories we have recorded of lost things and there's nothing worse than losing something. You know, you lose your car keys, drives you crazy, you know, you lose your dog or your cat or some other thing. I was in Wales a couple of years ago and I'd booked one of these long, long flights.

I had a seven or eight hour layover in New York City, flew to Scotland, then down to Wales, and then I had to take a bus to the train station, take the train to a little town by the name of Swansea to speak at a Bible college there. And after all of that travel, it was at least by that time about 26 hours, I guess, something like that, I got on the bus and the airport is way out in the country and I'm about two miles down the road and I realized I'm holding onto my suitcase and my backpack with my Bible, my passports and everything else, you know, I left behind and the panic that seized me at that moment, you know, how do I get off the bus?

How do I get back here? It's a country road all the way back and so a long story short, I eventually got back and somebody had found it and turned it in and thank God for that, but when you lose something, there's nothing worse than that. The Bible is again full of stories like that.

The man that had 100 sheep and they lost one. The woman that had 10 coins and she lost one. David that lost everything.

Remember when he went out to fight with the Philistines and came back to Ziklag, the city that they'd given him only to find out the whole thing had been destroyed. He'd lost his wives and children. All the men that were with him had lost their wives and so on and you can imagine that feeling where David, the Bible says of course, recovered everything, but his men were gonna turn against him and stone him one of the darkest nights and I'm sure in David's life when his own men, these mighty men, turned against him.

You mighty men, don't turn against us. David over here, I'll be after you. But anyway, so we have all these stories, but the story I want to draw your attention to is found in the Book of Kings.

If you have your Bible open this morning to 2 Kings chapter six. Let me give you a little bit of a background. This is a Bible college that we are gonna be visiting.

You said, I didn't know there was a Bible college in the Bible. Well, there was. In fact, if we make it more specific, it was a school of prophets.

Most people feel that it was started by Samuel. After Samuel died, Elijah took it over. After Elijah died, Elisha came in and was sort of the leader of the group because the Bible actually numbers them.

50 of the sons of the prophets went out, you recall, searching for Elisha when he was caught up and of course, they ridiculed Elijah over it and said, I think your master was just caught up and God dumped him somewhere in one of these valleys. And so 50 of them went out searching, of course, didn't find him. So we know there were 50 students at least in this school and what I want to do, I want to sort of break it down and this is one of those teaching things, so bear with me.

The first thing is their convocation. Their convocation, that's a fancy word for gathering. There was a convocation, there was a gathering together of these students.

Now, you don't read it specifically, but if you meditate, one of the things I enjoy about the Word of God is meditation and meditation sort of reveals things and in other words, there's a sequence here, you'll see it as we go along, but they have come together to discuss something, which is the second thing, their evaluation or their examination. In other words, this group of students has got together who call the gathering, we don't know, but we do know that they were all involved in it and there is a discussion. The discussion is, where are we going? So, it's good every once in a while to have an examination.

One of the things I hated in school were exams. Anybody can identify with that? They reveal your knowledge or your lack thereof. In my case, the lack thereof.

And invariably, back in the old school days in England, I don't know if they do it so much in America, but you would exchange your paper with somebody in front of you, behind you and the teacher then would grade it. Invariably, it was the cutest girl in the class who got your paper and the one that you thought, boy, I'd do anything to have a date with that one. And she hands it back to you with an F on it and you hand hers back with an A on it and you think, not a chance in the world of this ever coming together.

But anyway, an examination, I still don't like examinations, whether they're physical examinations where you go to the doctor for an exam or it's a mental examination or whatever, but it's good to examine yourself. The Bible, in fact, exhorts us in Corinthians, examine yourself. I would suggest that every once in a while, maybe once a year at least, you take an hour or two or three, get alone somewhere or maybe go rent a cabin somewhere and have a thorough examination of your life.

In other words, what have I achieved so far in my life? What do I hope to achieve? Where am I going? What are some of the things that are hindering me and so on and so forth? And so this group of students have got together and they call this convocation, this gathering, and they are examining themselves, trying to figure out what is going on, where are we going and so on and so forth. They come to this conclusion, which is the third thing, their dissatisfaction. They are not satisfied.

They're not satisfied with where they're at, they're not satisfied with their circumstances and that's a good thing in many ways. I don't know about you, but I live in a state of constant dissatisfaction. That's my testimony.

I live in a state of constant dissatisfaction, not discouragement. Discouragement is paralyzing, isn't it? Dissatisfaction produces motivation. If Henry Ford had been satisfied with the old jalopy that he created back then, what was the first one? The A or the T? I don't know.

Your car buffs? Was it the T or the A? Let's say it was Model A. If he'd have been satisfied with that, we'd have all been driving home today in Model As. But he was not satisfied. This thing can be refined, we can improve this, we can improve that and so on.

The same thing is true spiritually in our lives. We should never get to that place of being satisfied. In the life of the Apostle Paul, not that I've already attained.

Here was a guy caught up to the third heaven, saw all sorts of revelations that nobody else had ever seen. He could have prided himself. I wrote basically most of the New Testament apart from the Gospels and so on and so forth.

And I've been to heaven, I've raised the dead. I'll settle down now. I'm getting to be old.

I might as well sort of settle down and spend the rest of my days playing golf. No, he says, not that I've already attained, but I press on. Paul had that desire for more.

And let's face it, the Christian life, it's full of progression, isn't that right? We go from faith to faith and victory to victory, increasing and abounding in the knowledge of God. We should never ever reach a place of satisfaction. And so here are these students now and they've got to that place where they are not satisfied with where they are at.

And then the fourth thing is their limitation. And now you can pick it up with me in the Bible. All of that is presupposed if you look at this, but in verse one, now the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, behold now the place before you where we are living is too limited for us.

One translation says it is too small for us. So notice now it is the sons of the prophets. It's not just one sort of rogue student that's going off on a tangent here, which proves that they've obviously been together.

They've discussed things. They've put together a spokesperson, if you like. The spokesman has gone now to the head of the school, in this case, Elisha.

And he said to him, listen, we've been talking, we've been discussing, we've been evaluating things and we do not want to remain in this confined condition that we're in. This place where we are is too restrictive. It's too confining.

We are limited and therefore we cannot develop anymore. We cannot grow anymore and so on. And many times, again, in our own life, we end up in those places, don't we? I don't know about you, but I'm limited in a lot of areas that I don't want to be limited in.

I'm limited in my faith. I'm limited in my love. I'm limited in the area of revelation or prophetic insight or whatever it may be.

In other words, we find ourselves in a place of limitation. And God's word is always about increase, isn't it? Lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. Jabez, enlarge my borders.

God does not want us to live in a confined and restricted environment, spiritually speaking at least. Now, I don't know why they were limited, whether they had another intake of students coming in for another semester and all of a sudden they're maxed out. There's not enough space in the dormitory.

I don't know. The Bible doesn't give us those sort of details other than they come to the prophet and say, listen, we can't go on the way they are, the way we are. And many times we were settled for a period of time and then something happens and we realize, listen, we can't stay the way we are.

Let's say a couple get married and maybe they've decided we don't want to have children. They're too much of a problem, a very selfish sort of a couple and they're into material things and so their dream is to have some little condo, some loft apartment somewhere downtown that overlooks the river or overlooks the city or something and sure enough, one of them comes available and here they are. They go in there and they renovate the place and it is exactly the way they want it.

I mean, they are so proud of their little loft and all the things that they've got in there, the brick wall and the industrial pipes running through it and they've fixed it up exactly the way they want it and for about two or three years, everything is fine. They bring their friends over and they don't want to move. They are happy just the way they are and then one day, the husband comes home and the wife's in tears and she's joyful and sad at the same time and she said, guess what? We're going to have a baby.

It wasn't planned but we're going to have a baby. A few months later, she goes in for the first sonogram and she finds out she isn't having a baby. She's having three.

And all of a sudden, that little place that was so comfortable and so on, it's too small for us. We cannot raise three children in this little loft apartment. We need a place that is bigger and many times, we are content with our lives for a period of time but ultimately, God wants us to move on.

Isn't that right? And so, their limitation. The next thing is their decision. It's one thing to dream.

It's another thing to do something about it and their decision is, it says, they made a conscious decision to move from where they were and they say to Elisha, behold now, the place before us where we are living is too limited for us. Please let us go to the Jordan and each take from there a beam and let us make a place

for ourselves where we may live and he said, go. And notice that again, their decision is that they are going to go to the Jordan.

Let me say right now, the Jordan is not a very popular place. It's not very popular teaching. The word Jordan, you know, it means to descend.

It was a place of circumcision. It was a place of separation. It was a place of pain and so on and so forth but the way in which we grow is by going down.

Isn't that right? The place of death and it's not a very popular message because nobody preaches it anymore but God is not interested in your program. He's not interested in furthering your ambitions and goals. He has only one thing and that's his kingdom and in order for you to be a part of God's kingdom, you've got to die.

Die to your own desires, your own plans, your own goals, dreams, whatever it is and circumcision will cost you everything. Again, that place of separation and we grow by descending. He must what? Increase but if he's going to increase, I've got to decrease and but these students understand something.

Again, prophetically, we have to go to the Jordan and it's at the Jordan that we can expand. It's at the Jordan that we can grow. It's at the Jordan that we can see things that we are not seeing right now and I can assure you that he that would seek to save his life will end up losing it.

You lose your life and you'll find it. God's arithmetic, if you like, God's economy operates totally different than anybody else's. Isn't that right? We think if we hold on to our life, we'll find it.

The Bible says no, give it away, die to it and then you'll find it. Let it go and the Jordan of course is the place where you lose your life in order that you might gain it or you might find it. The next thing is the determination.

It says again in verse two, let us go and make a place. Things do not just happen in the Christian life. I know there's a lot of popular teaching now that Jesus has done everything and we don't have to do anything.

I don't know what Bible they're reading from but my Bible doesn't say that. We've got to do something, isn't it? Study to show yourself approved under God. Now that's works.

Well, we are saved by works but then we have to work after that, isn't that right? I mean, sorry, I get that wrong. We're not saved by works but once we are saved then we're saved for good works. We can't attain to our own salvation, we can't merit anything, we can't have enough brownie points where God says, okay, you'll get into the kingdom of God because you put some new pews in the church or whatever or paid for the pipe organ or any of those things.

We're saved by grace and by grace alone but once we are saved, we have the grace to work. Isn't that right? Let me say that so let me get that straight now. You know, it is the work of grace that saves us and it's that same grace that allows us to work and we have to study to show ourselves approved under God and they are prepared to work in order to achieve their goal when Jesus wanted to establish his kingdom and he needed some helpers because we are laborers together with him, he did not go down to the unemployment line in Jerusalem to a bunch of guys sort of stretched out on the grass hoping somebody would hire them for the day.

No, instead he went to people that were already active and I find that as I read through the word of God, God invariably chooses active individuals. They were mending the nets. One guy was a budding medical student, the other guy worked for H&R Block but nevertheless, I mean, that was the ragtag army that he put together but they were all involved doing something.

You know, when Elisha had to replace himself, he goes and, sorry, Elijah, he goes to Elisha who is what, plowing. David was looking after the sheep. I mean, God never ever chooses lazy people, never in the word of God.

In fact, the book of Proverbs tells us about the guy that is sitting there doing nothing, a sluggard. God never uses those sort of people. He's looking for people that are prepared to get involved and here is a bunch of students.

They said, listen, in order for us to move to the next level, so to speak, we are prepared to work. Let us go and we will make a place for us and God has given us things. My father used to say that Christianity is basically a do-it-yourself kit.

God sends you all the material, you have to put it together. I think there's a measure of truth to that. You didn't have to buy it but God gives you.

In fact, the Bible says, you know, he's given us all these exceeding great and precious promises that by them, in other words, God gives us the material but by them, we can achieve certain things. We can become partakers of the divine Godhead and so on. And so, there's a couple of scriptures along that line.

We have to do something with it and they are prepared to do that. I remember my father died at the age of 87 and in his latter years, I'm saying from about 70, late 70s to the period where he died, he would get a lot of phone calls because he was well-known because of his writings and so on. And many times, some students, seminary students, and they would say, listen, Brother Imhil, I'm, you know, in East Texas where my father lived at the time and I'm gonna be coming through your area.

Could I have a little bit of time to talk to you and whatever? And my dad said, you know, he said, the older I get, he said, I have more people wanting my mantle now that I'm getting older. And he said, many times, these students will say to him, you know, Brother Imhil, would you pray for me because I want your mantle? And my father, with a twinkle in his eye, he always had that good sense of sort of dry British humor. He said, everybody wants my mantle, nobody wants my sackcloth and ashes.

In other words, there is a cost to getting the mantle and the cost is, again, weeping between the porch and the altar or whatever, nights and nights in prayer, fasting, all of that, but everybody wants this instant, lay hands on me, I wanna go from zero to 60, so to speak, you know, in three seconds, spiritually speaking, and I want to carry your mantle. It's interesting, even with Elisha, who had double the amount of miracles that Elijah had in the New Testament, Elisha's name is never mentioned once. Isn't that interesting? Where is the God of Elisha? No, where is the God of Elijah? You know, and there's just something about that.

When Jesus was on the cross, he calls for what? Elijah, not Elisha. Who do men say that I am? And the people said, well, some say you're John the Baptist, some say you're Elijah, but Elisha's name is never, ever mentioned, and yet you have people, you know, always talking about Elisha and how he had a double portion and da-da-da-da-da. Well, he sort of got it the easy way in one sentence.

Somebody else had the sackcloth and ashes, and many times we got to be willing to pay the price, and these students said, listen, we will go in order to fulfill the dream. We will make this thing happen. So their determination.

The next thing is their submission. They refer to themselves, well, number one, they go to the prophet Elisha and they say, please let us go to the Jordan. In other words, they're not assuming anything, they're under authority, they're under the leadership, the mantle of this man, and then they refer to themselves as servants.

Notice it says, let us go to the Jordan, take from there a beam. And then verse three, then one said, please be willing to go with your servants. And he answered, I shall go.

In other words, they're not just doing something in a rogue sense or rebellious sense. You know, we don't think the school is going where it should be going, and we're going to do this, and we're going to split off and do our own thing and start an alternative school and so on. No, please, can we go? You know, do we have your permission? Go with your servants.

Again, the key to effective ministry is to recognize as Pastor Tim said this morning, we are servants. It's he that would be the greatest among you, let him become servantable. And they are prepared, again, to submit.

If you cannot submit to man, you will never submit to God. One of the things we'll be dealing with a little tonight in the area of spiritual warfare is this area of submission that is so absolutely essential when it comes to spiritual warfare, because it is really the key to spiritual warfare, and we'll look at that in a little bit more detail than what I've said right now. But Jesus was a servant, isn't that right? Came in to the 12 one day, he'd girded himself, stripped himself, and came in with a towel and a basin and began, as Pastor Tim said, you're going to have a message on that.

But what is interesting is Luke chapter 12, and I've pondered this portion of scripture many, many times. You see, Jesus was not just sort of play acting here. In Luke 12 and verse 37, let me go back to verse 35.

Be dressed in readiness, keep your lamps alight, be like men who are waiting for their master when he returns from the wedding feast, so that they may immediately open the door to him when he comes and he knocks. Blessed are those slaves whom the master shall find on the alert when he comes. Truly I say to you, that he will gird himself to serve, and have them recline at table, and will come up and wait on them.

Now, the master obviously is the Lord Jesus Christ. Can you imagine at the marriage supper of the lamb, that final climactic event of all human history when the bride and the bridegroom are united, that the master is going to be the one serving the tables? You see, Jesus was not play acting. In other words, he wasn't saying, listen, I can do this role, you know, like an actor.

He said, this is who I am, I am a servant. That's my nature, that's my character. I'm not just fulfilling a role here, that's who I am.

And it says here, you know, be dressed in readiness, waiting for your master, because when the master comes, he will gird himself and he will serve you. I ponder that many times. I think, how embarrassing.

I mean, even Peter said, Lord, don't do that. But Jesus in his glorified body, imagine there at the marriage supper of the lamb, if he's going around serving us, how broken we'll be. I will never forget in the early

days of Youth for the Mission, anybody, any YWAMers here, you know what it is.

When I first met Lauren Cunningham, YWAM existed in his suitcase. He'd taken out one team or something, and initially we had about 12 or 15 of us that were the core of YWAM. There's now 15 or 20,000.

And I remember we were in a room one day, and Lauren came in with a basin. We had the ladies in the other room, they were meeting with his wife, Darlene, and Lauren asked if he could meet with the men, and I guess there were less than that, there were maybe 10 of us. And Lauren got down in front of each one of us, removed our shoes and our socks, and began washing our feet.

And it was so humiliating in the sense of, here was the leader of this organization, and he said, listen, I just want you to know I'm here to serve you. And that's really what it's all about, isn't it? He that would be the greatest among you, let him become servant of all. Now, the focus is gonna change here because we have been looking at a group of students, 50 in fact, according to the Bible.

And now it narrows down to one individual. This individual is gone, they are now down at the Jordan, and he is cutting away, he's got his axe head, and his axe, and he's cutting down trees, maybe like a lot of students, there's a little bit of a competition going on, and one is watching the other, and he's already got three or four trees down. And this guy's maybe ahead of him by a couple of trees, and so on, everything is going well, he's sacrificed, he's left the old familiar place behind, they've launched out in faith now to start this sort of new beginning, this new level that they believe God has called them to, and so on, and everything is wonderful, he's rejoicing, and then all of a sudden, things change, radically change.

I've called it his frustration because he is cutting down a tree, and suddenly his axe head flies off the end of the axe, and lands in the river beside him. And immediately, he has lost his cutting edge. Now we use that expression, but this literally was a cutting edge, and he has lost his cutting edge.

I believe, and I genuinely believe, there is many a man, a woman of God, that they paid the price to go on with God, they've been excited about what God is doing in their life, they've been seeing souls saved, you know, started a Sunday school, whatever it is, started a church, everything has been going well, and then all of a sudden, things change, and they lose their cutting edge. And the thing is, how do I recover that cutting edge? You see, the cutting edge to me is the presence of God. It's the anointing of the Spirit of God.

It is that which you are powerless to do in your own strength, and yet, the axe and the man become one, isn't that right? We are laborers together with God. I can't operate, God can't operate by himself, so to speak, he needs me, I need God, we're laborers together with God. And he can't function without the axe, the axe is useless without the person behind it, isn't that right? And so, there's a lot of people, if they were to be brutally honest, and this again is where the examination comes in, listen, there was a time in my life when I was much more effective than I am today.

I was seeing souls saved, I had a burden, and when it came to the area of prayer, I used to, on a regular basis, study the word of God, you know, I did this, I did that, and so on, but all of that now is history, it's gone. There's a verse in Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiastes 10 and verse 10, it says, if the axe is dull, and he does not sharpen the edge, he has to exert more strength. If the axe is dull, and he doesn't take time to sharpen the edge, then he has to exert more strength.

Just last week, I decided to get my chainsaw out, my wife never likes me to rev that thing up, and I was taking a few limbs off, because the trees were already beginning to bud down our way, but I realized I'd been using it too much, and that thing was, I mean, it would hardly cut through butter, and I was literally putting all my weight on it, I'm talking about a branch only that big, and that thing would not even go through that, it was smoking, it was burning, and so on and so forth, I finally packed it up, I got on the email there, Googled and ordered a new blade, which already came, and I've already got it on there, so the next couple of days now, I need to go and trim up a little bit of a mess that I made with these branches, but the axe was dull, so to speak, a modern version of the axe, anyway, and you've got to take time, once you sharpen the edge, it's amazing how much more effective it is. I mean, you can go through those limbs, at least that size, and just literally seconds, it's enjoyable, you feel like you're, you know, one of those mighty men from South Dakota. But he's lost it.

The next thing is his desperation. Notice what it says there after losing the axe head, verse five, but as he was felling a beam, the axe head fell off into the water, and his response is, he cried out, he cried out. That is the response that God is looking for.

He did not try and get busy doing something else and pretend that, listen, you know, I'm fine, you know, I was just through with that anyway, and he goes and he starts picking up other logs, and you know, many times, that's what we do. We're embarrassed, we don't want to admit it, we don't want to acknowledge that we've lost the cutting edge, and so we get involved in something else, you know, I'm not interested in teaching Sunday school this year because, you know, and we make some excuse, or I can't come to the home group, or, you know, don't want to go on that mission strip, and, you know, we'll busy ourselves with something else. Thank God this man doesn't.

Instead, he cries out, and that is, again, what God is looking for, an acknowledgement of need. His cry is in proportion to the thing that he lost. Let me say that, his cry is in proportion to the thing that he lost.

If you happen to have the \$5 in your pocket, and, you know, you lose a penny, chances are you're not gonna cry out, unless it was a specific amount to buy something and you need that penny, but, you know, you lose a penny, no big deal. My wife finds pennies all the time. I don't pick them up anymore, they're not worth it, type thing, you know, it's gotta take a quarter to get me to bend down, but anyway, she'll pick up pennies, but, you know, no big deal, you don't cry out.

If you happen to lose a diamond in your ring, ladies, you possibly will cry out, isn't that right? That thing has got value, and so your cry is gonna be proportionate to the thing that you lost. And his cry is proportionate to the thing that he lost. Our last master, he said, so he has a cry.

The next thing, his obligation. You see, the problem was, it was borrowed, it was borrowed. There is nothing worse than losing something that belongs to something, somebody else.

Something that has been entrusted to you. About five years ago, I had a call from a gentleman that I'd known for several years. He used to, was a businessman associated with Assembly Guard Church up in Rhode Island, and I would go up there and minister, and they had a beautiful big house, and so I would stay with them in the home.

And he got transferred, at least he sold his business and bought another business down in a place called Pueblo, south of Colorado Springs. And was attending another church, must have mentioned my name, and so one day I got a call from him saying, listen, the pastor would like, you know, I've recommended

you, the pastor would like you to come out, and so on. And it was over the Fourth of July weekend, at least that was coming up.

And he said to me, he said, I know you've got a family in Colorado Springs, which we did at the time, a middle daughter, and a husband, and four grandchildren. And he said, you can extend the ticket, it won't cost any more, we're gonna fly you out anyway, and if you'd like to spend the Fourth of July with them, we'll take care of everything, and so on. So we decided that sounds like a good idea.

And so I had a number of meetings, and then he insisted, while I was in the house with him, my wife and I, he said, listen, I've got several cars, why don't you borrow my car, or one of my cars, for the weekend? And I said, you know, my kids, they've got a van and a car, I really don't think I'll need it. And he put quite a bit of pressure on us, almost embarrassed us, you know, to not take it. And so finally, sort of reluctantly, I said, well, I'll take it, but how am I gonna get back to you, you know, we're leaving out of Colorado, and you're 60 miles south.

He said, listen, just leave it at the airport, put the keys on the top of the wheel well, and you know, I'll pick it up the morning you leave, and so on and so forth. So we had this car, a little Volkswagen Jetta, and he was a military guy, and he had pictures of himself, you know, with all the spaghetti and everything else, you know, and I mean, he really liked that. But he was meticulous about everything, you know, his car was absolutely spotless, it had special sort of embroidered, sort of stitch seats, and so on.

I mean, it was a really nice little, you know, stick shift Volkswagen Jetta. So anyway, we drove up to Colorado Springs, and pulled up at the house where kids were renting at the time in a sort of a gated community, had a beautiful home, and I pulled up outside one of the three garages there, garage doors, and went inside, and the car sat there for basically two days. And then it was the night before the fourth, and we had to go somewhere, and so they had a bunch of things that they had to put in the car, I can't remember all the details now.

So they said, you know, would you mind following us? So we followed in the Jetta, came back that night, and I pulled the car up there, and jumped out, helped my daughter take some things out of the van, went inside, and about six o'clock in the morning, there was a knock on our bedroom door, and it was my granddaughter, and she said, Papa, Papa, your car is down the driveway, and smashed into a tree, and I'm thinking, I don't have a car, where am I, you know, this is, and then I, my car, you know, oh no, you know, and I got up and I looked, and the car looked perfect, I mean, you know, just sort of gone down the road, down an embankment about this high, and it looked like it had just gently come up against the street. So I actually went back to bed, and about eight o'clock, you know, I thought, well, I better get up and get going, you know, it's the fourth, and everybody was sleeping in. So I went down and examined the car.

Well, I mean, it had really picked up a little bit of steam. There was a baseball cap in the back window, it hit the tree so hard, the back window popped out, and the baseball cap was about eight feet behind the car, so, you know, that takes a lot of, and the whole back bumper was just wrapped around this big pine tree, and I thought, oh no, alas, master, it was borrowed. And I had to call this couple early in the morning, it was about 8.15 then, or 8.30, and the wife answered the phone, her name's Kim, and I said, Kim, oh, brother Raymond, how nice of you to call, you know.

I said, well, Kim, I've got some bad news. She said, you do? I said, yes, I said, I smashed up your car. Oh, brother Raymond, you're always trying to make jokes.

And I thought, oh my goodness. They had to drive up, her husband had already left to go fishing, and so they drove up, and we had to pry that thing so the wheel would turn, and you know, they carted it off, but oh, there's no worse feeling, alas, master, it was borrowed. You know, you and I do not own the Holy Spirit.

We have been entrusted with a gift. It's not your gift. The Holy Spirit is not your gift in the sense of ownership.

We are stewards, isn't that right? And what we do with the Holy Spirit, what we do with the gifts of the Spirit, and so on, one day we're gonna have to give an account. And here is this man, obviously, I'm gonna have to give an account. This was not my axe head.

Yes, I used it, yes, it was effective in my hands for a period of time, and so on. Many of us could say the same thing about the Holy Spirit, but we've lost that which was entrusted to us. The next thing is his confession.

Notice he goes to his master, and he says, the last master for it was borrowed, and the man of God said to him, where did it fall? In other words, where did you lose it? When did you lose it? Why did you lose it? And so on, and the Bible says he showed him the place. He knew exactly where, when, and how he lost that. And you know, there are people here, I believe, in a crowd this size, you know exactly when you lost it.

It was a night you stayed up, and you turned on something on the computer that you know you shouldn't be looking at. It was a night you went back to alcohol, went back to drugs, or did this, or did that, and so on. And of course, the Bible is full of stories like that.

Samson lost it when he went after Delilah. Jonah lost it when he disobeyed the Lord. Solomon lost it when he married foreign wives.

Demas lost it when he went back into the world, and so on. And the Bible is full of individuals, again, that once had the anointing of the Spirit of God, but they lost it. And we have to be brutally honest about it.

Our confession needs to be, I know where I lost it. I lost it when I stopped having a devotional time. I lost it when this happened.

I lost it when that happened. I can take you to the time and the place, so to speak. I lost it when I wouldn't forgive a brother or sister that stabbed me in the back.

I lost it when, you know, whatever it is, we all have our reasons for losing it. And many of us know, listen, I used to be a much more effective man or woman of God, but I've lost whatever I had. And I can take you back to the time.

It was a year ago, or it was six months ago, or it was three months ago, or it was five years ago, whatever the case may be. And it was over this particular thing. Something came into my spirit.

I grieved the Spirit of God. I quenched the Spirit of God. And I know I'm not the same person today because of it.

But the key is acknowledging it, his confession. The next thing, his provision. Verse six, it says, then the man of God said, where did it fall? And when he showed him the place, he cut off a stick and he threw it

into the water, and he made the iron float.

When he showed him the place, he cut off a stick and he applied that old rugged cross to that water. It's amazing, isn't it? Remember when the children of Israel came out of Egypt and they came to the waters of Mara and they complained, the waters of Mara, we can't drink these waters, they're terrible. And what does Moses do? He cuts off a stick and he throws it in.

It doesn't make sense to the natural mind how a stick, so to speak, how an old rugged cross can change our circumstances so drastically, make something that otherwise is impossible. How can wood make iron float? It doesn't make sense to the natural mind. It doesn't make sense to the world how I can come and ask for forgiveness and have total and complete restoration, all because I apply the cross to that situation, apply the cross to that bitterness, that sin, whatever it is, and say, God, I'm sorry.

Forgive me, cleanse me, Lord. I need to get back that thing that I lost. This is where I lost it, this is a place I lost it, and somebody else paid the price.

He doesn't take the stick, somebody else took the stick for him. Thank God somebody else, again, died on the cross for your sin and my sin, but what he does have to do, the last thing, his restoration, notice what the prophet said. He said to him, take it up for yourself.

In other words, the prophet doesn't take it up. It's floating, it's there, and all he's got to do is reach out and take it. That's where faith comes in, and Jesus Christ will not hand it back to you in that sense.

You, by faith, have to come, believing. If you confess your sin, he's faithful and just to forgive you and cleanse you from all unrighteousness, and you've got to reach out in faith and say, Lord, I believe that I can have back that thing that I've lost. I can have that joy back, I can have that peace back, I can have that authority back, whatever it is this morning, that you say, listen, there is something missing in my life, and I know why it's missing, because of this or that or the other thing in my life, but I'm prepared this morning to come to the cross and apply the cross to that situation or and reach out and take it and claim it, and we find that it says, so he put out his hand and he took it.

That's all it takes this morning is you to be honest with yourself and say, this is where I lost it. Lord, I need your forgiveness, I need your cleansing. I want that thing back in my life, that joy, that peace, that authority, that desire for souls, that prayer life that I used to have, that enjoyment of the word of God that I used to enjoy.

Instead, now I'm practicing or doing other things. Lord, that's gonna end today, and by your grace, I'm gonna restore and recover the thing that's been lost. Let's just close and pray.

Let's just close and pray.

---

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/r6n4L4u0qLs.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-ravenhill/the-life-of-a-man-who-lost-something/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**