

# Are You Prepared for the Judgment Seat of Christ

by David Wilkerson

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of preparing for the judgment seat of Christ by living a life of diligence and love for Jesus Christ, and warns of the consequences of not being prepared.*

**Duration:** 54:53

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 29:13, Matthew 7:24-27, Romans 14:10, 1 Corinthians 3:11, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Hebrews 9:27, Hebrews 12:15

**Topics:** "Judgment Seat"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by praying for the listeners to seek Jesus with all their hearts and to be diligent in their pursuit of God. He emphasizes the importance of being prepared for the judgment seat of Christ. The preacher shares an anecdote about a taxi driver who identifies himself as a 'son of a living God' and highlights the need for believers to know their identity in Christ. He then discusses the qualifications for standing confidently before the judgment seat of Christ, including not being slothful or lazy in the things of God and being diligent in prayer and the work of God. The sermon concludes with a call to grow in knowledge of Christ and be prepared for the judgment seat.

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## Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, Post Office Box 260, Lindale, Texas, 75771, or by calling 903-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted, and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. That they would consume your fire, your anointing, your unction. That nothing hinder the word of the Lord from going forth today, nothing.

That the spirit of the Lord God come upon me, and open our ears, open our eyes, and our hearts, and our understanding. And Lord, place us this morning before your judgment seat. Holy Spirit, let the fear of the living God that produces wisdom and changes our lives come upon us.

Fill the house with your precious holy fear. The fear of the Lord that causes men to abandon sin. The fear of the Lord that is our strength and our joy.

Lord, we don't take these things lightly. We take them with great trembling in our heart, and yet with joy. Unspeakable and full of glory.

Lord, come upon me from the top of my head, the soles of my feet, and speak your living word, I pray in Jesus name, amen. Are you prepared for the judgment seat of Christ? I hopped on a taxi the other day, and I was dressed in a suit and tie. And I settled in the back seat, and the taxi driver looked at me and said, oh, party time is it? I thought, boy, I wish you knew who you're talking to.

I said, no, I'm not into parties, sir, I'm into Jesus. And he turned right around, smiled as big as he could, and he said, oh, good, because I'm an SOTLG. I said, a what? He said, you're a preacher, and you don't know what an SOTLG means? I said, I'm sorry, I don't know.

He said, you don't know, son of the living God. He said, I'm a son of the living God. Before you clap, just be, don't clap, please.

And then he held up two fingers, he says, me and God are just like that, preacher. I said, well, what church do you worship with? What are the people you worship with? Oh, I don't go to church. He said, I don't have time for the Bible and religion and all that stuff.

But Jesus and me, we're like that. I'm an SOTLG, son of the living God. I was in a store Wednesday, and I watched some men that were loading a truck.

And I was just standing there watching, and one of the guys was humming a song. And I said, hey, buddy, are you humming my favorite song? And he said, what's that? Just a closer walk. He said, yeah.

And I said, that's my favorite song. And then he, suddenly, we got to talk, he found out I was a preacher, and he changed just like that. Maybe I just hum it.

In other words, it doesn't mean anything to me. You see, he's like a whole lot of people I find, and I'm shocked anymore. Everywhere I go in New York City, anywhere in the country now, I'm a son of the living God, or Jesus and I are just like that.

They're reprobates, unsaved, blind. But I'm ready for heaven. I'm ready for the judgment.

Our street rally down in Washington Square Park, a drunk, probably in his 60s, standing right beside me, clapping, reeking with alcohol, could hardly stand up. He was stoned. And he said, are you the speaker? And I said, I'm going to speak here today.

And he said, you know, I preach the gospel too. He said, the Lord and I have a special thing going. He said, I have a Pentecostal background, and he's so drunk he can hardly stand up.

But he says, oh, hallelujah. He's up and raises his hand, praise to the Lord at the top of his voice. And he asked me if he'd get him to testify.

I said, no, of course not. But you see, none of these are prepared to stand before the judgment. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or whether it be bad.

All professing Christians are going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Now, the Puritans taught that there was only one judgment that's at the end of all things, and that's the great white throne, that both

sinner and Christians are going to be judged at this great white throne. Many evangelicals believe otherwise, that there will be a special judgment prior to that called the judgment seat of Christ, and that all professing Christians will stand before Jesus as a judge.

Now, I'm not here to argue either point. I'm here to tell you that it's enough to know that the scripture on two occasions says that we must all, speaking of all Christians, Paul said we must all as believers stand before the judgment seat of Christ to be judged for all the works, all of our thoughts, all of our deeds, whether they were good or whether they were bad. And that is what I want to ask you today.

Are you prepared for this time? You will stand before the judge. It's going to be a time of great exposure. Every hidden thing is going to come out into the light.

First of all, the hidden good things of the unspoken, unheralded people who have done mighty works in the name of Jesus and have never been known. I don't think there'll be many evangelists or pastors leading that great group and doing the most rejoicing. They'll be the widows and the hidden ones who get most of the attention.

In First Corinthians, the third chapter, I want you to turn there with me, please. First Corinthians, the first chapter, and I want to give you the foundation for my message this morning. First Corinthians, the third chapter.

And I want to begin reading at the 11th verse, reading from King James. First Corinthians, third chapter, beginning to read 11th verse. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now, if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be made manifest or exposed is what it means. Every man's work will be exposed for the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire and the fire shall test or try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved yet so as by fire. Every man's work, every person's work is going to be exposed. He's going to cast his light upon it and he's going to judge it.

If any man's works abide which he has built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. Now, folks are going to be two kinds of people, two classes of Christians standing before the judgment seat. First of all, there'll be a host, a multitude on that day who stand with great exceeding joy and with much assurance according to the scripture.

This will be a glad day, exceeding glad day for them. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Furthermore, Paul the apostle said, having full assurance of hope unto the end that there are some people going to have full assurance when they stand there.

Others are going to stand there rejoicing their hearts filled with exceeding great joy anticipating this moment. I'll talk about the other class of people in just a few moments. Now, not every believer is going to face him with this full assurance of hope or with exceeding joy.

This exceeding joy when you're standing before the judgment seat of Christ. By the way, how do you think you're going to stand there? Will you be one of those with exceeding great joy? Are you going to be there with the agony? And I'm going to tell you how clearly the scripture said there's going to be a time of agony and terror for many. Even though they're going to be saved.

And I'll show you very clearly this morning from the scripture, the terror that I think I know I don't want to face just thinking about it terrifies my soul. But you see, this exceeding great joy, this full assurance of hope is reserved for a certain kind of Christian. In fact, it's described by Paul as those who built themselves up in their most holy faith, those who've learned to pray in the Holy Ghost.

Those who've kept themselves in the love of God and abstaining from sin, those who have been dependent on the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ. He lists those four qualifications just to begin with. Paul also said that if you want full assurance when you stand before the judgment seat of Christ, he said, they will be those who were not slothful in the things of God while they were here on earth.

They were not lazy about the things of God. They were not careless about the things of God. They were patiently enduring all their trials, Paul said.

They were diligent in prayer. They were diligent in the work of God. Now, these are going to stand boldly before the judgment seat of Christ because they've grown to know him.

This is not going to be a new experience for them to stand before his judgment seat because they have already been there. Every man's work shall be exposed for what it is, for the day will declare it because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall test every man's work of what sort it is. Now, what is this fire that's going to test every man's work? You and I are going to face fire.

Now, I've read books about it and I've studied what some of the commentaries say, and I heard a very descriptive picture of a man who claims to have had a dream about it, and he saw people standing there and hay, wood, and stubble, and the Lord had a torch and he's going down lighting torches in front of everybody, and after the hay and wood and stubble's gone, maybe there'd be some jewels and gold and silver still there. That's fine. But let me tell you what I believe the fire is.

In fact, I believe John in Revelation 1.14 describes it very well because Jesus appeared in the midst of seven candlesticks representing the churches, and he was unburdening his heart to John about the condition of the church, and John saw him, the one who laid his head on his bosom, the one who was so close to Jesus is now on his face, doesn't even recognize him because he's in his judicial robes now. He's a judge. He's come to judge the church.

He's come to judge his people, and he falls as a dead man. And the Bible said John saw his hair white as wool, white as snow, his feet like a burnished bronze that have just come out of a red-hot furnace, and his eyes a flaming fire. You'll find that also in Revelation 19.12. His eyes, John said, were a flame of fire, and upon his head were many crowns.

Folks, the fire that's going to judge us will come out of his eyes. It's the look of a holy Christ. We're going to stand before him one at a time, and we're going to face those flaming eyes, and those eyes of fire are going to test everything we ever said or did in time and here on earth.

And I know there'll be many know that they're going to have to stand before him one at a time, and they see people crumbling, and they see people falling. They see people who are not able to endure that blaze,

that blazing eyes of the Lord, and yet they're not afraid, because they've already seen those blazing eyes. They've already seen that flame of fire, because they went into the secret closet day after day, and they said, search me, O God, turn the searchlight of the Holy Ghost into my heart.

And they opened their heart, and they opened their eyes to him, and said, O God, blaze your eyes upon me, see if there'd be any wicked thing in me, and remove it by your Holy Ghost. Give me the power over it. And so they stand before him on the judgment seat, having already had it consumed by his fiery eyes.

I've seen those eyes. Have you seen them? Have you ever been in his presence, and you felt his gaze, and he looks, and you feel his holiness, and his power, and he says, this is wrong. You can't go on with this.

You can't touch this anymore. You can't do that. This is evil.

And he comes down, and he consumes it. There are people that are going to be there, who will be able to endure those flaming eyes, and not only will they endure them, those flaming eyes suddenly will turn into jewels. They'll turn into gold.

They'll turn into precious blazing diamonds, to the heart of those who've already been purged and cleansed. And the Lord knows that they stand there in that moment with exceeding joy, and full assurance of hope unto the end. If we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged.

For his eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men. Now folks, you can be tried by those flaming eyes now, before you get to the judgment seat. It happened to Isaiah.

Isaiah, in the sixth chapter, gets a vision of the Lord Almighty before the throne. And those flaming eyes so pierced Isaiah, he cries out, Oh God, I'm undone. I'm unclean.

I have unclean hands. I have unclean lips. I live among unclean people.

And an angel came with a live coal from the fire of God, touched his tongue and said, You're cleansed and you're purged from all your sin. Daniel sees the same vision. And he fell as a dead man.

And he saw the flaming eyes of the Lord. And he is prostrate. And the Lord comes to him and he says, Daniel, beloved, stand upright.

You don't have to fall before me now because you have been purged, you've been cleansed, you've allowed my fire to do its work. Now don't be afraid. Stand.

In fact, when John on Patmos saw him, the first thing Jesus did was reach out and touch him and say, John, don't be afraid. Stand. Folks, that's what I want on a judgment day.

When I stand before Jesus, the judge, I want to know that I have allowed the Holy Ghost to judge me, that the flaming eyes of God have come down with that fire. He does it out of love, not out of guilt, not out of condemnation, but divine love to burn it out. And I want to be able to stand before Jesus on that day with exceeding great joy and with assurance in my heart.

When I stand before Him, He can probe as deep as He wants and He will know that it's already been dealt with. Hallelujah. When these stand before His fiery eyes, it'll be a blaze of brilliant glory to the honor of the Lord.

Daniel said, I saw His eyes as lamps of fire. You know what a lamp is? That casts light on every hidden dark thing. I'll tell you what, Daniel had the Lord come to him with His lamp, with His light.

That's what David said, His word is a lamp unto my feet. You can take this word and you can examine your heart. You can go deep into your heart for the purging and for the cleansing.

Hallelujah. Now, many are going to be saved only through fire. And the fire shall test every man's work of what sort it shall be.

And if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so is through fire. Now, there are going to be a lot of Christians not rejoicing at all. They're going to be trembling on that day.

And they're going to hang their heads in shame. And the Bible said they're going to suffer. And the Greek word here says they're going to endure hurt and injury.

And the connotation in Greek is a violent, hurtful experience. I've heard people say, well, we know everybody's going to be saved if they're at the judgment seat of Christ. Isn't it enough to be saved? Isn't it enough to make heaven? You say, well, if I can just get there, let Him take all my rewards.

Maybe I don't have anything to present to Him. At least I don't go to hell. Just being saved should be enough, isn't it? It's like somebody saying, being alive is enough, isn't it? I know a lot of people that are alive, but they're not living.

They don't have any disease in their body. But they don't have the capacity to enjoy life. They don't have the capacity to enjoy all the good things that God has given or to understand they're like blind and dead people, even though they have life.

Some would say, I just want to make heaven. That's enough. Now, in my mind, I see multitudes on their faces groaning and weeping uncontrollably.

They stand face to face with His flaming eyes. And these holy eyes of Jesus begin to look and to probe and to search. And suddenly everything they've ever said and did is brought to the surface.

And it's flashed before their eyes and their memory. Now, folks, you say, that could take a million years. Well, times will be no more.

Who's counting? There'll be no time. And I see every act of kindness, every good work, every servant-like attitude that was given to the church or to the husband or to the wife or to brother, sister or to children. Every bit of that has to face the flaming eyes, this fire of Jesus that pierces from His eyes.

And it's all going to be exposed. It's all going to be out in the open. And many are going to find out it was all a facade.

It was hypocritical. Here stands a brother or sister from Times Square Church, for example. And everybody that knows this individual says, what a wonderful Christian, what a wonderful, caring person.

And everybody can't imagine them standing before the judgment seat because this person that is so well known in Times Square Church, I don't know, it could be a man, it could be a woman. It could be a young person, it could be an older person. And here you stand before the judgment seat and everybody is

shocked because you're trembling.

Everybody thought if anybody would stand before the throne of God with rejoicing and assurance, you would because you go about hugging, you go about listening, you care, you're so kind, and you hug and you kiss and you talk. And you just, you give anything you have, you're just so loving to everybody. And everybody talks so well of you and you're so well accepted and you have high honor among your brothers and sisters and you are spoken of as a kind, loving person.

But now you stand before a holy God. You stand before the flaming eyes and Jesus says, now the truth, because that's the only thing that stands now. And he points a finger, hypocrite, liar.

Because you were so kind in the house of God. You were so loving, but it was a facade because when you went home, you gave hell to your husband or your wife. You treated others with disdain.

There was no true love in you. It was all a front. You had a smile, but underneath you were angry, you were bitter, you were resentment.

You stand now, tell the truth. And then the Lord says, all you ever did, all your lifetime, is of no value to me. You wasted every good deed because beneath it all there was a root.

I don't want that. I want to examine my heart now. And I want him to pluck out of my soul any bitterness, any rebellion, any anger, any hatred, so that everything I do is based on the love of Jesus Christ and nothing else.

And then comes the hurting and the loss. When the Lord says, it's all been filthy rags. It's been a stench in my nostrils.

You've made it to stink in my eyes. Now, all you gave me, he says, was saving faith and nothing else. You lay hold of an inheritance.

And I am God and I am grace. And you're saved. You have eternal life.

But you have nothing to offer me. You wasted it all. To hear Jesus say so sadly, oh, my child, it's all been in vain.

None of it's acceptable to me because you always had something beneath it that was never plucked out by its roots. And I can only imagine what it's going to be like for those who are careless. And half-hearted as they see so many diligent Christians, so many rejoicing Christians standing before Jesus, the judge and hearing, well done, good and faithful servant.

And all of these things that were done out of diligence and love and honesty and truth. And to see the rejoicing, to see the Lord embracing so many and rejoicing in their faithfulness and saying, well done, you've been faithful in a few things. I'll make you willer over many.

And to see them just rejoicing and then to stand there waiting your turn and trying to recall at least an act or two of faithfulness, at least one season where you were so strong with the Lord. So you can stand there and remind the Lord of a time or a place or something you can bring to him. And you stand there listening to a litany, a lifetime of people were faithful and true to the Lord.

And here you stand before him now having been careless. And what are you going to tell him? What will you tell him? Well, Jesus, at least I've got one thing. I made it.

I didn't kill anybody. I didn't hurt anybody purposely. I did the best I knew how.

No, I didn't pray much, I know. The Bible, well, I did it when I felt guilty or somebody put pressure on me. Now, see, you're thinking this before you stand before him.

Do you think he'll listen to any of this? I told you of a taxi driver the other day told me how close he was. This was another cab driver. He said he just loved the Lord so much and he has a wonderful hope that he's going to be saved.

I said, well, do you pray, do you read your Bible, you go to church? He said, no, I don't have time. And I said, are you going to tell that to the judge? You're going to tell him that? Well, Lord, I didn't have a consistent longing to be shut in with you. I can't bring you any devotion because I was not devoted.

I went to church, though, every Sunday morning. I gave you two hours a week, Lord. Now, I know that my career and my job took my children because I wanted to fulfill your word, be faithful to my family.

So I spent a lot of time with my family, a lot of picnics, a lot of time with my family. But I gave you two hours, Lord, on Sunday morning. I know I spent a lot of time watching television when I could have been reading the word.

I could have developed a relationship with you and intimacy, but it just seemed like life put so many pressures on me. And I guess, Lord, I really didn't love you because if I loved you, I wouldn't have neglected you like I did. But I've got at least one thing.

I didn't backslide. I don't drink, Lord, and I don't smoke anymore. I don't use drugs.

I'm sexually clean. That ought to count for something. I wonder when you stand before him, just before your time comes, I wonder if you're going to have to race in your mind and try the hardest thing to find something you can give him, something you present to him.

When you look back over your life that was spent, what do I lay down? I have to stand before him. What am I going to lay down? What am I going to tell him about my life? Because he said, you're going to give an account, even though he knows that you're going to have to recount it. You're going to have to tell him all about it.

It would be amazing. You talk about loss. You know what he's going to say? I'm going to just stand there, child.

Look in my eyes. And when you look in his eyes, you thought all that counted was to make heaven, just so you got out of hell, away from the power of the devil, just so you're in paradise. I'm going to make a statement.

I want you to listen very closely to it, please. I want to ask you how close you are to Jesus right now. Because the distance you are from Jesus on that day is not going to change.

You're going to be as far away from Jesus on judgment day as you are right now, because death doesn't sanctify you, doesn't change you. Now, when I get heaven, I want to be as close to Jesus as I can get.

And you get close to Jesus here on earth.

You get close to him. You're intimate. Listen, why would you want him in eternity if you don't want him now? Why would you want to spend more time with him when you don't want to spend time with him now? What do you think is going to change you? Death won't change anything.

You're going to be the same distance from him then as you are now. This is the end of side one. You may now turn the tape over to side two.

And when you look in his eyes, and suddenly out of those eyes comes the whole store of redemption, and the price he paid, and the penalty he paid, and the blood that he shed, and all that he did for you in sending the Holy Ghost, in paying a price, coming down, giving up all of his glory, and paying a price for you, and dying for your sin. And when suddenly it dawns on you that you didn't value it, you didn't take advantage of it, you neglected it, you abused it. That is the terror.

That is the fire through which you're going to pass. What about those who are going to stand before him and thought that soul winning was the whole boot and caboodle of salvation? We've got whole denominations that say that the whole reason we're here is to win souls. Now, the Bible said, he that win his souls is wise.

The Bible makes it very, very clear where to go into all the world and preach the gospel to make disciples everywhere. And I believe that if you're a good Christian, you're a soul winner. But we have so many people today, think they're going to stand before Jesus.

You say, whoa, I know what I'm going to present to the Lord. I've won hundreds of souls. I've won many.

My Bible says on that day, many are going to come confessing. I cast out devils. I healed the sick.

I did many mighty works. And you say, I don't even know you. That's at the great white throne judgment.

What about my evangelistic acquaintance going all through Asia and Europe right now, preaching on the street, winning hundreds and hundreds of souls to Jesus. And at his side's a sweet little thing because he left his wife and picked up with her. And I got a letter from him last week.

And you see, workers of iniquity, many of them win thousands of souls. There are false prophets, television evangelists that I know are devils, absolute devils, who are in it for nothing but money and pride. And they will stand before him and say, well, I've won thousands of souls.

I've had evangelist friends who have gone down into the pits, believing that that would be enough before the judgment because they were soul winners and had a great harvest. That's going to burn in a moment before his eyes. No, it's not enough to win souls.

You have to depart from iniquity, walk in his righteousness. Now, some are going to suffer loss. Listen closely.

Some are going to suffer loss because someone else robbed them of their blessing in favor of God. It's not what they did. It's what they allowed someone else to do to them.

Behold, I come quickly. Hold fast that which you have. Let no man take your crown.

And then Jesus listed the things that you have to hold on to. I can't go over those six things, but I'll just mention two or three quickly. He said, first of all, he said, I want you to hold on to what you have unless somebody steal it.

He's suggesting, I'm giving it to you, but you have to hold on to it. Somebody could take it from you. If you don't value it, if you won't hold on to it, someone can steal it.

And there are going to be many stand before the Lord who have allowed somebody else to steal their inheritance, their blessing, not their inheritance, but their blessing in their favor of God so that they stand before God bitter and naked because they have nothing. They had it and it was stolen from them. First of all, he said, I gave you an open door which no man can shut.

God came to you. He has the keys. And he came one day with the key and you were all locked up.

You were in a pit. You were in a hell hole of darkness. Your room was all shut and you were in there.

You were bound by sin, bound by the devil. And Jesus came and opened the door. He opened the windows and said, come on out into the air.

Come out into the light. And you came out into the light. Hallelujah.

And he opened you up. He opened you. There was a time you couldn't sit in a church like this.

You'd want to run out, especially in preaching like this. You couldn't stand it. You'd be miserable.

You wouldn't hear it. You'd be blind and deaf and dumb. But he came and opened your ears.

He opened your eyes. And now you thank God for the word. There are some of you come to this church from other churches.

You came from false doctrines. You came from churches and you finally found a godly reproof. And you grew under it.

You said, thank God for reproof. Thank God for pastors that stand and preach the truth and preach it in righteousness. And you thanked the Lord for that.

And the Lord said, don't let anybody take that from you. That openness, your ears, your eyes, let nobody steal it from you. And there are going to be many stand before the judgment seat.

And the Lord said, who took away your openness? Why are you standing here closed and bitter? Who closed the door? Who did you allow to come in? Was it your husband? Was it your wife? Was it a friend? Was it a loved one? Was it a pastor? Did you let somebody come in and close you up and make you hard and bitter and cold? Oh brother, sister, I don't want anything or anybody to take my openness before the Lord. I thank God for being open. He said, I gave you a little strength.

That means in Greek, not much human ability. He said, I didn't give you much human ability. But because I didn't give you so much human ability, you had learned to lean on me.

You were driven to me. Everybody else, it came easy. But for you, it came hard.

You didn't have talent. You didn't have all the things that other people have. You knew you had to have me.

You leaned on me. You couldn't pray. You couldn't do anything without me.

I gave you a little strength. I didn't give you much ability. But he said, those are the kind of people I use to confound the wise.

And on the judgment day before Jesus, some of you are going to stand there and he's going to say, who demoralized you? Who told you you were worthless? Who told you you couldn't do anything? Who robbed you of your vision? Who robbed you of your ability to just go and trust me? What happened to that trust and confidence? Why is it that you stand before me now bemoaning the fact that, well, I'm nothing. I can't do anything. Of course, you're not.

He said, I didn't give you much ability, but I made you strong in your weakness. My strength came through you. Who robbed you of that? And I'll tell you what's going to hurt worst of all.

Here's where the loss really comes in. They will suffer loss. And that means there's a violent hurt.

There's a deep hurt. God, our Christ, is going to show you what you really lost. Do you know what God intended for you? He intended that all your enemies, both in the church and in the world, if you would just walk in faith, if you'd just be obedient to him, if you'd let him open and close the doors, because not only did he give you an open door, he gave you a closed door.

He closed the door behind you so you couldn't get back into the world. How many times have you tried? I know at Hannah House, there'll be some girl trying to walk out, and there's either Catherine or Susan. Where are you going? Where are you going? So Holy Ghost closing the door.

Same at Timothy House. Where are you going? Just about the time you think you're going to sneak out, the Holy Ghost said, where are you going? He shut the door on your face. And what he intended all the time, that the day would come that he would so honor you, that they would come and sit at your feet.

The Bible said they will come and worship at your feet, not worship you, but that worship at your feet signifies a student listening to a teacher. He said, and they will know that I have honored you. And this is what God intends for every believer, that if you would be faithful to him and be diligent, give him everything that's in your heart, everybody, whether they like you or not, they're going to have to listen to you, and they're going to have to acknowledge that God has blessed and favored you.

He said, I wanted you to come before me carrying this favor of heaven. I wanted you to come before me as a teacher of others, not because you're lording it over, but because of the things I taught you. I will make them to come and worship before your feet and to know that I have loved you.

You can have a wife that's walked out on you, and she's in the world in sin, and can even curse your face, but you stay faithful to God, the day will come, she'll know in her heart that God loves you, and God's blessed you and touched you. Same with wives whose husbands are backslidden or family members that mock you and ridicule you, the day will come, if you just stay faithful, they're going to have to acknowledge. And when they're hurting and need, they're going to come at your feet.

Now, in closing, I want to say something here, very, very important. In hell, there are degrees of punishment. Remember, the scripture says very clearly, Luke 12, 46 to 48, that some are going to be beaten with many stripes and some with few.

He's talking about unprofitable servants who are cast off into the darkness, and he said some are going to be heavily judged and others less judged. There will be degrees of punishment, there's no question about it, in the Bible. In heaven, it has to do with proximity to Christ.

It has to do with closeness and usefulness and comprehension and understanding. You've heard me say, and I'll say this before I close, when you get to heaven, it's not a static glory. In other words, you don't get it all at one time.

All through eternity, God's going to give us a capacity to know more and more of His grace. The ecstasy is going to get greater and greater all through eternity. The joy is going to mount higher and higher.

There'll be no end of it. It's an endless open glory. It's an open ecstasy that ever increases the longer we're in eternity, the more we're going to rejoice in who He is.

He's going to unfold all the mysteries of the universe and redemption, and it's going to be something. I'm going to learn all through eternity. I'm excited because I'm going to learn.

I'm going to be a student all through eternity. I'm hungry. But this, this one who comes through the fire, will not have that same capacity, that same capacity of ever increasing.

There'll not be that usefulness. Because you've been faithful, I'll make you a ruler. That means to be useful to Him.

Folks, the greatest joy I get now, I don't know about you, is to be useful to the Lord. I want that same joy in eternity. It blesses my soul, blesses me now more than I can explain.

I want that all through eternity. Now, if you just want to slip into heaven and sit there playing a harp, you think, and look over to see all these people suffering, oh, thank God I got out of that. You know, you see, I want to be there where the crowns are cast down.

I want to be there where I can embrace Him. Because He's going to have a body. He's going to have flesh and bone, and I can hug Him, and I can feel Him, just like I can hug and feel any other brother in this church that I would embrace.

I'll be able to feel Him and touch Him. Hallelujah. I want to live near Him.

I want to be near. And I want this understanding. I want this capacity to understand.

Now, let me talk about passing through fire. There are some that are going to be saved as through fire. Now, this is something more than the fiery eyes, and with this I close.

There's also a flaming tongue. You look all through the Bible. Remember when the fire came on the bush for Moses? What came out of the fire? A voice.

Mount Sinai, fire came down on the mountain when God appeared, and what came out of the fire? A voice. A thundering voice. And everywhere you see it in the Old Testament, you'll find it over and over

again.

Wherever the fire of God is, His flaming voice, His thunderous voice. And this is, I, folks, I don't have scripture to prove this. There may be another kind of fire, but I fear this more than any other kind of fire that I could think of.

I don't know how you could suffer any more than have to stand before Jesus, before His flaming eyes, and hear that stern, deep, thunderous voice, like a two-edged sword that came out of His mouth, according to John. And to have that two-edged sword flaming hot, pierce my soul, and have Him say, Saved, yes, by grace. But I want you to understand how you took me for granted.

You abused my grace. You made light of my cross. You loved me with no real devotion.

You wasted the time I gave you. You were unthankful for your health and your blessing. I bestowed so much upon you, you grew weary of the way.

You murmured, you complained, you were ungrateful, you were angry. To pass through that fire. You know, my kids, four, they didn't mind it when I took the belt and spanked them.

They could handle that. One thing my children couldn't handle, and I'll tell you that to this day, not Debbie, Bonnie, Gary, or Greg, and especially my sons. They couldn't stand that look on my face when I was hurt because of something they did.

And they didn't want that lecture. They didn't want to hear the pain in me. When I told them how they grieved not me but God, the pain, tears would roll down their cheeks.

They would just assume, go get the belt and lash me. But you see, they loved me so much, they knew they hurt me. That's the fire.

I love him too much to hurt him. I would rather he have an angel lash me and bleed me. But I don't want him to say, David, you hurt me.

That's a fire I don't want to pass through. I want him to say, you blessed me. You were a joy to my soul.

You were a joy to my being. But I don't want to face that tongue, that two-edged sword. I want to tell you something.

I was a father. After I lectured my children, after I told them where they pained and hurt me and God, and I saw how it pained them, and I saw the tears in their eyes, and I saw their repentant heart, you know what I did every time, never missed? I'd say, come here. And I'd stand there and make them hug me.

And that was the hardest part for them. I wasn't trying to hurt them. I was trying to say, you got the message.

I want you to know I love you. And we would hug and cry. That did more than all the whippings could ever do.

And on that day, after passing through the fire, he said, yet you'll be saved. But as through fire. Will you stand? I want to ask you the question I started with.

Are you prepared to stand before the judgment seat of Christ? Are you prepared right now? Think about it. Are you ready? Some of you are not even going to be at the judgment seat of Christ. You're going to be at the great white throne judgment where the sinners will be judged.

There'll be no advocate. There'll be no lawyer. There'll be no attorney to plead your case.

You're not right with God. You've forsaken him. You've run.

You're hidden from the Lord. You're living in sin. And God says, I brought you here this morning to change you and transform you and bring you back.

Some of you have left your first love. The Lord said, I've got something against you because you left your first love. And he says, go back to your first love.

And then there's a warning. There's a warning. Everything Jesus said to John about those who leave their first love and those who are careless.

Lest I come and take it away. I don't know how to approach this this morning. You said, brother, are you trying to make me afraid? The apostle said, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

The point of my whole message is that you would be able to stand before the judgment seat with joy and with full assurance of hope. And you can be there just that way. We examine yourself before the Holy Ghost.

If there's a root of bitterness toward anybody. You say, I don't have any anger in me. I don't have any bitterness in me.

Was it there before? How far back does it go? You say, well, the leaves, I don't see the leaves. But what about the root? The thing that goes down, down so deep in our consciousness. Is it there? Say, oh Jesus, did they pluck it out? There's got to be genuine repentance here this morning.

Some of you have to repent. I know that. I come to you as a pastor.

I'm saying you've got to repent. You say, well, I've been coming to Times Square Church. I don't care about coming to Times Square Church.

You've got to repent. You have mistreated. You have, there's been lying.

There's been mistreatment. There have been so many things that are there and have to be dealt with. Get it out.

Oh God, pluck out every root that would destroy and contaminate us. Pluck it out, Lord. That's what you want to do so that you can set us free and bring this joy of cleansing.

Hallelujah. Cleanse us and sanctify us today. Let there be a cleansing.

Lord, you said you'd send the Holy Ghost this morning. Poor conviction on this house. And bring the fear of God upon all of us, upon me, upon everybody in this church.

Bring the holy fear of God. We stand before a holy God and one day, Jesus, we're going to stand before your flaming eyes. Prepare us.

Oh Lord, we know it's just the blood, the cleansing of the blood, the righteousness of Jesus. But oh Lord, you've got to sanctify us. You've got to purge us of all iniquity.

Hallelujah. So that we will be there, not just saved, but with rejoicing and gladness of heart. If God's talking to you, just get out of your seat and come.

I don't know what else to say. If God's dealing with you, get out of your seat from the balcony in the main floor and get up here and repent and say, God, forgive me. Cry out to God.

Don't come up here and just say a cute prayer. Cry out to God and say, Lord, I'm guilty before you and I want my heart cleansed. I want to be changed.

I want to be healed of all of this junk that's been in me. I want it out. I've preached a whole lot of love.

I've preached the Father's love. I've preached Christ's love from this pulpit so many times. But you know, we have a tendency to abuse the love of God, the love of a father.

We get to a place where we think he's so loving, he's indulgent that he'll permit anything. And well, he's my loving father. He'll just wink at it.

No, he won't wink at sin. He won't wink at it anymore. He never has and he'll never wink at it.

We have a loving father, but on the judgment day, he's going to be judge. Can you imagine a young man? His father's a judge. And he's a pal with his dad.

Loves his father. He plays ball with him. But he's in a drunken accident and he's the cause of it.

And he stands before the judge and he says to himself, well, I'm not going to worry. That's just a breeze. It's a cakewalk.

That's my dad. But he's never seen his dad in his robes. He's never seen his dad as a judge.

He's only known him as a father. And here comes the judge and everybody stands and he sees the awe of that courtroom. And his father looks down at him.

He said, yes, you're my son, but I'm a judge and I believe in justice. And he's a just God, not just a loving father. He's a just and holy God.

And that boy is going to receive justice. He's not going to receive favoritism. None of us are favorites.

God doesn't have any favorites. Listen to me, please. He's here now.

If you're honest before him now, folks, get dead honest. You got to be honest before him. Say, Lord Jesus, I stand before you right here now to acknowledge that I have sinned against God in heaven, sinned against my Savior and against his cross.

And I want to be cleansed. You know what that means? I want this ended. I want this finished.

I want everybody come forward. Just lift your hands. Lift your hands to the Lord.

I want you. Now, I give you a prayer. It's only beginning.

But if you'll mean it, at least it'll start something in your heart. Pray this with me right now. Jesus, I admit I am not ready up to this point for the judgment seat.

But I want to be ready. But I want to be ready. I ask you, Jesus, to come and cleanse me, pluck out of me by the roots.

Everything unlike you, Jesus. Everything of anger and bitterness and worldliness and sin. Pluck it out.

I want no more to do with it. Forgive me. Now, wash me and cleanse me by your blood and through your precious word.

I know you love me, Jesus. And I want to stand before you with joy and assurance. Now, I want you to thank him for being faithful to you right now.

I thank you, Jesus, for being faithful to hear the cry of the repentant and the needy. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Lord, I'm asking you to cleanse this whole house. Lord, from the balcony. You've sent people here that are visiting here today.

You sent them for a reason. They're here, Lord, to come to a new plateau of diligence. Lord, I know there's been carelessness.

I know there's some here now that have not really been on their knees before you. They've not been seeking you with all their heart. Lord, they've taken you for granted.

They've neglected you days on end. Now, Jesus, come and remind us of it and prepare us to seek you with all of our hearts. He said, in the day you seek me with all your heart, you'll find me.

Hallelujah. Oh, God, give us that diligence. Take away the sloth from our hearts.

Let us not be slothful or careless, but diligent in the things of God. And we'll give you the praise and the honor. Hallelujah.

This is the conclusion of the tape.

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