

Audio Sermon: Shall We Continue in Sin - the Fear of God

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon challenges Christians to confront their sins and emphasizes the necessity of the fear of God for true repentance and victory over sin.

Duration: 1:05:56

Scripture: Psalm 139:23

Topics: "Fear Of God", "Repentance"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of acknowledging and dealing with sin in our lives through the fear of God. It highlights the consequences of continuing in sin, the need for repentance, and the power of the Holy Spirit to cleanse and empower believers to walk in righteousness and freedom.

Transcript

I trust you brought your Bible with you, you're going to need it tonight. I want you to go to Romans 6, please, Romans 6 chapter. I'm going to start, I'll read the first two verses.

My message tonight, shall we continue in sin? Shall we continue in sin? Verses 1 and 2, what shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin? That grace may abound, and God forbid, how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? Folks, if you'll be patient the first 30 minutes or so of this message, we'll get to the amazing grace. But I've got to speak his mind tonight on something that God has dealt so very severely and strongly with me about, and something that's come out of my innermost being. Heavenly Father, I thank you that you've taken this word tonight and woven it into the very fiber of my being.

Lord, this was not a message that I invented, it was a message that came from your throne and it brought me to my face. And I pray, God, that you would come on me with such a grace and mercy that I could preach this in a way, Lord, that would not be offensive and yet accomplish your will. I need your strength and your power and your unction and anointing.

God, touch my lips as you've never touched them before. Lord, you're bringing us into the covenant, but there has to be a special work done now. Lord, this is the one thing that is needed before we can go another step further.

Thank you for the marvelous word we heard this morning and the penetrating word this afternoon. And now, Lord, do it again. Give us your heart, give us your mind, I pray.

I humble myself before you. Amen. How is it that we who call ourselves Christians can continue holding on to besetting sin month after month and sometimes year after year? How is it that Christians can come to a church like this and hear such a strong word? And how is it that Christians who raise their hands and praise the Lord and confess deeply that they love Jesus and yet they can hold on to their sins, continue in bitterness, grudges, lust, fornication, adultery, drinking, homosexuality, lesbianism, you name it.

Thousands upon thousands of Christians have allowed the permissiveness of this age to creep into the church and into their very hearts, and now excusing things they would have never excused before, winking at sins they had never thought they would wink at before, taking it so lightly, fornication, adultery, some besetting sins that has laid hold of the heart and just won't let go. A sin that's entwined itself around the heart like a serpent. And in spite of all the tears, in spite of all the praying, in spite of all the messages on the covenant, still that sin is there and it won't go.

It won't go. Paul asked the question, how can we, we who are baptized into Jesus, we who have been buried and resurrected with him, how can we, who've been planted together in the likeness of his death, how can such as we continue in sin, how can we do it? Folks, you know the longer that sin continues in your heart, the more difficult it is to get it out, the longer you toy with it, the longer you flirt with it, the longer you allow it there, the more difficult it becomes, it starts decaying the spirit, it's like a cancer that spreads all through the body, all through your system, and it defiles everything that you think, everything that you touch, it defiles your life and everything around you, it defiles your family, it defiles everything. Sin never dies of itself.

Never. If it's not uprooted, destroyed, it's going to take the throne. It literally takes the throne, I don't care how you sing, I don't care how you shout.

If we continue in sin, the time is coming, it's going to take the throne, and we heard that very clearly this afternoon. Powerful message about the covenant and the need for God to deal with our sins. The conscious becomes defiled, discernment is the first thing that goes.

You lose your discernment, you can't tell the difference between right and wrong anymore. The difference between right and wrong becomes very clouded and fuzzy, and then that sin will become a voice in itself, and it will quote scripture to you to justify it. The devil came to Jesus and tried to justify his temptations, scriptures, oh I have so many people tell me that, you know, this is not wrong because God spoke to me, and God told me that this was not sinful, when very clearly it's contrary to the word of God.

Now under the new covenant, God made a promise to send the Holy Ghost to abide in us, to empower us to live in victory over sin, and to completely defeat the dominion of sin in our lives. There would be a release of this power, and he would give us a new heart, the scripture says he would give us a new mind, and he would come to set us free from all the captivity and slavery of sin, that is the promise of the new covenant. He promised to break the chains and set every captive free.

But those promises are given only to those who are sick of their sin and weary of it. God forbid that any Christian should just sit back and claim the blessings of the covenant and say I'm waiting for the Holy Ghost to do it. I've been told that the Holy Ghost will come into my heart, and the Holy Ghost will give me the power and authority, and that's it, and I want to tell you, if you're waiting for the Holy Ghost to do it

without your cooperation, you're sadly mistaken.

He will not do it without your cooperation. Why would the Holy Ghost release his power to those who want victory over sin they don't even believe is wicked, and they consider it only a nuisance? Why would God release any power of deliverance to those who wake up their sin and say well it's just uncomfortable to me, or it might hurt me, I might be exposed by it, but there's no hatred for that sin? Why would God through his Spirit release his power to get victory over sin we don't even think is wicked? Why do believers continue in sin? Why do so many go year after year after year in their sinful practices holding on to besetting sin, one root of bitterness, one grudge, one lust, one form of bondage? That you have victory in every area of their life, but there's one thing, and folks, I breathe this in all my heart, there's usually only one sin, sometimes what we consider a little sin, there's one thing that keeps us from coming into the fullness of the covenant blessings of God. Usually it's one thing, and the heart and the mind knows it, and God knows it, and he's told you about it, and he knows that there's one area in your life that remains.

God says, this has to go, and then you come into the covenant. I don't have to look far for an answer as to why we continue in our sins. I look into my own heart.

More and more I think of the time that I have to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Every day of my life now I think of it, when I have to stand before my Jesus and look into his loving eyes, and I have to give an account of everything I've preached. And I know over the years that I've preached things to others and demanded things of people I've never kept myself.

I know that other than the grace of God and the mercy of God, I couldn't stand before him. And Paul knew that too, he said, let's have me preach to others, I might still become a castaway. In other words, I stand before Jesus, and I didn't live what I preached.

I am aware every moment of the day now of that moment I stand before him, I have to stand and answer for this message I preach to you tonight, I have to live tonight and the rest of my life what I'm preaching to you. And I am reminded of that day, and the Bible said if we judge ourselves we will not be judged, and every day I put myself before the judgment seat of Christ. I stand there in my spirit before the very throne of Christ and say, Jesus, look me in the eye, if there's something there, deal with it, open it to me, I'm not going to stand before you with a sin that I continue in, I don't want, oh God, help me, I don't want to ever stand before the judgment seat, having continued with a sin to the very moment that trumpets out.

There's some of you sitting in this building right now, you can't even talk to somebody, there's bitterness, there's grudge, there's hatred, if Jesus comes tonight, you go immediately to the throne, what plea do you have, what excuse do you say, well I was waiting for the coming of the Holy Ghost to do it, I thought of grace of God would abound, what's your answer? Could that sin that you continued up to this last week or to last night, and you still have it in your heart now, it's still clinging, it's still there, what do you do when you stand before the judgment seat of Christ, folks it's getting late, and Jesus is at the door, he's coming very, very soon, and I don't have to look very far, I just look into my own heart, I don't look at the failure of others, and tonight I'm preaching weed because there's nobody here without sin, now folks, not everybody's living with a lust, but I want you to know if you sit here thinking you're above lust, you don't know your Bible, we all come short of the glory of God, and there is lust, capacity for lust in every one of us, or sin, that there's a capacity in us, and it's only sticking close to Jesus, it's only believing in his word, it's only staying close to him that gives us victory, and trusting fully in his blood, there are many of you that come to that, thank God, but I'm talking about those tonight who are continuing in their sins. The time has

come to ask ourselves the question, why am I still continuing in this sin? Why is this evil thing still there? Why am I not free? Now let me share with you the conclusion I've come to, and I came to this with the help of the Holy Ghost, and when he showed it to me, he cast, I literally fell wailing before God. No new truth, but it's something that has to be understood before we go another step further, before we say another word about covenant.

Here's the conclusion I've come to with the leading of the Holy Spirit. We continue in sin because we do not have the fear of God in us. We have never had the fear of God implanted in our heart by the Holy Ghost.

You can't work up the fear of God. You can't get it through the laying on of hands. You can't conjure up by any physical feeling, or any kind of manipulation of the flesh.

This is a genuine work of the Holy Ghost. He alone can implant his fear into our hearts, and I'm telling you now, there is no possibility of victory over any besetting sin unless the fear of God is being implanted. Impossible.

Proverbs 16.6, by mercy and truth and iniquity is purged, and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil. Proverbs 3.7, fear the Lord, then depart from evil. Proverbs 14.27, the fear of the Lord is the fountain of life to depart from the snares of the devil.

The fear of the Lord is the fountain of life, whereby you flee the snares of the devil of death. Now see, the fear of God is more than just reverential awe. I've heard that all my life.

It's reverential awe. You know, the Bible makes a very clear distinction between reverence and the fear of God. I read it to you from Hebrews 12.28, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

With reverence, God makes a distinction between that reverential awe for God and godly fear. There's a major difference. There can be no full revelation or understanding of God's new covenant promises.

The full revelation will not come until the fear of God is deeply rooted in us. I quote to you the scripture God gave me 30 some, 35 years ago, said it would be the theme of my life, and it's been that ever since. The secret of the Lord was with them that fear him and the Lord will show him his covenant.

The fear before the covenant. The secret of the Lord is in that fear him and he will show them his covenant. We don't see the fear of God in the church of Jesus Christ today.

You don't hear it in Christ. You do from this pulpit, but if you go all across, you can go from church to church across this nation, you will seldom hear a message about the fear of God. There's no fear of God before their eyes.

And we lack the fear of God because we have misinterpreted most of the New Testament scriptures about fear. We've misinterpreted them. For example, let me give you examples.

We quote this. God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of love and power in the sound mind. A perfect love casts out all fear, for you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.

There is no fear in love. These are all about fear, but folks, that refers to the fear of man and the fear of the devil, but not the fear of God. Paul made it clear, listen to it, so that we might boldly say, the Lord is my

helper and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Same Greek word. This has to do with the fear of man. There is in the new covenant what I call a precedent work of the Holy Spirit.

And this precedent means that it precedes all other works. In other words, this has to come first. And this precedent work of the Holy Spirit has to be accomplished in us before any of the other blessings and provisions of the covenant can be opened up to us and operate in our lives.

If we don't have this work of the Holy Spirit, none of these others, in fact, when God accomplishes this work, He is at the same time going to show you, accomplishing all the promises, they are in this one precedent work of the Holy Spirit that has to be accomplished in every one of us. I want you to go to Jeremiah 32 with me, please. Jeremiah 32.

And I'm not expecting any shouting until we get to the end tonight. And then if you don't shout, you didn't hear a word I said. Start with verse 39, please.

Two verses I want to read. Now folks, these are new covenant promises from the prophet Jeremiah. These are not old covenant promises, these are new covenant promises.

Let's start verse 38. They shall be my people and I will be their God. Now you know that's the first blessing promised in the new covenant.

And I will give them one heart and one way that they may fear me forever for the good for them and of their children after them. And I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them to do them good, but I will put my fear in their hearts, why? That they shall not depart from me. Look at me, please.

God says, I'm going to make you a promise. I'm going to send the Holy Ghost and I'm going to give him to you, he's going to abide and live in you. When he comes, he's going to cleanse the temple, your body's a temple, and he's going to deal with everything that's unlike Jesus in you.

He's going to go every corner of the heart, every little thing that is unlike Christ, he's going to shine the light on it and he's going to deal with it. He's not going to awaken anything, he wants it clean, he's going to have a clean heart. He's going to give you a new heart, he's going to give you a new vessel, but first of all he's going to come in and deal with issues that are in the heart, out of the abundance of the heart are the issues of life, out of the heart itself are the true issues of life.

He said, I'm going to do great things in you, I'm going to cause you to will and do of my good pleasure, I am going to do marvelous things in you, but first of all, before we do anything else, God says, I am going to put my fear in your hearts, why? If you don't have your, if you, he's inferring here that if you don't have his fear, your sin is going to turn you away from him, and God says, I'm going to come now in covenant, this is the foundational covenant covenant, this is the work of the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost he says is going to come down and implant the fear of God in you, so that you will not depart from me, it doesn't say the Holy Ghost is just going to come down and do all the work for you, you don't have to do anything, you just sit there and wait, and we've got whole denominations teaching that you just sit and wait, but we're sitting waiting when Jesus comes, still continuing in our sins, this is what I believe God is saying to us, and I want you to listen very closely, he says, I'm going to put my fear in your heart, I'm going to deal with you about how you look at your sin, how you deal with sin, if you're taking it lightly, God says, I'm going to deal

with that, I'm not going to wake you up with any sin, he says, he's no respecter of persons, and if you're sitting in the service tonight and they say it's lovely, and you think you have some special relationship with the Lord, that God has done such a marvelous work and grace in you, but yet you can continue in some sin, folks, if you say you have no sin, the Bible says you lie, and the truth is not in you, he says, I'm going to give you an understanding through my fear, I'm going to give you an understanding of exceeding sinfulness of what you're doing, I'm going to come down and show you the danger that you're in, until we see God's wrath against sin, until we see how it grieves the Holy Spirit, until we no longer take it lightly, we will never be free, you will never be free of your sin, if you think it is nothing before the eyes of God.

Now, how does the Holy Spirit put his fear in us, that we might not turn away from him? What method does he use to instill this godly fear in us, this divine marvelous fear? His method is the convicting word of God, the convicting error. Listen, if you're sitting here tonight hearing me, you say, Brother David, Pastor David, I have, I've been continuing in a sin, I've got something in my life, that I know the Holy Ghost has dealt with, I know there's something there that has to go, and I have tried, I've wept, I've tried to believe the covenant, I rejoice in that, and I want to enter into that peace of that, but as hard as I try, there's still that thing there, still there!

Let me tell you, if you have a heart to walk righteously before the Lord, and this sin has brought you to a weariness, and you're sick, you say, God, I want to be free, I want to walk before God, I want to be able to look Jesus right in the eye, and I want to know if I've died, and I stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and I know that I can say, and he knows, I have not continued in sin, I've not continued in my sin, oh, there's no end to this forgiveness, he will forgive, and forgive, and forgive, but you stand before God in a sin that you have continued in, you have not dealt with, you have never brought it out to the light, you have never allowed the Holy Ghost to deal with it, it's because you lack his fear! We try to shake off all guilt, and all condemnation, before the guilt has accomplished its purpose in us.

Now why don't you listen closely? We cry out these scriptures, such as, there is now no condemnation to them that be in Christ. We say, I have no condemnation, I am in Christ, I'm covered with the blood! But you have no right to claim that until you read the rest of the verse. To them who walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh.

If you are continuing in sin, you are walking in flesh! You're flesh! Some of you are sitting and saying, oh, this is so hard. No, the greatest grace of God is to deal with us like we're being dealt with now, the way God dealt with me, I've been dealt with first, and he's dealing with you now. That is the greatest mercy of God possible.

Listen, the greatest thing God can do for you if you're continuing in sin is to load your conscience with guilt. Load it! If you're sitting here tonight, and you continue in sin, you have no guilt in you about it. You can sit in this church and worship and praise God, go out in sin, you have no condemnation, you have no guilt, that means you have a hard heart! The greatest thing God can do for you tonight under the searchlight of the Holy Ghost is for you to cry out, oh God, there's sin in my life, and I know it's there, load me with guilt! Until it accomplishes what the law said it's supposed to accomplish.

To show the exceeding sinfulness of sin and the grief it causes the Holy Ghost. The fear of God includes, listen closely, the fear of God includes a full understanding of the danger and consequences of continuing in sin. The danger and the consequences of it.

Some of you sitting here tonight, you're not aware of the danger, you're not aware of the consequences. I know how God dealt with me when I was a young preacher. And I was going in the wrong direction one time.

And I remember Kansas, Missouri, Kansas, the state of Kansas, out in a cornfield. The Lord told me to go out and pray. And I'm out there by myself, no houses, no cars under rent, and the Holy Ghost put his finger on it.

And he told me straight out, David, this is sin. And I'm not allowing you to continue in it. And I'm telling you now, if you don't bring it out to the open, if you won't deal with it now, and if you want my fear to take a hold of your heart, I'm just going to lift your anointing.

God put his fear in my heart. The fear of God. The righteous, holy fear of his holiness.

That I could not work with it, I couldn't play with it, I couldn't continue in it. Before I could trust God to give me the enduring power of the Holy Spirit first, I had to know it was sin in the sight of God, and I had to see it through his eyes. Oh, I saw it through his eyes.

What he'll do, listen closely, if you really want God to deal with that sin, if you really wanted God, if you want to walk in freedom, let me tell you what's going to happen to you. If you want to walk in full covenant, he's going to shoot flaming arrows into your soul with his word. Sharp, convicting arrows of the word of God.

David said, your arrows will pierce my soul because of my sin. Now let me show you some of these flaming arrows he shot into my soul, and he's going to shoot them into your heart. Would God help me to say it in love? Is God going to show us exceeding sinfulness of sin? This is what the law is all about.

When he holds up the mirror, he says, now I want to show you the ugliness of it and how I see it. I want to give you, I want to show you at least four of these arrows, maybe five. Arrow number one, God considers hidden lusts, hidden sins in believers as more wicked, more dangerous, more vile than the most wicked, evil, open sins committed by the wicked.

Did you hear it? God considers the hidden sins of the heart in the mind. This is where it all begins. It's in the mind.

We say, well, I didn't act it out. It may be in my mind, but I didn't act it. We don't think it's sin because we don't act it out.

But God says he looks in the heart. He knows what's inside your heart. Think of the most vile thing.

Now this is going to get pretty strong, but I want you to listen to this, and I believe this is all in my heart. Think of the most vile sinner, the most wicked deeds you can think of. Think of this man who had a girlfriend engaged, and his father died, and she didn't come to the funeral and comfort him.

So out of hatred and revenge, he married her, got her pregnant, and killed the baby to get even with her. Did you see it in the newspaper last week? One of the national newscasters on the radio said this is considered one of the most vile, evil works ever perpetrated in American history. The most vile act of wickedness.

You think of all the murders and the flaunting acts of sin by a generation that's gone mad. Think of all the sins. And yet folks, if you look deeply into the Word of God, you'll find how God looks on the heart, and God considers in believers.

He looks at sin. Now I'm going to talk about his grace in just a minute, but first of all you have to see this before you go any further. God hates that secret thing, that thing that's embedded in us, that secret thing that we hide.

God says in my eyes that is more wicked and vile. In fact, if you're a Christian, those orphan acts that you do, those sins that you do openly, I consider those hidden things far more evil. He said to Laodicea Church, he said, I know you.

You're not what you claim to be. You're not what you say you are. He said, I know you.

You say, I'm all right, I'm in need of nothing. He said, I'm saying you're getting lukewarm, you're drying up. He said, I'm looking at your heart.

Everybody else sees all of this wealth and they see this prosperous church, but I'm looking, I know you. Oh folks, when God puts his finger on our hearts, he says, I know you. I know what's going on.

I know what's in your heart. For out of the heart are the real issues of life, and as he thinketh in his heart, so is he. You have got to come to this place where you say, God.

This is the sharp arrow of the Holy Ghost. He comes into the heart and says, you can't hide. Every secret thing is going to be brought out into the open.

God says, he despises that hidden, that which is hidden, that which no man knows about deep inside. The second arrow, the longer sin continues in you, the more danger of hardening of heart. Your heart will get hard.

Listen to what the scripture says. Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God, but exhort one another daily while it is called to day. Lord said, while you still have time, lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

He said, you continue in sinning, you're going to become correction proof, sermon proof. Whereas once you were able to sit in the house of God like this and tremble at the word of God, you loved the presence of Jesus. You would sit, you would hear a message and you would be able to go up that night and say, Lord, I know that was delivered from the Holy Ghost just for me.

I received it. You had ears to hear, but because you continued in your sin, because you would continue to play with it, work with it, and you would not allow the Holy Ghost to show you the exceeding sinfulness of it, that God could bring it out and set you free. And when the Holy Ghost says he'll come to empower you, he empowers you with his fear.

The fear of God is a power that is not empowering you, that is not fulfilling his covenant. He said, I'll put my fear in your heart that you will not turn against me. But the day will come as you continue in your sin and every day you can continue in your sin, the harder your heart is getting.

So the time will come that you can sit and praise God and everybody will look at you as if everything is fine, nothing is wrong with you, and you'll be able to sit through any message. You can sit down through

Holy Ghost thunder and not be moved, people around you weeping and repenting, and you sit there cold. You sit there unmovable.

Nothing can touch you. No preacher, no counselor, nobody. That's the Word of God.

Nothing can touch your heart anymore. It's hard because you won't let go, because the sin continues. I've seen it.

I've seen the horror of men of God turned over to hard heart. I think of a minister friend of mine, large church, committed adultery. He had a lustful heart.

His wife knew it and those who worked with him knew it. When a man tells dirty jokes and he doesn't have a mind on Jesus, you're everything but Jesus, you know something's wrong. He was caught and exposed, but God had mercy on this man and he was under discipline for a season and they restored him.

But you see, he never let go. He never dealt with that. He seemed to get off easy.

Men stood in his pulpit and preached the fire of God, preached conviction. Not because I was one of them, but stood in his pulpit. I was there the night he was exposed.

I was preaching in his pulpit. I think five women came forward that were having an affair with him. He could have an affair in his office and go from the office right into the pulpit.

One of my friends asked him, how could you do that? He smiled. He said, you have to be a good actor. It's a hard heart.

Nothing moved the man. No preaching, nothing. I've stood in pulpits of men where the spirit of God, I remember one time the spirit of God coming on me.

I lost five pounds in an hour because of the grief of the Holy Ghost. Because the man behind me had sat for a whole week under Holy Ghost preaching with a hard heart. And the Holy Ghost said, I'll give you one more chance.

I just stood for 20 minutes in the spirit of God. I said, there are demons that are in the balcony. They're in the rafters all over because there's sin in this house and God's giving you one more chance.

I turned. Not a sound, not a movement. A few months later exposed for homosexuality.

I've seen that hardness. Some of you here now, and I tell you by the Holy Ghost, and I'm a loving pastor, the spirit of God's on me. And I'm telling you, some of you here now, God is dealing with you in love.

He's coming now, just like He sits you down and says, now look, this is getting dangerous. You're in danger and I'm here because I love you and I'm telling you, you're in danger. You're not seeing it as I see it.

You've lived with it so long, you've grown comfortable with it. Now you can sit with a hard heart. I'm telling you folks, some of you need to deal with this tonight.

Let your heart grow hard in my preaching. You see the fear of God comes and says, every day you continue. Each day you go on doing it.

Your heart is slowly, surely growing hard. Your sin is becoming less obnoxious to you. Third arrow.

I want you to go to Psalm 89 to see it. You continue your sin and you're going to face the rod of God. Psalm 89.

This is also covenant. I'm going to give you nothing but covenant scriptures. I want you to begin reading verse 30.

We're going to go from 30 to 34. Now folks, this is one of the prime important covenant promises. Start verse 28.

My mercy will I keep for him forever and my covenant shall stand fast with him. That's covenant between God and his son, Christ. His seed, that is us.

So also will I make to endure forever in his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law and walk not in my judgments, if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments. In other words, if they continue in their sins, then will I visit their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes.

Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I utterly, will I not, I will not utterly from him, but nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. Now folks, we love to hear this. My faithfulness, my loving kindness, I'll never take away.

We love to hear that. I'm going to keep the covenant and I'm going to bless you and I'm going to keep you. We love to hear that, but we skip lightly.

And this is where the Holy Ghost dealt with me this day. He said, stop. Stop right there.

Don't go down to verse 33 till you stop at 32. You break my laws. You keep not my commandments.

Then I'm going to visit your transgression with the rod and your iniquity with stripes. Look at me. There's no way I can stop at this.

There's no way I can get around it. God wouldn't let me get around it. He won't let you get around it.

You're going to stop right here. The Lord says you continue to sin. He said, I'll not take my loving kindness from you.

That means he's sending you to hell. He said, I'm going to deal with you. I'm going to put the rod on your back and you're going to feel my stripes on your back.

You're going to be judged. And if you think that is a light thing, now we know that whom the Lord loves, he chases. We know that the rod is always in the loving hand of a loving father.

But if you think tonight that that's the light thing, you better remember David. David is a prime example. Here's a man after God's own heart.

Here's a man that has such favor with God, lives with sin hidden, continues in sin for month after month after month, making all kinds of justifications, covering his sin. And God said that's enough and he sends a prophet. And God by the prophet ripped him off of every excuse, just tore every excuse apart.

So David had to face it on demand, yes. And if you think the rod of God is some easy thing, then you look at David fleeing into the wilderness, running from his favorite son, hiding, hearing the message that his own son is killed in battle, and all the people killed in the process and all the bloodshed. And David is wailing before God.

If you think the rod of God is easy, then remember the baby, that illegitimate baby that David bore, and after he'd covered all his sins, and the baby dies. And then you listen to the heartrending cry of David, oh God don't take your Holy Ghost from me. Because of the terror, he said my bones are breaking.

He said I have no rest in my bones, I have no hope. Because he was under the rod of God. I've been under that rod.

You don't want to be under that rod. God said you continue in your sin. He said I'm going to keep my covenant.

My mercy will never depart from you. That's my promise, that's everlasting. I've made that to my son.

For him, I never left him, and I'm never going to leave you. But I'm not going to let you go. I'm not going to let you destroy yourself.

Because if I'm a covenant God and I love you, I'm going to have to get the poison. And I'm a surgeon, he's the great physician, he's not going to let you leave the operating room until his knife has finished his job. You can't be healed otherwise.

He's going to dig it out. You'll come under the rod of God. Number four, if you continue in sin, you're going to experience a constant drain and loss of peace and strength.

It's going to be like, if you have a car, if you've ever seen a hole in the oil tank, that oil that drains out, there's going to be a constant dripping and draining out of your life of peace, joy, and strength. Listen to what David said, my strength has failed because of my iniquity and my bones are consumed. Your arrows stick faster than me.

There's no rest in my bones because of my sins. Oh God, he says, you have weakened my strength. God did it.

I've seen these who become so confused because they continue in sin. There's a confusion in their life. There's a confusion in their home.

They're always downcast. That's not the only reason. We all go through those periods.

I understand that even the most righteous among us who have no hidden thing in our lives, and yet I see that unrest. I've been around ministers and I would sit with them next to the pulpit and they couldn't sit still. They were just moving constantly.

There was no rest. They'd get moving all the time and I'd get nervous sitting next to them. I know it's not nerves.

It's Holy Ghost moving on the nerves, dealing with it. Watch how still everybody is. A constant disturbance in the life, in the home.

Everything's disturbed. Everything's out of tilter. Confusion because sin still lies at the door.

The last era, I'm going to go over to number five now. One of the most grievous consequences of continuing sin is the loss of usefulness to the kingdom of God. Folks, that's the one thing that God should ever put me on the shelf.

I've seen men who had been mightily used of God put on the shelf. God said, I'm sorry, you continue in your sin. You won't let me deal with it.

He said, I don't have any more use for you. You'll, my mercy will bring you through, but I can't use you anymore. I want you to quickly, I want to show this to you because it's so sad.

First Samuel. First Samuel, quickly, please, before I close. First Samuel, 13th chapter.

It happened to Saul. And when I read this, it just makes me tremble. 13th chapter, verse 13.

And Samuel said to Saul, thou hast done foolishly. Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord, thy God. You've continued in your sin, which he commanded thee.

For now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. He said, if you would have just dealt with this, he said, God was on the verge of establishing you forever. God was saying to this man, I had plans for you.

I wanted to use you. Now I'm not just talking about ministers, and I'm talking about every one of us in the pew, every withering saint who is withering now. No more use to the kingdom of God because that thing continues and you will not let the Holy Ghost show you the wickedness of it.

14th verse, but now thy kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought him a man after his own heart. The Lord has commanded him to be captain over his people because thou has not kept that which the Lord commanded thee.

Look at me, please. God said, Saul, I can't use you anymore. Sorry.

And his spirit left him. No more use to the kingdom of God. And he was given over to activity of the flesh alone.

And he moved from then on only in the flesh and folks, this, this, this is where it ends. You become absolutely barren and fruitless. No more use to the kingdom of God.

I don't want to go to heaven that way. I don't want to live my Christian life just to escape hell. Not at all.

Now, let me give you the mercy part before I close. All right. Are you ready? Now, this is all mercy, but let me just bring some marvelous opening of this right now to your heart.

Because you know, when God showed me, this is the way I had to look at any sin in my life. And God said, you just can't go on and on and on and on continually in your sin. There has to come a day when it's dealt with.

I don't care if it's homosexuality, lesbianism, drinking, alcohol, fornication, lust, whatever it may be, pornography, whatever it is. It can be unbelief. It can be lying and stealing and all of these things that we try to hide.

And God says, no, that comes in time. It has to end. Now, God made it clear to me that I have to remind myself every day from now on.

And I'm going to do this by his grace through the power of the Holy Ghost. I literally pray, God, put your fear in me. He's not going to do it unless you ask for it.

You have to ask for the Holy Ghost. And then he gives you the promise, but you have to lay hold of it. Just as sure as God promised to deliver Israel after 70 years, he commanded, he laid hold of Daniel's heart to lay hold of that promise.

It was there after 70 years. He laid it, he saw it, yet God, he fasted and prayed until that promise was his. Israel received that promise in reality.

He has given us all these new covenant promises to lay hold of them by faith. Now, by faith, if God right now is dealing with you and there is a sense of guilt of your sin, that is the gift of God. God is putting a wonderful power in you.

He said, by the fear of God, men depart from iniquity. God is fulfilling every promise of the covenant to you right now. I thank God for his fear in my heart, a godly fear.

And that, the godly fear entails that time the Holy Ghost came into my life and he keeps coming in. And when there's something unlike Christ, and I want to get comfortable with it, and I continue in that, if I continue hearing message after message after message, and there's something I know God's dealing with in my life, if I don't allow the Holy Ghost now to come and deal with me and say, that's dangerous, you continue, there's going to come a time, you're going to come under the rod, you're going to come under his correction, and it's going not, it's not going to be easy, it's going to be very, very difficult, and it can bring you to the very brink of death, it can bring you to the very brink of the grave, as it did David. And you allow that work of the Holy Ghost to be accomplished.

He is fulfilling everything. He's being God to you. He said, I'll be God to you and you'll be my children.

This is God being God to you. He said, I'm going to give you a new heart. This is how God's giving you a new heart.

He's putting his fear in there to get rid, to give you power, to get this thing evicted out of your spirit and soul and mind. This is God writing his laws in your heart, because you see the law, the purpose of the law is to expose sin. He said, I'm putting that in your heart, I'm putting my fear in your heart, and that's the law being put in your heart.

And folks, you get it finally, you come to the place where you're, I can't do this in my own strength and in my own power, but I know one thing, because the fear, let me say this, exposure never heals anybody. You can be exposed before and made a scandal, that's not going to heal you. David was made a scandal, lived with it for a whole year, it never healed him.

Exposure doesn't heal you, and God's not trying to expose you to the world. He's exposing you, the Holy Ghost is exposing you to yourself. And that law that's written in our heart, God said, I'm going to write my laws in your heart, these are all covenant promises, and God does it by instilling his fear, showing you the deceitfulness, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and telling you straight out, if you're willing, if you're going to, if you will acknowledge that you can't go on in this, if you'll acknowledge it's dreadful sin and quit

justifying it and say, Holy Ghost, I bring it to you now, I acknowledge it's sin, I repent before you.

Now, Holy Ghost, you have given me this fear, you've empowered me now, and I believe you're going to take me the rest of the way, and when you go that far, then you come to the comfort of the Holy Ghost. And with this I close, Acts 9 31, Then had the church rest throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and were edified, listen, walking in the fear of God, that new covenant had just been given, just sealed by the blood, and now Pentecost has come, and now the Bible said they're walking in the fear of God, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. You walk in the fear of God, and you're going to get the comfort of the Holy Ghost, they go hand in hand.

I have comfort in my heart now, because he's torn away all the excuses, and he said, if you do that, if you truly repent, if you allow me to show you the exceeding sinfulness of what is in your heart, then I'm going to bring you out into the glory, the resurrection glory of the full new covenant, of all my promises, and he's doing it now. Are you understanding this? I'm going to close now. The only way you and I can shout, the only way you and I can be free, you say, oh brother there's a heaviness here now, there's a heaviness.

Of course there's a heaviness. This is the Holy Ghost. Jesus is coming.

He's getting his church ready. He's not going to give his new covenant promises to a people who are still walking in fear. You say, well, isn't that the reason the Holy Ghost is given, to get us out of our fear? Yes, but he puts the fear in first, so that we can acknowledge that it's real.

I don't think that's complicated, and I stand before you now. I have not arrived. I'm so far from where I want to be, but I tell you before a holy God, before the Holy Spirit, I thank him for coming to me, head on, putting his law in my heart and said, David, I'm going to keep shooting those arrows into your heart, because I love you, because I'm not going to let you walk away from me.

I'm not going to let your sins take you away from me. I'm going to put my fear in your heart, so that you'll never depart from me. Never depart from me.

Hallelujah. Now folks, we're going to have time for the Holy Ghost to deal with us in love, all the marvelous grace and love of Jesus, when we simply acknowledge our sins. Will you acknowledge it for me? I want you to stand.

In my flesh, you know what I'd like to do? I would like now, and it would be just flesh, I would just so like to come and put my arms on every one of you, pat you on the backs, everything's okay. Everything's fine. Don't worry about it.

You can't do it. I don't know how heavy it gets. This got so heavy in me, I was thrown on my face, and I cried out, and I walk in the new covenant, and I preach the new covenant.

But David said, you don't go another step in the new covenant, you don't preach another word until you deal with this foundational, perceived truth. Fear of God is the beginning of the wisdom of the covenant. If the Holy Ghost, while I was preaching tonight, convicted you, there is guilt.

That guilt will be taken, it will leave the moment you acknowledge it. The moment you come and say, God, right now, I have cozied with this, I have flirted with it, I have not allowed you to show me the exceeding sinfulness of it, I've not allowed your law in my heart, I've not faced it, I've not dealt with it, but I felt your arrow piercing my soul and my heart tonight. Up in the balcony, wherever you are, I'm asking you to come

up here now and say, Jesus, I want you to deal with this.

Holy Ghost, come and put your fear in my heart, that I'll not take this lightly anymore. I will not look lightly. And if you've got a grudge or bitterness in your heart toward anybody, you better get up here and make it right with God.

Deal with it now. Get it out of your system. Say, Lord, I'm going to make it right.

I'm going to make it right. Holy Ghost will help you make it right. The Holy Ghost will do it.

You've got to cooperate with the Holy Ghost. Move in close, please, make room for all those that are coming now. Lord Jesus, we're to fear and tremble before your word as the Holy Ghost deals lovingly in our hearts.

He said, I want you to be free. I've given you a covenant, and I said I'd send the Holy Ghost to you, and I've done that. And tonight I've sent the Holy Ghost to abide in you, to implant in your heart that godly fear that you'll never again ever take your sin lightly.

But you say, Jesus, let me see it through your eyes. And then I bring it to you, Lord, when I see the ugliness of it, and say, Lord, I don't want to continue in this. I know that it grieves the Holy Spirit in me, and I know that my body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and I want the Holy Ghost to have freedom to do his work in my heart.

Holy Spirit, you will not do it without our cooperation. You will not force yourself on us. Holy Ghost, you do come.

You come with him to empower us. You said, I'll do in you what you cannot do. But Lord, you expect us to cooperate with you.

You expect us now to allow you to do your work, and you're doing that work tonight. Lord, I have to stand before you on the judgment seat. Jesus, I stand one day to answer for what I preach to this people.

God, you know my heart, that I don't want to condemn the righteous and comfort the wicked. Oh God, I know what you said to my heart. If I'm one of the pastors of this church, you tell me that I have to go deeper.

I have to look at everything in my life through your eyes. My relationship to my wife, my language with my wife, or my family, the way I, any covetousness that tries to hold in my heart, all of these things, oh God, that you deal with us about, and we just let them lay there and just let them fester and turn into cancer. God just said, no, I won't allow that.

I love you. I'm going to put my fear in your heart so you'll not walk away from me. Lord Jesus, may I ask you now to put your fear in the heart, not only those who came forward, but this entire church, that we do as they did at their Pentecost, walking in the fear of God and the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

Hallelujah. I want everybody that came forward, in fact everybody in this church, I want you to just lift your hands right now and ask the Holy Ghost to come right now and implant in your heart and the mind the fear of God. I want to be a pastor who ministers under the fear of God.

I don't want to take anything lightly. I don't want to be a joker in this pulpit. I don't want to be somebody just telling people everything's okay when I know it's not.

I want God. Folks, that's not why the pastor's church are preaching covenant. We're not trying to just soothe your conscience.

We're asking God to enliven your conscience through the covenant, to enliven your conscience and anoint it so that we will not live comfortably with sin. God, right now I've asked the Holy Ghost to come. Lord, plant your fear in my heart, a godly fear, that I will see the danger of sin.

I will see the consequences of sin. Lord, we will not continue in our sins. You have given us power now when we acknowledge it.

You will come now, Lord, and give us the authority and the power to cast it out, out of your sight and out of our sight. Hallelujah. Ask him right now to plant his fear in your heart.

And if there's something in your heart, there's something in your life that you know that you've been holding dearly into your bosom, say, Lord Jesus, help me to acknowledge it. I can't get away with this. Help me to acknowledge of this sin.

Help me acknowledge it has to go. It has to go. No more excuses.

Come on, let the Holy Ghost deal with you right now. While you're standing here, no more excuses. Jesus, this is going to have to go.

Come on, let the Holy Ghost do a work. He's convicting you. Let him convict you.

Let him do his work in your heart. Hallelujah. Now ask him to cleanse you right now with your own words.

Lord, just cleanse me now. Lord, take this. I give it to you now, Jesus.

I acknowledge it's sin. And now Holy Ghost come right now. I give it to you.

The moment you give it to him, the moment you say, yes, Lord, I see this as you see it now. Help me to see it in all of its ugliness. And then you begin to thank him right now.

Hallelujah. Comfort our Holy Ghost, because we sincerely come with our sins to you and laid them down. Hallelujah.

Now lift your hands and say, Holy Ghost, come and comfort my heart now, because you see what is in me. I want to walk in your righteousness. I want from now on to walk in the consciousness of your mercy and grace, but with the holy fear of God in my heart.

Hallelujah. Lord, I ask you now to cleanse us. Pray this prayer with me right now.

Jesus, you know it is in my heart. You know the sin. You know that something, that one thing that you've been dealing with.

Now, Holy Spirit, you have to do this for me. Help me to see it as you see it. Help me not to justify it anymore.

No more excuses. I lay it down, Jesus, before the blood of Christ. Come and cleanse me now and help me every day through your fear, your godly fear, to cast out the fear of man, the fear of the devil, and that you're going to keep me now, because I'm crying out to you to come by covenant and give me power.

Hallelujah. I give you thanks right now. Give me thanks.

Hallelujah. Now, listen to me, please. The comfort and peace of the Holy Ghost comes the very moment you agree with the Holy Ghost.

The moment you agree with him, it's a sin. This is no thing. I'm not allowed to keep it.

Once you agree with him, the battle's over. You just agree with the Holy Ghost. He shines the light on and he says, see that? And you say, well, that's no big thing.

I've got a couple scriptures to prove I can do it. No, you say, I agree with you, Holy Spirit, that's sin. Now, Holy Ghost, I can't get that out by myself.

You come with your power now and you, I agree with you now, Holy Ghost, since I've agreed with you now, you come and you do it. And he'll do it. Hallelujah.

But the foundation power of the Holy Ghost is the implantation of his holy, righteous fear. Glory be to God. Hallelujah.

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