

Beware of the Smiters

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon warns believers to be vigilant against the spirit of smiting that can arise in religious movements and emphasizes the importance of testing all teachings against Scripture.

Duration: 49:49

Scripture: Psalm 23:1

Topics: "Beware"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher warns against becoming too involved in religious movements to the point of becoming defensive and divisive. He emphasizes the role of pastors and shepherds in protecting the body of Christ. The preacher addresses the congregation, urging those who are not right with God or are confused in their theology to seek clarity and salvation. He also highlights the growth and excitement within the church, and encourages the congregation to pray together, believing that God will answer their prayers.

Transcript

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A teaching message and it may not be as much for this church as for those who hear it on tape. The message I preach tonight is going to go out to our mailing list. In fact, we're getting it ready for our very next newsletter to over 800,000 people around the world.

And I feel this is an admonition and a warning to the body of Jesus Christ. Now folks, God sends pastors and shepherds to protect us. Remember David said a lion came and I killed the lion and a bear came and I killed the bear.

He was watching his sheep. He wouldn't let a lion or bear touch his sheep. He put his life on the line.

And God calls shepherds to do that. And this is one of those kinds. We want to keep you from the lion and the bear.

We want to keep you from the wolves. And we pray that you will receive tonight some of you may consider correction, whatever it may be. May the Lord make his word real to our hearts.

Father, you gave me this word tonight. You gave this to me. You spoke it to my heart sovereignly, supernaturally.

Lord, it's a simple message, but it's something, Lord, that has to be heard. So many things are going on in the body of Christ today. So many things that are confusing multitudes.

Oh my God, speak through your living word. Give me a spirit of mercy and love, tenderness and grace. That I can speak this, Lord, not out of my heart, but out of the mind of Christ that abides in me.

Sanctify me. Let the word of the Lord come with might and power and anointing and unction. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen.

My message tonight, beware of the smiters. Beware of the smiters. In Isaiah, don't turn there, but in Isaiah the 50th chapter, the 6th verse, speaking of Christ, he said, But I gave my back to the smiters and my cheeks to them that plucked off my hair.

I hid not my face from shame and spitting. Now these smiters lashed on the back of Jesus Christ with vengeance and wrath until they afflicted such pain and they drew blood from his veins. But who are these that were smiting Christ across the face, smiting his back, because really smiting is to take vengeance, to slap and to hit until, really with a vengeance, trying literally to kill.

Who were these that were smiting, hitting, striking with vengeance on our Lord? This was all done in the name of religion, remember. It was done to defend the religion of the flesh. It was inflicted by a religious movement that felt threatened by one who had invited them to simply come and reason together.

He had the truth, he said, I want to talk to you, I want to give you the truth. Jesus was literally murdered by a robed clergy. They instigated this whole business.

It was to protect a religious system, a religious movement that couldn't afford to be told it could be wrong or in error. And because they could not stand the truth, because they could not stand the criticism, or they could not stand the light of the Holy Spirit cast upon it, they rebelled against it and in the process crucified our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Look at the fanaticism and the anger of those who were slapping his face, plucking off his beard, think of it, picking and plucking out his beard, spitting in his face, all to protect a religious movement, a religious movement.

People who were so indoctrinated in it, so given to their movement, they were beyond conviction. They could not be convicted, they would not hear anybody. This is it, take it or leave it, shut in completely, protect a religious movement.

Incredible. Jesus warned of this kind of religious smiting. He said, yea, the time will come that whosoever killeth you will think he doeth God's service.

He said, in fact, he's elaborating on the religious crowd. He's talking about the Sadducees and the Sanhedrin and the Pharisees. He said, they're going to come.

These men were religious men. They wore white robes, they tithed, they were devout in their religion. But these devout men were murderers.

They had a smiting spirit. They will do these things unto you because they have not known the Father and they've not known me. There are many religious movements in the land today, religious works, movements of God, called movements of God, that have a smiting, destructive spirit in it.

And the Lord says, they will reach out and they will smite me, really because they don't know me, because I'm not a part of what they're doing. The smiters are still with us and they're still smiting the back of Jesus. In Hebrews 6.6 it said of those who fall away, they have crucified to themselves the Son of God afresh and they put him to an open shame.

And what he's saying, they're still smiting him daily. They're still smiting his back. When Christ apprehended Saul, remember on the road to Damascus? He said, Saul, why are you persecuting me? Now, he didn't even know anything about Christ at that time, except that he believed he was a fanatic and a false prophet.

But he was coming against the body of Christ. And he said, Saul, when you persecute my body, you persecute me. And beloved, I want to tell you, the smiters who are smiting the body of Jesus Christ, are smiting Christ himself.

That's how serious this message is tonight. There is today, in the body of Christ, a new and dangerous spirit of smiting. And I believe the Holy Ghost has given me this as a warning to the body of Christ.

And the warning is this. Listen closely now. All of you who have itching ears, all of you who want to go someplace and hear and see something new.

You don't want to pay the price of digging into the Word of God. You don't want to go through the discipline of the Holy Ghost because the Bible said, whom the Lord loves, he disciplines. And you want to go and have somebody lay hands on your head.

And you want to get zapped. And you want to fall down and come up and say, I am changed. You're not going to be changed by falling on the ground.

I believe in falling on the ground when the Holy Ghost comes upon you. I've been smitten many times by the power of the Holy Ghost. But folks, if that's a shortcut to try to find some new touch of God, you are sadly mistaken.

And people are running all over the world now trying to be a part of some new exciting thing. Now listen to me please. Hear this in the spirit of the living God.

It is possible to become so involved in a religious movement, so taken up by it, and become so defensive of it, as to become a smiter of the body of Jesus Christ. You become so wrapped up in it, so given to it, so enamored by it, that you will defend it with your life, and you will not stand to hear anybody cross you with what could be the truth and show you that you may possibly be in error. What I'm about to say now can only be accepted, I believe, by lovers of truth.

You've got to love the truth. Now, we're living in the last of the last days. And Jesus warned us that there would come new doctrines in the last days, new teachings.

There would be new teachers that would appear with enticing gospels, ministers who would pose as angels of light with new messages and new truths and new doctrines, but who, the Bible says in truth, are

agents of Satan. And the Bible said it's going to get so powerful that the enemy will try to deceive even the elect, the chosen of God. Now folks, that is something that ought to get our attention, that we are going to see, and we are in that place right now.

Paul warns the church the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, 2 Timothy 4.3, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables. They will not want to hear the truth. They will not want to hear about sacrifice and suffering.

They want some easy thing. Americans have become so addicted to instant everything. Instant everything.

Blame it on McDonald's. Blame it on fast foods. Blame it on advertising.

Everybody wants instant cure of everything. But when it comes to the gospel of Jesus Christ, there is a price. There is a price.

They shall turn away their ears from the truth. They shall be turned away to fables. And folks, that time has come.

And the Greek word here for heaping up is a root word. It means going about trying to accumulate. And you see people right now going around heaping to themselves new teachings and new things.

They want to heap it to themselves. They want to accumulate all of these things. And the Greeks suggest travel or moving about to accumulate.

Now, the Word of God clearly instructs us to test every doctrine, every religious movement, and the spirits behind those movements. Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are going out into the world. You say, well, Brother David, who made you the judge of what is of God and what is not of God? The Bible.

He made you a judge. He made me a judge. God helped you.

God helped the church. If it will not stand on the criteria of the Word of God and judge every movement, every revival, everything that calls itself of God. If you do not judge it, then any high-spirited man, any man with a strong spirit can come and overrule your spirit and send you to hell.

Beloved, believe not every spirit. Try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are going out into the world. It's the duty of every pastor.

It's my duty to stand up here tonight and do what I'm about to do. It's your duty as a believer. Every new thing that you hear is to test it.

Don't touch it until you've tested it by the Word of God. Until you've tried the spirit that's behind it, okay? The Holy Ghost has never called for blind acceptance of even the gospel. No, everything that Jesus has given to us will stand the test.

He'll say, prove me, prove me, prove me, test me. Anything that's of God will cry out, test me, prove me, examine me. That's the ministry of the Holy Ghost.

I want to be open. Holy Ghost, look at me. The whole world, look at me.

I want no hidden thing. This is the cry of that which is of God. Test, prove.

There's nothing to fear. There is no such thing as blind acceptance. That's for cults.

Peter warned, there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who in secret shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their evil ways. Now remember, Peter is saying, these were bought by the blood of Christ.

And now they are following evil ways. They were bought. They were Christians.

They were under the blood. But they were led away by false doctrine because they didn't test the spirits behind those doctrines and those movements and those revivals. This is a frightening warning.

But for those who are truly of God, those who tried the Spirit, the apostles said, ye are of God, little children, and you've overcome them. You were not swept away by it because you tested it, you tried it, and you were protected from these winds and waves of doctrine that are sweeping the land. Beloved, you and I have not even seen the beginning of what is coming.

What you see and hear now is just a mere image of what is about to appear on the American scene of such mixed doctrines, mixed with the things of the world that the devil himself coming to pose as pious, godly men in the pulpit. Oh, brother, sister, this is a time, this is a time that you and I must judge everything righteously by the living Word of God. Now, God has given us a fail-safe test of all movements, ministries, and the spirit that motivates them.

And here it is, 1 John 4, 2 and 3, just listen. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.

And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus is come in the flesh is not of God. Now, here it is again. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God.

Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God. Now, wait a minute. I mean, I have had people absolutely sold out to cults that have been to this church and been delivered.

And they will tell you to go back here and say, Brother Wilkson, the reason I'm confused is because I put them to the test. I asked them, do you believe that Jesus is God in the flesh? Oh, yes, yes, yes, I believe that. And they said, Brother Dave, they exalt Jesus.

And when they talk about Jesus, they talk about God coming in the flesh. You see, it's not, the apostle's not talking about mouthing the words. I believe the devil himself can quote these words to achieve his purpose.

It's not just speaking the word. I believe you can go out here in this city to the most dead, dry, liberal church, and you can have an atheistic-minded pastor get up and say, Oh, yes, I believe that God, Jesus was God in the flesh. Just so that he can get through to those with his false doctrine.

It's not just mouthing the words. The meaning here is deeper than a much deeper, and the meaning is this. If you're going to say that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh, then he's got to be the Lord of your life.

He is Lord of my life. He is Lord, he is God in the flesh, but he's God in my flesh. He's here, he rules, he reigns.

All my motives, everything comes out of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in my life and my being. The devil can quote scripture. Don't be fooled by some, just giving a word test.

When, what John is trying to show us with this, if you come, if you confess that Jesus is Lord and God, you must show the fruit of that in your life. Now, here's the only way to truly test which is truly of God. Listen to me, please.

That which is of God must be permeated, saturated with the spirit of Jesus Christ. That spirit of Christ is what? It is gentle, it is loving, it is kind, it is easy to be entreated. If its spring and fountain comes from heaven, if it's of God, the fruit of it is going to be the spirit of Jesus Christ.

Everything you see, everything you hear will be Christ-like. If it's a genuine work of God, then it will have with it, in it and through it, the spirit of Christ. Now that, any particular movement, anything that calls itself a move of God, anything that calls itself revival or work of God's spirit, it has to have this.

Now, one of two things happens. If there's a smiting spirit, if there's a spirit of wrath, if there's a spirit that lashes out, trying to protect itself. You see, anything is of God is protected only by the Holy Ghost.

In fact, God won't allow you to defend it. He won't allow you to have pick up your sword, the sword of flesh. Anytime that flesh touches it, the Holy Ghost departs.

And He'll let you go ahead and try to defend it. He'll let you fight it. But anything that's of God does not have to be defended by man.

Nothing at all. It's defended by the spirit of living God and nothing, no one else. Now, that spiritual movement is false if it has a smiting spirit.

Or, let me kindly suggest to you that I believe that there are some works and some revivals and some movements that started out with a genuine touch of God. Because you see, Americans especially are hungry for God. I mean, churches everywhere are crying out, Oh God, revive us again.

People are so hungry, they need God. There's an emptiness, there's a hunger, there's a thirst. People are so ready to grab at anything that looks like an awakening.

And folks, that's the danger if you're not very careful. I give credit now. I say this from the depths of my heart and in the love of Jesus Christ.

There are some movements, I believe, that are started by the spirit of God and the Lord was generally working and generally moving. But somewhere along the line, flesh got in the way. Flesh began to taint it.

It became my work, my movement, my revival, our revival. Don't touch this as ours. And it became a personal thing and then the flesh began to rise and taint it and the Holy Spirit left.

And it goes on in the flesh. And you can tell when the spirit is left when that smiting spirit appears. That smiting spirit because that is not of Christ.

That is not the spirit of Christ. The Holy Ghost will not be a part of that which is of a smiting spirit. The Holy Ghost has departed.

And folks, you can go for five, ten years in the flesh and it'll look like a move of God. But folks, it will have a defensive spirit, it'll have a fighting spirit behind it. Let me give you some examples of some of the recent smiting spirits that have come across my desk in my office.

Smitings that I've heard about personally. A pastor stood in a conference last year. He was a part of what is called a revival.

And he stood in front of this conference boasting. Every single person who resists this revival has committed blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. He said, this revival is like a mighty elephant and all the critics are like flies on its back and God's going to swat them.

That's a smiting spirit. That's not of Christ. So you can immediately mark off that move immediately.

Anything that man is involved with has nothing to do with the Holy Ghost because that's a smiting spirit. Let me give you another example. This is a videotape I viewed two weeks ago in my office.

This was the leader of a particular movement in the land today. His countenance was angry and he cried out, I will no longer, in essence, these were his words, I will no longer listen to any preacher or elder who questions me or this work and as far as those who are taking a stand publicly against this work, they've got 90 days to repent. He castigated the elders and others who brought into question the move of God.

And folks, I was frightened by what I saw and what I heard because so many have been enamored by what is happening in that particular movement. Now, I must say perhaps somewhere along the line that which is of God became flesh because that was what I saw and what I heard was flesh. That is not the spirit of God.

There is no cursing that comes out of the spirit of Jesus Christ against any man or woman on the face of the earth. The disciples of Jesus became enraged when the Samaritans would not receive the Lord. The word says they did not receive him and James and John, the scripture says that when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did? Jesus was aghast.

He couldn't believe his ears. But he, speaking of Jesus, he turned and rebuked them and said, You know not what manner of spirit you are of, for the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. Jesus said, That cursing, smiting spirit in you is not of God.

You desire to smite those who oppose you. He said, Just because they didn't receive my message, that's not of God. He said, You don't know what spirit you are of.

Whatever spirit it is, it's not of mine. The Lord said, I've nothing to do with that. I would be a smiter myself if I stood here in front of you right now and brought this message with anything but the love of Christ.

And I speak with love in my heart. I speak to those who are doing these smiting things in ignorance. There are many of them and I believe they're doing it in ignorance.

But folks, we are commanded by the Scripture to show forth the loving, tender mercies of the Lord Jesus Christ. We're commanded as shepherds and believers to test these spirits. If you do not judge according

to this standard of the Lord, that the spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, the spirit of tenderness, if that does not embody the message, if that's not what it is, beware.

If I were able to sit down with leaders of religious movements and revivals throughout the land, and if they came to me and said, Brother Wilkson, you're in your 60s, you've been around a long time, you've got gray hair, do you have a word for us? I would, in humility, the best I know how, say yes. I would say stop trying to defend what God is doing. If it's God, you don't need any defense.

Leave it alone, but don't strike out against people. Don't throw curses. Don't try to say... And folks, there have been so many now that are under terrible bondage because some preacher got up and said, This is such a work of God, if you deny it, you blaspheme against the Holy Ghost.

That's trying to call fire down out of heaven and consume. The Lord said, that's not my spirit. A dear sister in this church stopped me in a rotunda a few days ago.

And she'd been somewhere in another state, among a group of Pentecostal friends. And they had just gone to what they call a great revival. And they were talking about how great this move was.

And this sister that's in the church and may be here right now, began to question them according to the light of the scripture and just began to test it by the spirit. And a spirit rose up in them. And they began, that smiting spirit, Well, you have no right to say anything like that.

You were not there. We were there and we know and that's it. Period.

Believe it or not. She said, Brother Wilkinson, they wouldn't listen to a word. They didn't want to hear it.

And they as well as said that I'm resisting the Holy Spirit. That's a smiting spirit. God help you if you are part of Times Square Church and you go out thinking you have it all.

And we have the best and only thing in America today. God help you, we don't. We're so far behind.

Thank God for what He's doing. Thank God for what He's doing. But there ought to be, if God is here and God's spirit is moving, it ought to make us all humble.

It ought to put a love in our hearts that we embrace people and we have an ear open to criticism. We have an ear open to be corrected. I heard this one pastor, he as well as said, I don't want to hear anymore.

I don't want any correction, I don't want anything. Even some of the people of his own church who lovingly wanted some of their questions answered said, I don't want to hear it. He's still there? Now let me show you something of the true spirit of Christ that must be demonstrated by true men of God.

Let's talk about the Apostle Paul for just a moment. Now, Paul is summoned from prison to stand before the Sanhedrin. Now, Paul's life, his ministry, his theology, his very lifestyle, everything is called into question now.

He's being mocked, he's being ridiculed. He faces a crowd of religious leaders. They're proud, arrogant men, especially the high priest Ananias.

According to Josephus, Ananias is described as a violent man, haughty, gluttonous, an evil man, hiding behind a thin crust of dignity. And the high priest commands a servant that's standing nearby, smite Paul

on the mouth. Smite him on the mouth.

A servant reaches up, wham, right across his mouth. Now, folks, that hurts. I believe it hurt.

Paul was a human being. He wasn't an angel. He wasn't God in flesh.

He was a man of like passions, just like Elijah. And that stung his pride. He had just confessed before them.

Paul had just... The end of side one. You may now turn the tape over to side two. ...that I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.

And what he's trying to say, I have not committed adultery. I have not sinned. I'm living an honest life.

I have nothing but God's eternal purposes in mind. And I'm standing before you, a holy man, and I want nothing but God's will in my life. And you smite me? You smack my mouth? And, folks, I want to tell you something.

As ministers of the gospel, we do hurt when people say things and they stand against us and the criticism comes and comes and comes. And Paul got into flesh. Paul got into flesh.

He struck back and he smote a high priest. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall! Whoo! In other words, you hypocrite. God's going to get you.

You got 90 days. Oh, no, no, no, no, folks. Forsittest thou to judge me after the law and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? Paul got into the flesh.

Paul didn't need to defend himself. I'll tell you why. Because the moment the high priest said, smite him on the mouth, God made up his mind.

He already determined what he's going to do. Because two years later, according to Josephus, King Agrippa removed him from his high office and he was slain by a dagger in A.D. 60 with the knife of Sikorel. According to history, Sikorel took a dagger and stabbed him and killed him.

You see, God keeps records. God keeps the books. You don't touch God's anointed.

You can't touch God's anointed and get away with it. You don't have to defend it. Paul didn't have to defend himself.

And I'll tell you something. Here's the spirit of Christ. Here's the difference.

Rather than going on smiting and rather going on going after it was all said and done and gathering his men around him and saying, well, boy, is he going to pay the price. Boy, is God going to get him. God is going to get him.

Folks, that spirit's going on me sometimes. I've wanted to call fire down out of heaven. Folks, there are some people I would love to see the ground just open, swallow them up.

But that wasn't Christ. That wasn't of Jesus. How dangerous it is for any follower of Christ to wish the destruction of anyone who rejects or criticizes them.

There are some pastors and ministers who'd rather see people dead than saved. God help us. God help us.

Have you ever said that to anybody? God will get you. I'm a man of God. I'm a woman of God.

God will get you. Boy, I did that this past year. I had to go to the man, apologize.

He's a street person. This guy has hounded me for five years. I mean, he'd see me two blocks away.

He goes, phony, phony. Here comes Brother Dave Phony. Oh, you met him.

You met him. You heard him, huh? I meet him everywhere I go in this city. And one day, I just was a little out of sorts.

He comes by me and he was just walking by me. I said, well, you're not going to do it? He said, I ain't phony. I turned and said, that's the last God going to make you pay.

You know what he said? Some spirit. You better believe I apologized to him. Paul had the spirit of Christ come on him.

And he, by the way, folks, if you're going to curse, let me tell you what the Bible says. Job said, neither have I allowed my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul. And he was talking about those who were speaking against him, who hated him and rejoiced in his troubles.

He said, for those people, I didn't allow my mouth to sin by wishing a curse to his soul. Psalms 109, 17, as he loved cursing, so let it come upon him. As he delighted not in blessings, so let it be far from him.

God says, if you're going to curse, the curse is going to come back on you. As he clothed himself with cursing, like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water. And into his bones, let it be unto him as a garment which covers him.

And for a girdle wherewith he is clothed, girded continually. Romans 12, 14, bless them that persecute you and curse not. Let them curse, but you bless.

You bless. Let people curse you all they want. By the way, any of these people around that are into this Santerra and some of these other demonic things, if they've been trying to put voodoo dolls on you and curses on you, just stand up in Jesus' name and begin to pray for them because that curse is coming back on themselves.

Don't be afraid of it. Those of you here from Haiti and from Africa, where this is so prevalent, I've had many Christians come and say, Brother Wilkins, it just puts a heavy burden on you. You don't have to be afraid of that.

Not at all. But you see, with Paul, the Spirit of Christ rose up in him and he repented immediately and publicly before the whole group. He said, I knew not that he was the high priest.

And I believe what he's saying, because everybody knew who Ananias was. Paul knew. Everybody knew this high priest because it was a very high exalted office at the time.

And what I really believe he's saying, I did not respect him as such. I didn't respect him as the high priest. I didn't give him the respect because Paul knew what Jude said of those who speak evil of dignities.

Also Exodus 22, 28, Thou shalt not curse the ruler of thy people. He knew the law. He was a master of the law.

He knew that. He knew it. He got in the flesh.

Now, Paul exhibited the true Spirit of Christ who says, I was wrong. This is not the Spirit of my Christ. This is not a good testimony before the brethren.

And I would say to the leaders of movements, if you want God to bless you, and if you have been smiting, publicly apologize. Get before the people and say, that's not the Spirit of Christ. And maybe, and prayerfully, the Holy Spirit will do a new work.

Hallelujah. Now, contrast this Spirit of Christ, this humble, easily entreated Spirit that Paul is expressing now, with the Spirit of those who defended this religious movement of the day, of the Pharisees and the Sanhedrin. Now, listen to me closely before I close this message.

You've got to hear and understand this part of it, because this is one of the most important parts. There were people who sat under the teaching and under the smiting ministry of these high priests. Can you imagine? Rather than rejoice in Lazarus being raised from the dead, they're going to kill him? I read that.

I can't get it through my noggin. I can't get it through my head. How blind these people were that rather than, here's a man raised from the dead.

Everybody knows it. And because he's such a testimony leading people to Christ, they're going to kill him as well as Christ. And, folks, this smiting Spirit, this angry, defensive, smiting Spirit can be imparted.

Let's talk about impartation. This is what is truly imparted in movements that have been tainted by flesh. Even though many of them start right and then move into the flesh.

Folks, hear this warning and hear it well. If you go and sit under a ministry of any kind and you hear this defensiveness. You hear this anger.

You hear, don't touch this. Don't say anything about it. Leave it alone.

This is of God. If it's of God, why try to defend it? That's a smiting Spirit reaching out against anybody. If you hear a fighting Spirit, if you hear that at all, get out as quick as you can.

Run, run as fast as you can. Because that Spirit can leap on you. And you too will defend it with your life.

You will become so enamored of it and you will get wrapped up in it. And you will in turn become a smiter so that you will not listen to anybody. And you will reach out and try to smite anybody that would speak against what could be error that you're involved in.

Now, there were 40 men that heard and sat under this kind of teaching. And these 40 men come to the high priest and to the Sanhedrin. And the Scripture says, they said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse that we will eat nothing until we've smitten Paul.

We're not going to eat. We're not going to drink until we kill him. Where did they get that Spirit? From the high priest who had a smiting spirit trying to protect something that they finally acknowledged was their own.

This is ours. Don't touch it. And ready to strike out at anybody who would threaten their world.

And if you go into that, my friends, I tell you, as a loving, caring shepherd, that fighting spirit. You'll find that in every cult. You'll find anybody that's in a cult.

You'll find the leader saying, you walk out of here and you're dead. You leave us and God's going to get you. You leave us and there's going to be catastrophe, disaster.

You're going to die. Your children are going to die. There's nothing but threats.

There's nothing but anger. Folks, that which is of God is easily entreated. It's defended only by the Holy Spirit.

And out of it comes humility and grace and love. Here are 40 men now infected by that. That spirit had leaped upon them and they had, oh, they had this fighting hatred toward Paul the Apostle.

If you're sitting in any of that kind of cult or you're sitting in any kind of ministry like that, I beg of you, I plead with you in Jesus' name to flee it as fast as you can. Can you imagine wanting to see a brother smitten all in the name of God in the defense of a coveted religious work? A coveted religious work and wanting to see somebody die? Now, in closing, contrast all of this that I'm talking about. The smiting spirit of the high priest and those who were infected by it.

It had been imparted to them and now it's spread through all of Jerusalem. But contrast that to Christ at the cross. Here are men, here are the same people smiting him, attacking him, criticizing him, spitting on him.

And what does Jesus say? Father, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing. Oh, I want that spirit.

I want that spirit with everything in me. Now, folks, here's the test. I'm going to say it again.

And if you don't get anything, if you forget everything else I say, remember this. Mark it down. Here's the spirit that you have to hear.

If it's of God, here's what it has to have coming forth out of it. First pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And here it is, the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them who make peace.

A true revival, a true work of God consists of peacemakers. The spirit is a spirit of peace. It's a spirit of reconciliation.

Folks, I grieve over what I see and hear in the land today, but I'm not here on some soapbox trying to correct anybody. I'm trying to bring some light, and I bring it in love. I'm not trying to smite any of my brothers in Christ.

I hope you hear a spirit of love and reconciliation here in this message tonight. There's no anger against anybody. But, folks, we don't want anybody coming into this church, and we say it lovingly.

I have to say it as a shepherd. With this, I'm going to close. We can't have anybody going off somewhere and getting some smiting spirit imparted to them, some defensive spirit, and come in here and try to impart it to this body.

We promise you as pastors we'll stand up against that. We'll do it with love, but we'll do it firmly because we're here to protect the sheep. We want you protected.

Folks, we're not afraid of you going someplace. You want to go to Africa? I'll tell you, if you want to go and see a great revival, get on an airplane, I'll say this lovingly, and go to South Africa, to the Zulus, where there's been a 30-year revival. And what you're going to see, you're going to see people being healed every day.

You're going to see the most loving tenderness that you've ever seen in your life. And there are, if you want, that's fine. We're not asking.

We're not trying to hold sheep. We're not trying to keep people here. We're not policemen.

I'm not a police officer, neither is Brother Carter. He was a cop, but he isn't anymore. It's true, Brother Carter.

We're not police. We can't police. None of our teachers are elders.

We can't police you. We're not trying to hold you here. Folks, believe me, there are five people waiting for a receipt.

That's not it. We have to stand before the judge one day. And I want to know, and I know Brother Carter wants to know, we want to know when we stand before the Lord.

We went into this book and we got on our knees and we came to you with the word of the living God to protect your soul so that no wolf, nothing that was false, could taint you or destroy your faith or take away this tenderness of the heart of Jesus from you. I want everybody to stand. I've got something on my mind.

We're going to do something different now. How many of you in this church feel protected? Raise your hand. You feel protected by the Holy Ghost.

Raise it high. Wave it at me. Say, thank God.

Thank you, Jesus. Hallelujah. You can put your hands down.

Up in the balcony. You know we're not here for your money. Have you ever heard a word from this pulpit about begging for money? Your pastors have set an example.

And we've loved you with our lives. And I believe Brother Carter would say just what I can. We would lay our lives down, literally, physically.

There's a time to shout. There's a time then to let the word of God just sink into your heart and say, God, I want this to be a part of my life to protect me from now on. Now, there are people here tonight that are in this congregation.

Some of you are not right with God. Some of you are not saved. Some of you are backslidden.

Some of you are right now mixed up in your theology. Or you're mixed up. You say, well, I don't know what to believe anymore.

I don't know what to believe. I hear one thing over here and one thing over here. Let me tell you something.

We have a body of people in this church tonight. The great majority that are here tonight are loving people. They're growing in the Lord.

This is the most exciting thing about pastoring in this church. Because we see people growing. Changed.

We see and feel the love of Jesus Christ. This past year, there's been such a growth in love. This choir loves everybody else in the choir.

They love their pastors. There's a spirit of love and unity that is marvelous. It's like oil that runs down.

Wonderful. And I'm saying that to say this. It has to do with my altar call.

This is a body ministry tonight. If you're here, there's somebody around you. In front of you, behind you, around you, there are a number of Christians who are just full of Jesus.

And they're able to pray and touch God for you. I want us to turn the whole church for the next 10 minutes into a prayer meeting, a prayer house. I'm not going to have anybody come forward tonight.

But before we do this, I want a show of hands up in the balcony on the main floor. I want to know how many there are. Now, don't put your hand up until I ask you to.

But I want to know how many there are tonight in this church. And I want people around you to see who you are so they can join you in prayer. I want to know how many of you right now are going through a terrible struggle in your faith.

Or you feel a coldness that the enemy is trying to put on your soul. Or you may not even be right with God. You want to be right with God.

And you want the Spirit of the Lord to touch you tonight in a wonderful way. You need your spirit lifted by the power of the Holy Ghost. I want you to raise your hand.

Balcony in the main floor, all over the house. Put your hand up. Yes, up there, wherever you are.

God bless you. I want everybody in this place. No music or anything.

A choir, you can pray with one another. I want you to turn around. And I want you to just, I'd like, look at me please.

Do it carefully now. I want about four or five people. Just a small group.

You'll turn around. And I just want you to hold hands. The Bible said we're going to greet together.

Now look at me please. I want you to give your name. Are you guys from Timothy House? Some of you guys, you move over here.

Guys in the second row, you can turn around to those in the back. So it's just not your own group. I want you to find somebody, perhaps, that's not in your little group, and invite them into your circle.

Now here, I want you to give your name. I want you to give your name. And I want you to speak out, if it takes three or four minutes, what you want your group to pray about.

The Bible said, If two or three agree together concerning anything on earth, it shall be done to the Father in heaven. I believe that with everything in me. I believe that.

Now, we're going to see God answer prayer. God is going to answer prayer supernaturally right now. Many, many.

Now, you say, Brother Wilkerson, I'm embarrassed by this. Don't be embarrassed. In your circle, nope, not going to happen.

You're not going to fall. If God wants you to do that, that's fine. But I'm going to tell you, right now, God's going to answer your prayer.

Turn around right now. Just get in a circle, three or four, five people. And I want you to give your name and make your prayer request known.

Ask, tell everybody in your circle what to pray about. And then everybody will pray together. God's going to come down and move in a special way and answer prayer.

This is the conclusion of the tape.

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