

# Breaking the Yoke

by David Wilkerson

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*David Wilkerson's sermon emphasizes the importance of embracing the yoke of Christ, seeking truth, and understanding God's judgment in a world filled with false teachings.*

**Duration:** 1:04:44

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 5:1-12

**Topics:** "Yoke"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of crossing the line with God. He emphasizes that there comes a point when even the prayers of righteous individuals like Job, Daniel, and Moses cannot save their families if they have crossed this line. The preacher expresses concern that society is very close to this line, citing Jeremiah 5:4 where people are going to the house of God and claiming to be under His Lordship, but living a lie. He criticizes the false portrayal of God as only a God of love and mercy, arguing that there are consequences for breaking God's restraints and bonds.

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## Transcript

I'm going to go to two verses. Do you love the Lord? Do you turn to the Word of God? I do. I hope you brought your Bibles.

Don't forget your Bible on Tuesdays and Sundays, every service. Would you, before we go, Matthew 11th chapter, 11th chapter of Matthew, just turn to Matthew 11. I'm going to have you read one verse or two, but before you do, look this way for just a minute.

You that have been coming on a regular basis and you who plan to come, you know the greatest thing to do for many, many people? If you've been talking to friends who say, I'm so hungry for the Lord, you know others who may want what you believe you're receiving from the Lord, get on the telephone. It's not a commercial. I don't think you have to sell what God's doing.

You don't have to sell it. But if your heart's burning and the Lord has touched you, testify to what He's done. And it can be that they could come with their heart too burned and set on fire and they'd be provoked to righteousness and holiness.

And that can be a great change in their lives. We're not just interested in getting a bunch of people together. That can be done by using gimmicks in a lot of public relations and PR.

We're looking for hungry hearts who will come and bring their Bibles, not afraid to be reproved righteously and lovingly. And who said, Brother Wilkerson, we really need something from God. And I pray that the message will be delivered in that kind of love tonight.

Breaking the yoke. Breaking the yoke. I want you to look at Matthew 11, 29.

11, 29 and 30. I want to read two verses. Take my yoke upon you, and Lord of me, I am meek and lowly in heart.

You shall find rest unto your soul. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Do you see that? Turn to Jeremiah. Turn left to Jeremiah. And I'm going to have you read one verse with me, and then I want you to keep it open to Jeremiah, because I'm going to do a lot of my preaching from Jeremiah tonight.

We're going into the prophecies of Jeremiah. And I want you to read one verse. I'm reading King James.

Whatever verse you have, it'll come out very clear there. Jeremiah 5. Oh, I love to hear the rustling of the leaves. That's music.

Amen. Jeremiah 5. 5. Hey, do you know what? Look at me for just a minute. You know, I used to go to church and never had to take my Bible.

You know, a lot of Seventy God churches are that way. A lot of Baptist churches are that way. You don't have to take your Bible, because the pastor will take a text and you never go back to the Bible.

Just one little verse. You're going to read it with me. Because it's going to get strong enough that you're going to have to look at it and prove me.

Okay, look at verse 5. Chapter 5, verse 5. I will get me unto the great men and will speak unto them, for they have known the word of the Lord and the judgment of their God, but they have altogether broken the yoke and burst the bonds. They have broken the yoke and burst the bonds. Now, what did we read first? Take my yoke upon you, Lord of me.

My yoke is easy, my burden is light. Here, Jeremiah said, these have altogether broken the yoke. Take it upon me.

These say no. They break it. They burst their bonds.

They don't want it. They're talking about Christian liberty. And they break their yoke, burst their bonds, and call it Christian liberty.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, I pray that You will speak to Christians and sinners alike and backsliders. Lord, we're working under conditions that are not the best of conditions, not of the sound.

Help us to project in the sound. Lord, even though we've never been in this room before, You have seemed to clear it out of all demon opposition and every lying spirit, and there's a freedom of the Holy Ghost. Now, Lord, I want the word to come forth with unction and anointing.

Lord, try to deepen our hearts, because there are some here, Lord, are going to have to deal with these things tonight. We're going to have to deal with it. Lord, we heard Tuesday night some things we had to deal with.

We heard this morning a strong word of things that we have to deal with, Lord. Get the poison out of our system. Now, Lord, deal with this even stronger if You must.

Lord, we're not afraid of Your rod. We're not afraid of Your rod. Your staff comforts us.

Hallelujah. We get comfort from that because it's a sign of Your love. Minister Your grace.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. God, remember, said to Abraham, If you can show me ten righteous men in Sodom, I'll save and spare Sodom.

And God couldn't find ten righteous men, so He destroyed it. Do you remember that? Now, in Jeremiah, He gets down to one. He said, If you can find me one man, I'll spare Jerusalem.

I want you to read it with me, please. 5th chapter. Do you have 5th chapter? Verse 1. Run you to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know and seek in the broad places thereof.

If you can find a man, just one man, if there be any that executes judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it. Look at me, please. He says to the prophet, Go, walk the streets.

Go to the marketplace. Go to the synagogue. Go in and out up the streets with a candle.

Search it out. Go into every home. Search it.

Show me one man that loves the truth. Show me one man who's practicing what he preaches. And I'm going to show you that these are people, in spite of God saying, Show me a man, they were going about saying, He is Lord.

He lives. They claim to be under the Lordship of Jehovah. This is what makes it so bad.

They were boasting, Our Lord lives. Look at verse 2. And there they say, What were they saying? The Lord liveth. Surely they swear falsely.

Now, the law said this, You shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shall you profane the name of the Lord thy God. That's in Leviticus 12. That's 19.12. You shall not take my name in vain.

You shall not say, He is my Lord, and lie. That's falsely naming His name. Thou shall not take the name of thy Lord God in vain.

Don't take it upon yourself to say, He lives, He's my Lord. If you're not in truth living it. And that's what the message is about.

And we're going to come down very hard on what I believe. He's saying to my heart, The church confesses and believes that He is Lord. But I want you to notice something.

He's not talking here to Sodom. He's not talking to Babylon. He's not talking to an ungodly crowd.

He's talking to the church. He's talking to His own people. He's talking to His own people.

And He says, You go out, Jeremiah. Now, Jeremiah is a man standing in the gap. He's a righteous man.

But God's looking on the whole society now. He's looking on the people of God. And He said, Jeremiah, I'm going to destroy this place.

I'm going to bring judgment. Jeremiah, show me one man. Show me one who claims that he is under the Lordship of Jehovah.

Just one that seeketh the truth, that walks in truth and righteousness and I'll pardon. Now, God said He's looking for the truth because look at verse 3. O Lord, are not Thine eyes upon the truth? God was saying, I don't care how loud they praise Me. He said they come to My house and they cover the altar with their tears and yet they have a doctrine that hurts.

I don't care how much you go around testifying and boasting. I don't care how much you pay your tithe. I don't care how faithful you are in all of these things.

I am looking for truth. My eye is on the truth. My eye is not on what you say.

And there are thousands of people in America right now meeting. I can take you to many churches right now. Their people are saying, He's Lord, He's Lord.

They're singing, He's Lord, He's Lord. And they're lying. God says, I'm not on the sound of the music.

My eye and my ear is not on that. I'm looking for truth. I'm looking at the heart.

Now, God was incensed. God was absolutely livid in wrath and anger. And I want you to look at Jeremiah 7. Turn over to Jeremiah 7. These people were saying, He's Lord, but they were living such a lie.

And I want you to look at God's attitude. Jeremiah 7, verse 8. Behold, your trusting, lying words cannot profit. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, and swear falsely? Burn incense under Baal and walk after the gods whom you know not? Then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name and say, we are delivered to do all these abominations.

Is this house which is called by My name become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the Lord. Now go you now unto My place which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first. And see what I did to it for the wickedness of My people Israel.

Do you remember what happened at Shiloh? That's where Eli's heart yearned for the ark of God. Here was a man whose heart bled for the things of God. And yet God said, Ichabod, God closed the doors of His own house in Shiloh because they were saying, Lord, Lord, covering the elders with tears, but they were offering strange fire before God.

Verse 13, And now because ye have done all these works, saith the Lord, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not, and I called you, but ye answered not. Therefore will I do unto this house which is called by My name, when you trust in the place which I gave to you and to your fathers as I have done to Shiloh, that I will cast you out of My sight as I have cast out all your brethren, even the whole seed of Ephraim. Now who is he talking to? He's talking to people who said He lives.

The Lord lives. He's my God. You see that.

Look again. Chapter 5, verse 2, And though they say, The Lord liveth, surely they swear falsely. Now I want you to look at verse 7. See how God had prospered these people.

How shall I pardon thee? Chapter 5, verse 7, Jeremiah. How shall I pardon thee for this? Thy children have forsaken Me. They sworn by them that are no gods when I have fed them to the fool.

In other words, when I've prospered... Folks, what does the Bible say? That the goodness of the Lord is to lead us to repentance. Isn't that it? God allowed the stock market to go off the chart. God has allowed the lowest unemployment in the history of this nation.

He has flooded us with goods. And people developed a doctrine so they could hold on to it. They call it prosperity.

Name it and claim it. Now I want you to listen closely. God's allowed this prosperity, but that was to bring us to repentance.

God was giving us time and space to repent. We've crossed the deadline, folks. We have crossed that deadline.

Look what happens when God prospered them. And they assembled themselves by troops in the harlot's houses. There was fed horses in the morning, every one made after his neighbor's wife.

Shall not visit for these things said the Lord? And shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? Turn to Jeremiah 6. I want to show you chapter 6. They flocked to a gospel of prosperity. They had no time for reproof. They refused to believe that God was a God of judgment.

Now I'm building on what God spoke to us this morning. Look me in the eye before we go. Just believe it.

Jeremiah 6 chapter. Look at me eye. Right this way.

Hear me, please. There are so many in the pulpit today preaching a false gospel of peace, peace. And they're trying to tell God's people that God is not a God of judgment.

That all He is is a God of love and all you hear is, you are loved, you are loved, you are loved. Yes, He does love us, but He's a holy God and He deals with sin. And we've got to understand something about the nature of our God.

We've been deceived. The church has been deceived. Look at Jeremiah 6 verse 13.

For from the least of them, even to the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness. And from the prophet, even unto the priest, everyone deals falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, peace, peace, when there is no peace.

Were they ashamed when they had committed abominations? No, they were not at all ashamed. Neither could they blush. These were the Scriptures that Bob was talking about this morning.

Therefore, they shall fall among them that fall. At the time that I visit them, they shall be cast down, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord.

Stand you in the way and see and ask for the old paths. Where is the good way? And walk in it. And you shall find rest for your souls.

But they said, we will not walk therein. Also, I sent watchmen over your saying, hearken to the sound of the trumpet. But they said, we will not hearken.

Turn back to Jeremiah 5. Jeremiah 5. Verse 11. For the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against Me, saith the Lord. They have belied the Lord and said, it's not He.

The original Hebrew says, they have said that God is not that kind. God is not that way. He does not judge.

We don't serve a God of judgment. We serve only a God of mercy and grace and peace and love. Do you understand that they're not preaching holiness in 99% of our churches anymore? They're preaching not separation, but unity.

Unity at any cost. And I can take you to my Bible and show you that if you're walking in Jesus and He's your head, you don't have to have anybody organize you into unity. You're united to the head because you walk with Jesus.

And if you walk with Jesus tonight, I don't have to have any kind of person try to bring us together. We're together, and I don't even know your name. We are united because He's the head and we're attached to the head.

There's no other unity. There's no other kind of bringing people together outside of coming to the head. But they have lied about the Lord.

Verse 12, they've said, it's not He. Neither shall evil come upon you, neither shall we see sorrow or famine. Look this way.

Isn't that what you've been hearing? The garbage coming off of much of Christian television, it's nothing but, I have to tell you, it's garbage. What kind of a Christ are we trying to portray to the world? If Jesus came walking in to some of those TV studios on His donkey barefooted, they'd throw Him out. The lowly Nazarene with no place to lay His head.

And He comes walking in. How would He be received? What would He think? And then to hear the gospel that's being preached. Do you know that when I wrote the book Set the Trumpet to Your Mouth, the greatest kind of reproof I got? I got more problems from preachers.

Charismatic preachers who said God will not destroy America. God will not send judgment on America. Because we serve a God of mercy, we serve a God of love.

They have lied about the Lord saying that's not our God. That's not our God. Is that in your Bible? They have belied the Lord.

They said that's not Him. That's not the way God is. Believe me folks, He's a God of love.

He loves His children with an undying love. But there comes a day when a society, when a people cross a line and God says even though Job and Daniel and Moses prayed, they'd only save their own soul. Not even their families.

Because they crossed a line. I don't know where that line is. I can't draw it for us.

But we're very close to it I believe. Jeremiah 5, verse 4. Jeremiah couldn't believe this stupidity and the blindness. Look at verse 4. Therefore I said, surely these are the poor.

They're foolish, for they know not the way of the Lord nor the judgment of their God. Here's the picture. These people are going to the house of God.

They're saying, Lord, Lord. They're singing about His Lordship. They're testifying they're under His Lordship.

And they're telling a lie. They're living a lie. They're going around saying, Peace, peace.

There's endless peace and prosperity. They had an image of God. They really believed that as long as there was a temple and as long as there was a holy city, it was God's city and God would never destroy it.

And God said, Oh, you are wrong. Remember, Siloah was my house and I destroyed Siloah. He said, You just get your Bible out.

You get out the law. You get out, Moses. And you understand what I did.

You don't know my nature. You've got the wrong picture of who I am. Look at Jeremiah.

He's incredulous. He can't believe what he's seeing. He's saying, Oh God, how stupid, how blind these people are testifying they're under the Lordship of Jehovah.

He said, They must be the poorest, ignorant... These are the ignorant masses. Now, I know what that's like to go out in the street and you say, Lord, maybe... And perhaps this is what went through Jeremiah's mind. Lord, maybe I ought to make an allowance for all these ignorant masses.

They don't understand. All they do is sit all day long in front of their television set, watch sports and drink beer and eat potato chips. They don't want anything to do with you, God.

That's one thing. But these were not that kind of masses. These were those who were coming to his house saying, Lord, Lord! But he was saying, maybe it's because they're uneducated.

Maybe it's because they're so poor and they have to scrounge to make a living. He's trying to make an allowance for what he's seeing. So look what he says in the next verse, verse 5. I will get me unto the great men.

I will speak unto them, for they've known the way of the Lord and the judgment of their God. Now look here again, if you will, please. He's saying, I'm going to go to the clean moral crowd.

This ignorant mass of people. Maybe that's the way they're going to be, but surely I can find what I'm looking for. I'll find honesty.

I'll find that man God's looking for. I'll find that one if I have to. I've got to find him among those who are clean, good, moral, the prince of the people.

I'll go among them! Is that what it says? He's saying, why do they tell the world that the Lord lives? Why are they saying they are wise? Why do they testify that they know God's Word? Why all these lies? In Jeremiah 8, you don't have to turn there, but Jeremiah 8, 9 says, the pen of the scribe even is written falsely. The scribes, those who write the books, they were telling lies. You go to any bookstore, including

the bookstores here in New York City, and you can read the biggest pack of lies ever written, and it's supposed to be in the name of God.

I'm telling you, those books are sending more people to hell by giving them false peace than anything I can imagine. More than all the drug pushers in New York City. More than all the pornographers, the Christian writers who are not preaching the holiness of Jesus Christ are sending people to hell because they're putting them to sleep.

And you don't dare walk in a bookstore anymore without some Holy Ghost to serve it. You can damn your soul! You can so pervert your spiritual mind, you can so cloud your eyes, smear it over your eyes so you can't even see or know anymore. He said even the pen of the scribes have written falsely.

He said they're writing, peace, peace, God is love. There's no God of judgment. Don't be afraid.

But the Bible, God says, they're writing treachery. They're treacherous men. The Scripture says they rejected the Word of the Lord.

What wisdom is there in them? For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly saying peace, peace, when there's no peace. All they want to do is make you feel good. I don't want to go to church where there's just a gospel of fun where you feel good.

I want God, when I go to a church, to dig down in me so if there's any hidden sin or anything else, God will dig it out by the Word. Look at verse 5. Read it again. Last part of it.

Well, let's read the whole verse again. Jeremiah 5. I will get me... I'm going to go to the great men. I'm going to find that man God's looking for there.

And I'll speak unto them. For they have known the way of the Lord. Are these sinners? Is this the street crowd we're talking about? They've known the way of the Lord.

And the judgment, the law of God, they know it. But, what's it say? These have all together broken the yoke and burst the bonds. Look at me.

Jeremiah goes to this so-called moral crowd, the church-going crowd, the people that were singing, Lord, Lord. And he was shocked. He was horrified.

It was worse than the poor. It was worse than the ignorant. He said, these people have no restraints at all.

These people have broken every yoke. They burst every bond. They call it freedom.

They want no more legalism. They don't want any more preaching that would bring them under bondage, as they call it. And he said, these people want to say, He's Lord, He lives, He lives, He lives.

And no restraints. No yoke. They've broken through the yoke.

They've burst the bonds. Now, the word bands, B-A-N-D-S in Hebrew is a halter. And it's the same in the Greek when Jesus said, Take My yoke upon you.

My yoke is easy, My burden is light. Burden there is bands. It's a halter.

It's a restraint. It's a restraint. But these have broken the yoke, He said.

All together, they've broken it. Jesus said, My yoke is easy, My burden is light. Now, I want you to go to Hosea 11 and show you a very clear picture of the yoke.

And what God intended it to be. Hosea. I want you to go to the 11th chapter of Hosea.

Go to Daniel and turn right. Just before Joel. Hosea 11.

Hosea 11, let's begin reading. Do you have it? I'm waiting for some of the teen child boys. They're just newly in the Lord.

Okay, I want you to follow me now. Hosea 11, let's read verse 1. When Israel was a child, then I loved him and called my son out of Egypt. As they called him, so they went from them.

They sacrificed unto Balaam and burned incense to grave an image. I taught Ephraim also to go, taking them by their arms. But they knew not that I healed them.

I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love. In other words, he said the halter I put on them was a halter of love. And I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws.

And I laid meat unto them. Alright, now let me show you. Let me read that in the original Hebrew.

Here's what it reads. King James is not a good translation of that. I'm reading from Sporel, original Hebrew.

And here's what it says. I drew them with cords of a man and with bands of love. And I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws.

And I gave food unto them. He said I was taking off the yoke of sin. But he said I was giving them a yoke of love.

Restraint of love. I did this in love. I didn't do it out of any kind of anger.

Didn't do it any other reason, but these were to be bonds. Bonds, a yoke of love, restraints of love. And that's all it means, a restraint of love.

Now, God does not ever remove His yoke. Jesus said take My yoke upon you, learn of Me, My yoke is easy, My burden is light. Because He can't do it because we're co-yoked to Jesus Christ.

How can that yoke be broken unless you are separated from Christ? We're His fellow yokemen. We're yoked to Jesus Christ. Now, let me show you something.

When Jesus said My yoke is easy, My burden is light, it doesn't mean that it's optional. It doesn't mean that... And by the way, you know what the yoke is? The restraints are? These are the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the law of God.

This is His holy Word. And God says, I have to put restraints on you or you will run wild. You'll be like a stubborn mule cow.

And you'll run off after wild poisonous weeds. I have to have a yoke on you and I'm going to keep you in the furrow because I've got a work for you to do. And the only way you can be happy is to have these restraints on you.

Now, I want to read to you from one of the old Puritan writers. He's talking about the yoke. Now, listen closely.

It's not in your Bible. Just listen to what this old time preacher wrote. As a merciful master lifts up the yoke upon the cheeks of the oxen, that is, he pushes it far back so that the animal can eat the food in comfort.

So has the Lord made the yoke of the law, which has been laid on His people, both soft and light. He lifts it above the cheeks to make it easier by pushing it back. In other words, He said, I'm going to push it back where it's comfortable if you would yield to it.

He said, I will feed you because when you're in the yoke, isn't the shepherd responsible then to feed you? So how do you feed yourself when you're in the yoke? This is the whole purpose to it. God says, I laid meat upon them. I fed them.

They surrendered to the yoke. That's when He said, My yoke is easy. My burden is light.

He said, you picture Him standing between the two oxen and it's biting. They're shaking their neck. They're trying to get out of it and to make it comfortable.

He doesn't remove it. He picks it up and pushes it back against the cheeks. That's where it's comfortable with the oxen.

It's comfortable with the cow. It's back there so He can chew the cut. He can eat His food.

He doesn't even recognize it. He doesn't feel it then. And He can pull.

He can work in comfort and ease. He said, I'll make my yoke easy. My burden light.

It's still there. It's not gone. It's not optional.

He has pushed it to its comfort zone. And you must accept it willingly. Or there's another way to it.

And it's Hosea. Look at Hosea 11. Look, it says, And I laid meat unto them.

It means I gave them food. Look at me please. Do you know that real freedom, real Christian freedom is not breaking all the bonds.

I can take you to charismatic churches now where the pastors specialize in breaking harnesses. That's right. You can divorce all you want to without feeling condemned.

Drinking wine and drinking now and going to nightclubs is called Christian liberty. I mean the pastor will get up and tell you the latest movies he's seen. There is no cry against sin from the pulpit.

Because you see, that's called bondage. That's called legalism. They have all kinds of names for it.

No, there's a yoke, friends. There is a yoke. And you cannot get out of that unless you choose to get your stiff neck and shake it loose and run wild.

Oh. Oh. Look at verse... Are you still in Hosea? Why don't you go to Hosea 4. Verse 16.

I want to show you what God thinks backsliding is. You think you know what backsliding means? You've heard of people backsliding? Backsliding has to do with getting your neck outside the yoke. Verse 16.

For Israel slideth back as a backsliding heifer. Now the Lord will feed them as a lamb in a large place. Let me read it to you in original Hebrew.

For Israel slides back as a backslidden cow and the Lord will feed them as a lamb in a wild place. Ephraim is joined to idols. Let him alone.

You know what that's saying? If you look here, I like it better I'm looking right at you. He's saying, Israel, my people have become like this wild, unruly cow, this wild cow refuses to yield to the yoke and he stretches out his neck and he slides back out of the yoke. Backsliding is someone who had their neck to the yoke and slid out.

All backsliding has to do with refusing that restraint of the Holy Ghost. Seek Him with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul, all your strength. I mean, I can stand here right now and explain this yoke and you know what those restraints are.

But there are Christians all over this nation now they are smarting under it and saying I don't want it, it's too hard, I don't want that kind of preaching. We're going to have a lot of people in New York City who come and hear us one time and walk out, some of them halfway through the message. We've already had that happen.

Get up inside. I was born and raised on that, that old fashioned Holy Ghost holiness preaching. I don't want that.

That brings condemnation, that brings guilt. No, the only time it brings condemnation or guilt is when you're like a backslidden cow, like a heifer that's stubborn and won't put your neck to it and you backslide right out of it. And you want to go to a church that's going to make you comfortable and at ease so nobody touches your sin.

Hey look, if you can't find one, I've got a whole list of them, I'll give you a name. I'll give you names and addresses where you can go and be very cozy. And I'm not being facetious, and I'm not trying to be funny, it's a gospel truth.

The backslidden, for Israel slideth back as a backsliding cow. Look at verse 18, Hosea 4. You still there? Their drink is what? They don't want to come and drink the living water, so they go out, not only do they, the Lord can't feed them anymore, they're going out after their own wild oats, you see, they're not under the yoke. The Lord said, I'll feed them like a lamb, in other words, I'll let them wander off like a lamb, they want to go, I'll let them go, they feed as they please, they want to do as they please, but their drink is sour.

They have committed war to Him continually, their rulers are ashamed to love. Alright, let's move on now. Psalms 2-3, don't turn, but let me read it to you.

Just let me read it to you, Psalms 2-3. Let us break these bonds asunder, let us cast away all the cords from us. There you have right now, what's been the marking of God's people from the very beginning of time when God chose Israel to call them out.

Oh, look at Jeremiah 2, go back to Jeremiah, you still have your finger on Jeremiah? Go back to Jeremiah 2. I'm going to show you that from the very beginning, it's been this way. God's people have been trying to break the yoke and burst the bonds, the band, to get out of the halter from the very beginning. Jeremiah 2, verse 20.

For of old time I have broken the yoke and burst thy bands, and thou saidest, I would not transgress when upon every high hill and every green tree you wandered playing the harlot. Alright, now listen closely. When I say it's a poor translation, listen, I love the King James, I've preached most of that, sometimes I preach from the New American Standard.

But you see, these were taken from even pure, I mean, the very original Hebrew reads like this, listen closely. Surely from old you have broken off the yoke and you have withdrawn the bands, and yet you have said, I will obey when instead upon every high hill and under every green tree you've prostrated yourself like a harlot. Like a prostitute.

God said to Israel, ever since I called you out, He said, I picked you up. I put you under my arms and I delivered you. But from the very beginning, all you've wanted to do is burst the bands.

You want to get out from the yoke. You don't want my burden on you. You don't want these loving restraints on you anymore.

And yet you keep saying, I want to obey you God. When all the time you talk about obedience, you talk about my lordship, but like a prostitute you go out and sit before your idols hour after hour after hour. You're prostituting me, he said.

You're not a faithful lover to me. Surely from the very beginning you've tried to break the yoke. You've withdrawn it.

Now this is God's complaint from the very beginning even to now. And this is the problem in the church today. It's the problem.

You see it everywhere. Now I want to show you. I've got to move quickly because I want to say it all tonight.

Do you know that God is still looking? He's still looking for that One who says He's my Lord and He says it in righteousness. He says it not falsely, but God looks on that man or that woman who says He's Lord. They have upraised hands and God can look down and say, that's the truth.

There He is. There she is. I've found Him.

I've found her. They're not sitting in front of their idols. They're not living double standards.

They're not singing one thing and living another. They are not testifying one thing and living another. Here He is.

Here she is. I've found that One. And He's still looking.

Look at Jeremiah 4 again. Jeremiah 4, not 5, but Jeremiah 4. Do you know it's possible to testify about that and be truthful? For if thou will return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto Me, and if you will put away your abomination out of My sight, then you shall not be removed or sent away. Then shall thou swear the Lord liveth in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness, and the nations, that means the people, shall bless themselves in Him and in Him shall they glory.

For thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah in Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourself to the Lord and take away the foreskin of your heart, ye men of Judah,

inhabitants of Jerusalem. Lest My fury come forth like fire and burn that none can quench it because of the evil of your doings.

Now, people, I've got to get this off my heart. So just be patient with me a minute. It's flowing out so fast.

Let it go slow down a minute because I want you to hear it. I get a tendency to get all excited about it. But God is saying, if you'll get rid of your idols, and don't tell me your television set isn't an idol.

Why is all the furniture facing it? Hey, folks, do you know that God moved on this leadership up here months and months and months ago a long, long time ago that we couldn't be preachers that would be anointed and have that idol in our homes. In fact, our whole staff, we gathered over \$10,000 worth of TV sets that were willingly offered. We took them out in the woods and shot them with shotguns and buried them.

That's the truth. People mocked us and said, why didn't you sell it? We don't sell idols. But I'm going to look you right down and I'm going to tell you in love.

You come here or wherever you go to church, and I say it in love because God was patient with me. And I want to be patient with you. But how do you come here and raise what you call holy hands? And how do you stand here weak for the lost? And how do you say, He's my Lord? And then you go home and you watch such filth that's incubated in hell, most of it by homosexuals, homosexual writers, homosexual minds, incubated in the very pits of hell.

And you sit there, and I'm going to tell you right now, you are not even going to be saved in the end. If you're sitting there watching Dallas and Dynasty and all that filth out of hell, you're not even going to heaven. You're not even saved.

You're not even saved. Because He said, the saved man doesn't set any wicked thing before his eyes. The saved man doesn't live with idolatry.

Not when the Holy Ghost deals with it. Didn't He say His eyes are too holy? You say Jesus lives in you? Then He's looking out of your eyes, isn't He? Didn't He say His eyes were too pure? Aren't His eyes too pure? And how do you sit before your idols? He said, you sit before your idols and then you come before my house and say, Lord, Lord. That's swearing falsely.

That's the very thing that God is putting His finger on right here. The swearing falsely. Now, I don't know how many of you have lost now that may never come back.

But you see, I'm not obligated to try to get you back. I'm obligated to tell you the truth while you're here. That's all.

No clapping, please. That's what this whole thing is about. This is life and death with us.

That's why we don't have anything to do with the theater crowd out here. We don't go to the theaters. We don't go to the movie houses.

We don't partake in these things because God says, no, you can't be a part of that spirit and still keep My anointing. You can't walk with Me in righteousness. You say, well, that's legalism.

That's legalism. No, that's obedience. That doesn't save you.

Getting rid of television doesn't save you. None of these things save you. You're saved by grace.

You're saved by faith alone in the meritorious work of Jesus on the cross. By grace alone we're saved. That the saved man who's really saved.

You're not saved, I'm telling you, if you live in adultery, if you live in fornication, if you're sitting before idols, you really don't know Him yet. You say, well, I've never had anybody put it that strong, but the Holy Ghost is saying that now. He's saying it to the whole church.

A lot of people are mocking, a lot of people are laughing, but I'm telling you the truth. Well, I didn't mean to get on to that, but there it is. You say, but sir, David, He is my Lord.

I do love Him. I've confessed my sins. I've forsaken the world.

I've given Him my heart. Look at Jeremiah 4, 3 and 4. Again, He said, break up your foul old ground. Do you know what foul old ground is? Foul old ground is ground that's been plowed, but neglected.

It hasn't been... all the clods haven't been broken up. Somebody got all excited and stirred up and they went out and they got busy sweating and they plowed up this whole field and walked away. No seed is planted.

And folks, that's about all we're getting today. Many people are getting stirred. That's it, stirred.

Nothing else. He said, no, that's not enough. You get in there and start breaking up that foul old ground.

You get rid of that idolatry. You start dealing with these things in your life now. So that I can plant the seed and water it and it can bring full fruit.

Break up that foul old ground. Do these things that He calls you to do. Obey Him.

Break up that foul old ground. Circumcise yourself to the Lord. Take away the foreskin of your heart.

In other words, take away these things. Cut these things out of your life. Destroy them.

Hate them. I'm going to just follow the Lord's leading here. Do you mind? I've already said it pretty strong.

And some of you heard me... Go to Deuteronomy 7.26. I'm going to give you this verse and that's it. Then I'm going to move on. But some of you didn't hear me.

But you know, when I said about television, some of you, I saw your jaw drop. You say, Brother Dave, that's not in the Bible, is it? Oh, yes it is. At least in my Bible.

It's in my Bible. It's in Deuteronomy 7.26. Come on now, look at it. Neither shall thou bring an abomination... where? Lest you become what? A cursed thing like it, or the band which is cursed, but thou shalt utterly detest it, thou shalt utterly abhor it, for it is a cursed thing.

What curses it? Because Satan has used it as his number one tool now to destroy the vitality of the church of Jesus Christ and take away the diligence of the coming of the Lord, the diligence of righteousness, and has put a people to sleep. And my Bible says, how shall we escape? We! We! God's people! How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? That doesn't mean neglect prayer. It doesn't mean neglect reading the Bible.

How shall we escape if we neglect the salvation of the lost city of New York City? How do we escape if we neglect the salvation of our family? This is a great salvation for the whole world, but how can you even talk about it if your heart's not right? If your heart's not right. He said, circumcise yourself before the Lord. I want you to go to Jeremiah 12.

Jeremiah 12. Do you still love the Word? Jeremiah 12. Verse 10.

Jeremiah 12, verse 10. Many... many what? And what have the pastors done? Boy, that's pretty tough. Now if I said that, somebody would get mad.

I didn't say it. Jeremiah said it. Is that in your Bible? Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard.

They have trodden my portion underfoot. They have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness. They have made it desolate, and being desolate, it mourneth unto me.

The whole land is made desolate. Why? Because no man lays it to heart. No man is diligent about it.

No man's upset about it. No man's concerned about it. I was walking down Broadway, 70th Street, around 70th Street the other night, and I was weeping.

I couldn't help it. I was looking at all the masses of people coming in from work, and listen to the horns, and look at those masses of people. And I was thinking about this great salvation and how do we escape? How do I escape if I neglect this great salvation that's free to all? And I said, oh God, must they all be damned.

Must so many be damned. There's such a small handful of Christians. And you know what I heard? And it just broke me.

I started to weep. And I'm sure, you know, in New York, if you're talking to yourself or praying, people think you're insane. There's somebody doing it anyhow.

Just another one of those people blabbering. But the Lord was, Lord, as though He came down and put a finger right on my chest, and pointed a finger at me, and He stopped me dead in my tracks. And I was weeping.

He said, David, if not you, who? And just as I was praying, that brother right over here, aren't you the brother that stopped me? Got off a bus. Second row here. And he said, Brother Dave.

And I said, you've been coming to service? Yes. He was telling me that you've got to give him some time off that he can pray. And I remember lovingly just pointing.

He said, Brother, if not you, if not me, then who? Who's he going to touch this city with? Who's going to fast? Who's going to pray? If not those whose hearts have been stirred. If not those who've been looking at the Word of the Lord and say, Oh God, I can't live a double life. I can't live a lie.

I'm not going to call you Lord, Lord, and go sit in front of my idols. If God can't find us, if not you, then who? Who's going to weep for this city? Who's going to pray? If not you praying for your unsafe family, who? Who's God going to get? Where's He going to find somebody? Where? We're going to open up an upper room. And if you don't go there to pray, who goes? If not you, who? And it hit me.

And ever since then, I've just been for a few days now, every waking moment, if not you, David, if you won't seek my face, if you won't humble yourself, if you won't give yourself to prayer, if you won't give yourself wholly to me, like Jeremiah, like Isaiah, like Ezekiel. You say, well brother David, you mean to tell me that after working all day on the job, I've got to carry another burden after that? I want to go home and relax. You mean to tell me I've got to weep over the loss? You mean I've got to live like Jesus did? That I've got to break away and pray? Even though I've been out ministering to people, I've got to still break away and pray? And then I've got to go to a cross and I've got to die to self and sin? Yes, yes, yes! It all depends on whether you believe God's Word is true or not.

It all depends on whether you believe judgment is coming. It all depends on whether you just say, well, things are going to continue as they were from the beginning of time. No! God's saying it's enough.

How shall we escape if we neglect? If we become careless? If we're not laying it to heart? Do you know what the Scripture says? And I'm reading something that was written. Think of this. Over 1,900 years ago, this was written.

I'm reading. Don't go there, but just listen. Romans 13.

Knowing the time that now it is high time to awake out of sleep. For now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed. The night's far spent.

The day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness. Get rid of those idols.

And let us put on the armor of light. Now look. Think of it.

If 1,900 years ago, the day was far spent. Remember the day was far spent and the day's at hand, the new day. How much more now? After 1,900 years.

You know what makes me cry? Now, these disciples of Christ who were so far removed from His coming were expecting that at any moment they lived diligently and they spent their lifetime. Jesus wasn't first. He was everything.

I mean, they gave everything. Yet, we who are so close to His coming live so carelessly after 1,900 years since this was written. Think of it.

If it's time to awake then, what time is it now? What time is it now? I don't know what God's going to have to do. I don't know what He's going to have to do. I don't know if He has to totally crash the stock market.

I don't know if He has to send New York City into bankruptcy, which I believe word is going to eventually hit. I don't know what God has to do to this city. I don't know what He has to do to every city.

I don't know what He has to do to the church. But He said it's a fearful thing to fall in the hands of a living God. And He's talking to the church.

He said it's a frightful thing. The Greek word is frightful. It's a frightful thing.

And we're not taking it frightful. We've created a God in our concept. We have a concept of God that He is so... He's just so loving.

He's so merciful. Yes, He is. To those who follow Him in righteousness.

And God so loved the world He gave His only Son. Yes, He loves the whole world. But there comes a time when God says my justice must now be satisfied.

And He said that's it. And He begins to move. And folks, we're not hearing it.

I'm saying it, but you're not hearing it. And only the Holy Ghost can make it real. It's all over.

The party's over. And now, let me ask you how you're spending your time. You say, Lord, Lord, He's my Lord.

And yet, what do you do with your spare time now? Are you playing cards? Half the people in New York City are playing cards now. They're playing cards. They are reading books.

They're listening to music. Now, there's nothing wrong with reading books. There's nothing wrong with listening to music.

But you say, Brother Dave, I'm a housewife. And all God expects of me as a Christian housewife is to have a home where there's comfort and where there's peace. Do you mean I'm expected to carry the burden of the Lord? I'm expected to weep between the porch and the altar too? Yes.

Yes. You say, I've done my part. No, I'm saying that we haven't done our part.

I'm saying that we've not taken His yoke. We have not wanted His halter. Some of you put in an eight-hour day on your job.

And when you walk out of that job, you say, I've done my part. There are some of you who work maybe for American Bible Society. I'm hoping there's nobody who works for us in Teen Challenge or even my office like this who feels after a job, it's all over.

And I'm going to tell you something right now. He's going to move in His fury and His wrath because He said, you're living a lie. You say, He's Lord, He's Lord.

You won't take His burden. You won't take His yoke upon you. I'm asking you.

How many of you wives? How many of you husbands? Drive through the city or you ride in the subway? How many of you wept? When's the last time you wept over the lost? Come on now. Have you grown so accustomed to it it doesn't move you anymore? I've been in this city now for 30 years and it's moving me now more than it's ever moved me before because I'm getting the burden of the Lord. And I'm realizing that it's not enough just to go out and pass out literature.

It's not just enough to have a job for Jesus. I've got to have His spirited upon me. His brokenness.

I've got to be able to pray, Oh Lord, do something in my heart. I'm not just an errand boy. I want Your heart.

I want You to break me. I don't want to tell the world that He's my Lord and live a lie because I'm not praying and I'm not weeping. Are you reading it? Are you digging into it? That's what God said to us this morning.

If you were there, to go deeper into this Word. You have time. You say you don't have time.

Yes, you have time for everything else. And He said, I'm going to judge you for it. I've got a lot more I can't go on because I just feel the Lord's telling me to bring it to a close.

Just a whole lot saying, Lord, Lord. Lord, Lord. Lord, I ate and drank in Your presence.

You taught in my presence. He said, I don't know you. You know why? He said, you've been swearing falsely.

I don't want to put a burden of guilt on anybody. I'm not trying to bring anybody under condemnation. No.

But we're not taking God's Word seriously. We are not looking at it and accepting it for face value. He said, you break up your fallow ground.

You circumcise your heart. You get my yoke upon you. You take my burden upon you.

You get this halter upon you. And you walk with Me. You take My burden upon you.

I really don't think this message is for sinners tonight. It's for we who are Christians called by His name. And I got to thinking, Lord, is there any way that this could be me? I was looking out the window last night.

Lord, could that be me? Have I swore falsely that You're my Lord? I've said, Lord, You live. But it's not in truth. The only way it can be in truth is that it consumes my whole life.

I become totally wrapped up in His divine purposes. His eternal purpose. I become so wrapped up in Him that everything in my life, thank God for my family.

Thank God for being able to sit down and eat and rest with friends. Thank God for all these other things. But these things begin to become less and less important.

And then, He said, you can't neglect this. He said, you have trampled on it and you've called the holy things of God common. They're just ordinary things.

You've trampled my blood by calling it common. It's just another thing going to church doing these things. Just another thing.

No, it has to consume us. It's what I'm talking about being consumed with Christ. Being consumed with walking in His righteousness.

Not trying to do it in my own strength. But getting so hungry for Him. Saying, Lord, when I tell the world that You are Lord, when I sing, He is Lord, He is Lord, I want You to be able to look at me and say, there's a brother.

There's a man I've been looking for who stands in the gap. When he's got time off, he doesn't gravitate to something of this world. When he's got any time, he's drawn to my heart.

He doesn't sit and waste his hours in front of television. He's drawn to my heart. And to that one that's drawing, drawing, drawing to Him.

You're hearing it from Don. You're hearing it from Bob. And you're hearing it from me tonight.

You're going to keep hearing it. He's trying to draw us and woo us to Himself to reveal His heart to us. Is that what you want? To be able to say, yes, Lord, here's one.

And in truth, He knows it. Heavenly Father, speak Your Word to our heart. Speak conviction to our heart.

Lord, You're coming one of these days and we're going to stand before You and be judged. And You were speaking to Your children when You said, the Lord begins judgment in His house. Judgment begins in the house of the Lord.

And then You went right on and said it's a fearful, frightful thing to fall into the hands of a living God. And we, Your church, are in Your hands, Lord. And I take seriously Your Word tonight.

Awake us. Stir us. Lord, that even before we go to sleep, we don't say, well, another day is gone.

But we go down on our knees before we go to bed tonight and say, draw me nearer, Jesus. Draw me nearer to You. And Lord, while everything is going haywire, let my heart burn for You.

Let my heart burn after righteousness. Lord, cleanse me. Drive out all the idolatry and all the adultery and the lust.

And fill my heart with You, Jesus. Fill my heart with You, Jesus. And I want to know tonight, because I'd like to pray with you.

I'm asking. There were probably 15, 20 hands of those who've never been to Times Square Church before. But if you walked in here and said, David, my heart has grown cold.

I mean it. My heart's grown cold. But I feel conviction of the Holy Spirit tonight.

Now please don't come. You shouldn't have to come all the time and time again. But if you're here tonight and say, I want God to break this hardness, this coldness.

I want to be truly able to say He's my Lord and not be lying about it. I don't want to tell lies. I don't want to live a lie.

Get up out of your seat and come and stand in the front right now. Just come. We're going to pray with you and believe God to change your life.

That's it. Singers, come if you will, please. This is the end of the message.

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