

Death of a Promise - Part 2

by David Wilkerson

God brings us to a place of hopelessness to bring us to a place of absolute dependence on Him, an opportunity to show Him that we believe Him, no matter how black or hopeless the situation.

Duration: 51:34

Scripture: Mark 11:22, Romans 10:17, Hebrews 11:1

Topics: "Promise"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the evidence of faith and how to prove it to oneself and others. They emphasize the importance of being a witness of faith to the world. The speaker also mentions a previous message titled 'The Death of a Promise,' which explores how God fulfills promises in unexpected ways. The sermon concludes with a prayer for understanding and a request for the Holy Spirit to make the message impactful.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing WORLDCHALLENGE PO BOX 260 LINDALE, TEXAS 75771 or calling 903-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. I preached a message Tuesday night entitled The Death of a Promise. That God, when he gives you a promise, sentences it to death and all the means by which it can be fulfilled till you think it's hopeless, there's no other way for it ever to be fulfilled.

He sentenced death to it. And we're going to tell you why. The second part of this is entitled The Window of Faith.

Tonight, I'll preach the third part of it. This is the first time in my life I've preached a three-part message. You see, I used to be an evangelist.

One message at a time. But when I got this word, I thought it was just for me. I was going to keep it to myself because it had blessed me.

Nothing profound about it, just that it helped my faith, helped me understand some of the ways of God. And I thought, well, I'll just follow it away. The Lord said, no, share it with the body.

So I've shared one. And tonight, the message is the third part of this, and it's called The Evidence of Faith. How do you know you have faith? How do you prove it to yourself, to those around you? Because the Lord said, we're to be a witness of faith to the whole world before the sons of men.

We're to believe before the sons of men. And how do you show God that you have faith? The evidence of faith. How do you know? We'll talk about that in the service at 6 o'clock.

But let's go now to the Word of the Lord, the window of faith. Aren't you glad for the Word? Folks, I would tell you something. You can take this whole world, but you give me the Word.

Give me the revelation. When I get something from God, I get so excited about the Word. I live on this, and I know you do too, just to love the Word.

This is a church that loves the Word of God. Amen. Turn around to two people and say, I love the Word.

I love the Word. Amen. Back and forth behind you, around you, I love the Word of God.

Amen. I hope you mean that. Let's pray.

Lord, we thank you for our guests that are in the wheelchairs here in front of us. We thank you for your faithfulness to them and how much you love them. And for this congregation and how you love us.

That you would bring us the revealed Word of God. What a wonderful thing, Lord, that you can communicate with us today, that we can know your ways. We're not left in darkness.

If our ears are open and our eyes are open, Lord, you'll speak to us. You will speak to our hearts. Now, Lord, give us hearing ears this afternoon.

Give us seeing eyes and open hearts. Otherwise, Lord, the Word is not going to be received or it'll be forgotten. Lord, I don't ever want to forget what you're saying to me this afternoon.

I don't want to forget it as long as I live. So, Holy Spirit, come and make it real to my heart as I preach it. Make it more and more woven into the very fiber of my being.

That everyone in the balcony, in the main floor, in the choir, and everyone on the stage, let us hear the Word. Lord, it's nothing profound. It's very simple.

But in its simplicity, make it very real to our hearts. Lord, I thank you for this Word. Now, anoint it.

Let the glory of the Lord be exalted in this, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Now, you've heard of the window of opportunity.

The window of opportunity is a particular set time that is most favorable or conducive to action. It's a period of time that is the most favorable. It's an opening, a period that's best suited to accomplish a certain goal.

The window opens, the opportunity is there, and then suddenly it's closed. For example, the window of opportunity in Russia right now is open. It opened one day, suddenly.

It was closed, the iron curtain was there, suddenly the iron curtain came down, and the window of opportunity was open, and they tell us that very soon that that window of opportunity will be closed. We

have, I think, 300, 250, 300 of our people going into Russia this next summer. It may be the last.

We don't know. But those in Russia, we have people in Siberia from this church working as missionaries. We have people in Ukraine, missionaries that we support in Ukraine.

And we keep hearing from the pastors there, they fear that very soon if the present president Yeltsin is out of the scene, that door may come, that window may suddenly close. It's a window of opportunity to preach the gospel. There's a window of opportunity open right now in the Balkans, in what was former Yugoslavia, in Slovenia, in Bosnia, and Herzegovina.

Right now, we have Brother Kuzmic. We've been praying for him. He's preached in this pulpit.

And he is even this week over in Bosnia and over in those different nations there. And he is consulting right now with the presidents and the leaders of these countries. They're making new constitutions.

And he is consulting and advising right now. The time may come when this message is being taped and ten years from now, somebody hearing this will be shocked maybe that there was a window of opportunity that opened. It may be once again closed.

That window is open right now. In fact, we have missionaries from this church in Bosnia right now. And we are working with, we are supporting a ministry over there that works with the fugitives.

We have missionary work all over the world because the windows of opportunity are open. There's another window of opportunity. It's called the window of salvation.

And you know how that opens. Some of you have already had your window of opportunity closed. But there comes a time.

It's a window. It's an opening. When the Holy Spirit is convicting you, when you hear the word of God, there's a sense of lostness.

There's a sense of need. And the Holy Spirit comes wooing and convicting and He draws you to Himself. That's the work of the Holy Spirit.

And it's that window of opportunity opening. And some of you had your window of opportunity. Now it doesn't mean, and it is closed by the way.

For many people all over the world, that window is closed. Not that God closes it. That window is not closed by God.

It's a matter of the heart being hardened, the ears being closed, and the eyes being shut, turning it away. God's always wooing, always calling. But there comes a time that there will never be that opportunity.

I was an evangelist before I came to this church. I traveled all over the world, preached to multitudes. And there came a time in every meeting, and I could sense it, I can still tell it when I'm overseas or anywhere else in the mass crusade.

There comes a time in the moment when that window of opportunity, that window of faith is open. All over the congregation you could sense it. The Holy Spirit is brooding.

He is breathing. The word has found its mark. And suddenly that window is open and the Lord says, will you believe? Will you believe Me now? And many take advantage of that window of opportunity, that window of faith, and they come and give their life to the Lord.

They could be sitting in their seat. That window opens. But many shake off the conviction.

They go out there, and folks, that window never quite opens again. I'm not saying there won't be another opportunity, but it'll never be like that moment. And some of you may get it in this service this afternoon.

Your window of faith may open in this meeting. And I pray God help you to take advantage of it. This is what it is with faith.

There's a window of faith, and I call that a set time, an opportune time, whereby we have the best chance ever to exercise and practice faith. There comes a time, and I'm going to illustrate that in just a moment. I'm going to prove to you that faith is really not acceptable to God unless it is practiced and given to Him during the window of faith.

When the window is open, when the window is closed, it is not faith. It is not acceptable to God. And I'm going to prove that to you, even right now.

He opens the window, and He expects us to take advantage of that openness and to give Him complete faith. Now, let me illustrate my point. And folks, put on your thinking cap and follow me, because if you will get this into your spirit, if you will really get a hold of it, you'll understand some of the problems you're going through.

You're going to understand some of the trials, some of the darkness that is in your life, some of the crises that you're facing. You'll understand why God has not only permitted it, allowed it, and sometimes brought it upon us. Let's go, for example, to Israel to prove the point that I've just made.

Israel is at the brink of the Jordan, ready to go into Canaan. Moses, of course, is not to go in. But Moses encouraged the people to go on.

He said, Behold, the Lord thy God has set the land before you. Go up now and possess it, as the Lord God of thy fathers has said unto thee. Fear not, neither be discouraged.

Instead, the people demanded that twelve spies be sent to go up and scout out the land. And they said, Behold, the Lord God... Let me read it to you. Let the spies go and tell us how we must go up and into what cities we shall come.

Now, that in itself is the beginning of unbelief because up to this time they'd been led by the cloud by day and the fire by night. They'd been led by God every step of the way. Now they're saying at the brink of the promised land, let spies go and let them show us the way.

Let's get the map from them. They'll tell us how. They'll give us the strategy.

So Moses said, That sounded good to me. Folks, I've never believed the spies were a part of God's plan. I believe that grieved God.

God went along with it. Just like He went along with them having a king Saul. God blessed it.

He accepted it. And that's what He did with the Scythes. He accepted their strategy knowing that they were an unbelieving, stiff-necked people.

They send the spies in to the promised land. Ten of the spies, you remember, came back with an evil report. They said, There are giants in the land.

The cities are walled high into the heavens. We have no chance. We're going to be overwhelmed.

We'll be defeated. We were like grasshoppers to these people. Yes, it's a good land.

It's everything God said it was. But we can't do it. It's hopeless.

Absolutely hopeless. They brought back an evil report. An unbelief swept all through the camp.

The people began to weep. They turned on Moses. And they said, What kind of a leader are you to bring us out here to kill us before this kind of an enemy, this strong enemy? Joshua and Caleb, two of the spies, you remember, stood up and said, They're meat for us.

God has given us the land. They're afraid of us. They dread us.

We can go up and we can take the land. Moses stood up. And God, through his lips, opened a window of faith to these people.

Listen to it. Dread not, neither be afraid of them. The Lord, your God, which goeth before you, he shall fight for you according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes.

And in the wilderness, what thou hast seen and how that the Lord, thy God, has led thee as a son in all the ways that you went, even until now. He's led you as a father leads a child. He bore you on eagle's wings.

Don't be afraid now. Go, and God will be with you. And folks, that was the window of faith.

You see, God brings us to a place of absolute hopelessness. He brings us to a place where humanly, there is no way out of the situation. It's absolutely impossible.

But why does God bring us to that point? Why does he allow these things in our life? Because it is that point the window of faith is most open. And the darker it is, the more open the window, the greater the opportunity to give him glory, to give him honor in believing him in the darkest hour when no human hands, when no power on heaven or earth, or rather on earth can undertake your problem. The window is wide open.

And folks, that window was open all that night while the children of Israel murmured and complained. In fact, they held an election and they're going to vote for another leader to take them back to Egypt. In fact, they called Egypt now the land of milk and honey.

And they're going to go back all night and God listened to that while the window of opportunity was open. And he listened. And it grieved the heart of God.

People got up the next day and there was anger. They were ready to move. They were packing, ready to go back to Egypt.

And Moses has lost control at this point. Amazing thing. Moses said, yet in this thing you did not believe the Lord your God.

Deuteronomy 1.32. They refused. They accused the Lord of abandoning them and leaving them to their own devices. And suddenly, in anger, God shut the window.

The opportunity was gone to believe. The opportunity to have faith was gone. This was a wonderful opportunity.

In fact, it was going to be the last of ten. It was the tenth and last window of faith that would be open to these people. Listen to what the Scripture says.

And then, in other words, after the window was shut, turn you and take your journey into the wilderness. God said, no. I can't work with you anymore.

You refuse to trust me. You refuse to believe me. I sent you messengers.

I gave you my word. I gave you my promise. You won't believe me.

Go on back to the wilderness now. You're on your own. Now, I'll take care of you.

I'll meet your needs. You'll have food on your table. You'll have enough water to drink.

You'll have clothes on your back that won't wear out. But you are not going to be a part of my eternal purpose. You have nothing to do with my future plans.

Go out in the wilderness and die. And when they heard this judgment, they had second thoughts. And they had their little meetings.

And the crowd and the princes gathered together. And by this time, Moses is absolutely incredulous. The attitude of this people.

And now they gather. I don't know if it's the next day, but somewhere in that 24 hour period, they come back and they're all armed. They've got their weapons.

And now they're full of faith. And they said, Moses, we're ready. We're going.

All ready. But the window was closed. That window of faith had closed.

Listen to it. Then, that's after the window was shut, you answered and said, we have sinned against the Lord. Now, this was not a true repentance.

This was just because they were trying to get back the promise of getting into the land of Canaan. We have sinned against the Lord. We will go up now and fight according to all that the Lord our God has commanded us.

And you had, when every man had girded every man his weapon of war, you came and said, we are ready to go up and fight. Look at them. All night they have been murmuring and complaining.

They have no faith. And here they stand now. It's only 24 hours later, maybe 30, 48 hours at the most.

And here they stand before the man of God who said, we have the faith now to go. And God said, well, the faith that you have now, I don't accept. The faith you have now is after the fact.

It's after the window. You are believing me now only because of what you fear you're going to lose. It's not that you trust me.

You're afraid of judgment. This, folks, Moses warned them. He said, don't go up.

Neither fight. For God is not among you now, lest you be smitten before your enemies. But you would not listen.

You rebelled. You went up presumptuously. The Amorites came out against you and chased you as bees do, like a swarm of bees on them, and destroyed you.

And you returned and wept before the Lord. But the Lord would not hearken to your voice nor give ear unto you. Folks, the time for faith is when God presents to you the most hopeless moment in your life, the most hopeless situation, that you have a window, you have an opportunity for yourself, the world, and to show God that you believe Him, no matter how black, no matter how hopeless, no matter what the situation, it's in that moment God says, I'm trying to bring you to faith.

Now, I told you this was the tenth and last window of faith open to this people. All these men, God said, have tempted me now these ten times and have not hearkened to my voice. Now, there were windows of faith open to them.

There were nine other windows. Remember the Red Sea? God brought them to a hopeless situation. Here's Pharaoh in the back.

The mountains on the side, there's the Red Sea. And by the way, God led them there by the cloud and the fire, led them right there. God took them into a hopeless situation.

The window of faith was open and then God had to close it because they didn't believe it. They wept and cried, said, Moses, you brought us out here to kill us. Weren't there graves in Egypt? God closed the door.

Folks, if they had learned their lesson, if they had accepted, if they had moved in through that window of faith and laid hold of God and say, God is able to do anything and they had laid hold of that, they would have not had those other nine tests. They would not have had to go to the waters of Mara. But God says, I can't let you go into the promised land until you are wholly dependent upon me, until you trust me for all things in your life.

I have to be everything to you. You have got to be wholly dependent upon me. You can't go in there fighting your own battle.

You can't trust the arm of flesh. You have to trust me. And because they failed it, a few days later they're at the waters of Mara.

The waters are bitter. God put that bitter pill in that water because, again, he's wanting to open a window of faith. Here they are again.

Lord says, alright, here's another chance for you. Here's a hard time. It looks like you're going to, you're going to have no water and you're just going to die of thirst.

Everybody's thirsty. And here's a chance to say, live or die, we're the Lord's. God is able.

God said he'd be our shield and our guide. We're going to trust him. They missed it there.

They missed it at Rephidim. They missed it at Tabara. They missed it at the wilderness of sin.

All of those opportunities. And now, finally, here they are, the last time before they go on. The tenth time.

And this is the last window. And God wouldn't open another window because he knew if he did it would be in vain. Why should he open another window of faith and give them an opportunity to believe because he knew what was in their heart and now they would never believe.

Never. Hallelujah. Abraham is set before us as an example of faith because he took advantage of a window of faith.

The scripture says, in being not weak in faith, he, Abraham, considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, and neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. In Romans 4.20 we read, he, Abraham, staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but he was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that what he promised he was able to perform, therefore it was counted to him for righteousness. Now, folks, I want you to listen closely now.

It says that Abraham believed God, didn't stagger at the promise of God, believed that God was able to do everything that he's promised. He's able to perform. But, folks, I don't believe that Moses came into that until he was 99 years old, that kind of faith.

He didn't come to that kind of faith when the first windows of faith were opened to him. The window of faith was opened to him when he was 75 years old. The Lord said, you're going to be a father of many nations.

And then, I don't know whether he really believed that because there's evidence of unbelief in Abraham up to this time. Was it not unbelief when he has his wife consort with him and suddenly tell people that she's his sister rather than his wife? Now, she's a half-sister, but it's a half-lie. And they consort among themselves, and Abraham is saying, I did it because I was afraid of my life.

You see, God had already given him a window of faith and told him, I'm going to be your guide, I'm going to be your strength, and you're going to live to be a ripe old age. That was the window of faith. All he had to do was lay hold of it, but you see him two times staggering in his faith.

Now, was it faith that he would consort with his wife again and they would plan this scheme because God wasn't acting fast enough? And so, Sarah says, take my maid, Hagar, go into her and conceive, and hopefully it'll be a son, and he can be the promise. And so, and Ishmael came out of it. Ishmael is nothing but an act of unbelief.

So, up to this time, Moses has not yet learned how to take advantage of the window of faith. And folks, God comes to him when he's 99 years old. The Lord appears with three men, three angels, and appears to him in Mamre.

And what the Lord says to him, he said, a year from now, I'll read it to you, and the Lord appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre. Three men stood by him, and he said, I certainly will return unto thee according to the time of life, and lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. But he's saying, next year, at this time, I'll be at the same spot, I'll be here, and that will be the moment your wife will conceive, and you're

going to have a son.

Now, folks, he's 99 years old now. And a window of faith is open for a whole year. By the way, he didn't get his name Abraham until he was 99.

There's 24 years there after the call of God, he's still Abram. God doesn't call him the father of nations, and God calls him the father of nations because he knows now he's in faith. He knows now that this man's going to believe him no matter what.

Because something got a hold of him this time. This time, he laid hold of him and said, I know God is able, I am dead, my wife's womb is dead, everything looks absolutely hopeless, it's going to take a miracle, but I believe God's able to do it. Now, folks, that didn't come at the first part of that last year because that's when he goes down to Gera to sojourn, and Abimelech looks upon his wife again, and he said, surely there's no fear of God here, so you tell them you're my sister to save my skin.

He's still wavering a bit, but somewhere before the Lord appeared again to Abraham, he was fully persuaded, he staggered not. I don't believe that he was a man of faith the moment God came to him and spoke to him. Folks, faith comes through testing, it comes through trial.

Abraham was tried in his faith. But he got a hold of something this time. This was the window open once again, and Abraham says, this time I am going to believe God no matter what happens.

And he got a hold of a faith that would take him through the rest of his life. He lived to be 137 years old, but that man would never doubt God again. That's why God could trust him to take his son to the altar.

Isaac, when he's 13 years old, say, put a knife to him. God provided a lamb, you remember. But he was able to trust God the rest of his life.

This man trusted God. He got a hold of a faith. He took advantage of the window of opportunity.

That window of faith was open to him in that year. And the scripture, let me read it to you here. Let's find.

And the Lord visited Sarah, just as he said. And the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

Hallelujah. Glory be to God. And that's why God called him his friend.

I'll tell you what, folks. It's the man, the woman, who is finally taking advantage of that window of faith and fully trusts God and becomes the friend of God. Isn't that amazing to be called the friend of God? You know what that means? That not only do I give my secrets to God, not only do I unburden my heart to Him, He unburdens His heart to me and tells me His secrets.

He's my friend. He's a friend that's thinking closer to their brother. He is my friend.

Abraham was a friend of God because he believed, the Scripture said. It's because his faith he became a friend of God. And, folks, it's that man or the woman today that's walking by faith, fully trusting the Lord that is the friend of God, that hears the mind of God, that gets clear direction, that hears His heartbeat.

Folks, I know people that walk with God that way. They actually hear the heartbeat of God. Hallelujah.

Now, last Tuesday, remember I preached the death of a promise and how God gives you a promise and then He rolls death in on it and on all the means and ways by which it could be fulfilled. Remember, the womb represents the ways and means by which the promise could be fulfilled and it was dead. All the possibilities that would make the promise come to pass, it's all dead, it's all gone.

God did it to set before Abraham a window of faith. That's what it is. Now, some of you, balcony in the main floor right now, you are in the hardest time of your whole life, your Christian life.

I don't know whether it's finances. You face a crisis that only God can get you out of. I don't know whether it has to do with your marriage.

You say, my marriage looks absolutely hopeless, brother Dave. I have tried and tried enough. I know my heart.

I am putting every effort into my marriage and it's not working. Outside of a miracle, we are not going to make it. And some of you have other kinds of problems.

You have prayed for an unsaved loved one for so long and you're discouraged about it. And some of you right now are having physical problems, really serious physical problems. Terrible pain.

And you know what that's all about? He allows us to come to this place where only He can deliver, where only God can do it. That point when you're at your lowest, when you are at the place where you can't turn to the right or the left, you know of no one you can call, no one that you can depend on. Folks, if you're in a financial problem, there's not going to be an angel come and do it.

There's not going to be some rich man, some rich woman. You're not going to find somebody in your building that's going to knock on your door with \$10,000 to meet your needs. You're in a mess.

You're in trouble. That's your window. This is the best opportunity you will ever have in your life to step out in faith and give glory to God and see the miracle happen.

You say, Brother Dave, if I don't take advantage of this window of faith and if I mess up, will there be another window open? Oh, sure, but you're going to have to go back into the pit. You're going to have to go back down there because the window only opens at your lowest point. It only opens when everything is impossible.

Anybody can believe God when everything is going smooth. That's not faith. That's presumption.

Faith only comes out of the fire. It only comes out of the flood. Oh, sure, you have another window, but why not believe in now so you don't have to go back through it again? Some of us go, some people just absolutely live in turmoil and confusion.

They never do come to a point of faith. The window keeps closing and opening, but they don't take advantage of it. I don't think we take seriously this matter of believing God when we face this window of faith.

You say, well, prove your point. Give me something New Testament. I'll give you something New Testament.

In fact, don't turn there, but it's the first chapter of Luke. Remember that holy priest named Zacharias? He'd been praying all his lifetime for his son. He's a holy, righteous man.

He's a praying man. He's a weeping man of God. He walks in righteousness before the Lord and he's faithful.

He's in the holy place, in fact. And an angel appears by the name of Gabriel. And an angel appeared to him at the right side of the altar and said to him, Zacharias, fear not.

Your prayer has been heard. And your wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son and thou shalt call his name John. Folks, sometimes the window of faith opens for quite a period.

Other times, it's just open for seconds. It just comes and God expects you to lay hold of it. Here's an angel appearing.

And Zacharias has just a moment of faith This should have been a happy moment. Now folks, get the picture please. Here's an angel, a mighty angel of God.

He's got to be just glowing in light. Have you ever seen an angel? I've not seen an angel, but I can only imagine this angel appears there in the glory. He's in the light and his power.

And this angel is speaking as a man to him. Zacharias, the Lord's heard your prayer. You're going to have a son.

Your wife Elizabeth is going to have a son. He even gave him his name. You're going to have a son.

You're going to call him John. And the window's open. Suddenly it closes.

Zacharias, this holy godly man says, give me a sign. Give me a sign. What better sign can you have than an angel Gabriel standing in front of you? Folks, some of us are so full of unbelief that if an angel like Gabriel could stood right in front of you and say, how am I supposed to know? How can I believe this? Whereby, or how shall I know this? I'm an old man, and my wife is well stricken in years.

You say, well, surely God could overlook that. He's an old man. His wife's elderly.

And he's been faithful. He's been a praying man. Surely God doesn't... He's not going to say anything about it.

He'll just kind of slough over it and just kind of forget it and keep the promise anyhow. No, no, no, no. God didn't take lightly to this man not taking advantage of the window of faith.

He slammed the door of faith, the window of faith. He slammed it shut. Didn't mean that he wouldn't fulfill the promise.

But this man would not enjoy it. For a year, he's not going to be open to his mouth. What God had really intended, he'd say, oh, thank you, Lord.

I believe you. And it should have been the happiest moment in his life. He should have gone out and met the crowd and said, I am going to be a father.

You talk about blowing away a crowd. That old man standing there, everybody knew he's dead and his wife dead. What a testimony of faith it could have been to everybody.

He could have had a whole year of praising the Lord and shouting all over Israel. I'm going to be a father. His name is going to be John.

I'm going to have a son, John. This man had read about Abraham and Sarah. He knew all about that.

He taught it. He knew God was faithful to his promises. But he wouldn't believe God.

He says, give me a sign. He disbelieved it, in other words. And what the angel said? The angel answered and said, I'm Gabriel.

You know, he said, look at me. You want a sign? I'm Gabriel. I'm your sign.

I'm Gabriel that stand in the presence of God. And I'm sent to speak to thee and to show thee glad tidings. This should be a time of rejoicing.

And behold, thou shalt be dumb and not able to speak until the day that these things shall be performed because thou believest not my words which shall be fulfilled in their season. God said, I'm going to shut your mouth. Not a word from you.

You're going to stalk unbelief. Don't talk to me. I'll tell you what.

If God took away my voice and I couldn't come here to Times Square Church and praise the Lord and shout, if I couldn't go through my prayer closet like I do and just cry out to God His praises and worship Him, I know that God can hear thought prayers, but oh, to give voice out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. What a judgment on this man. What a judgment for his unbelief because he wouldn't take advantage of that window of faith that came to him.

In every crisis, every difficulty, every time of trouble, you're going to find that window of faith. For example, in chapter 9 of Mark, there's a father who brings to his disciples a son that's demon-possessed. You remember the story? Those demons and that boy would cast him into a fire and then into the water trying first to burn him and then drown him.

He was foaming at the mouth. They just couldn't do it. And Jesus is coming down off the Mount of Transfiguration and He goes to the father.

The first thing He says, How long has this been going on? Folks, that's the first question the Lord asks you when He comes to open the window of faith. How long have you been put up with this? How long have you been enduring this? Folks, when I saw this the other day, my heart was just broken before the Lord at His utter, utter faithfulness. How He comes to us.

He came to this father and He said, How long has this been like this? And he said, Since he's a child. And the Lord said, You mean this has been going on ever since he was a child? A little child? Father says, Yes. And the Lord turns to the man and He said, And He opens the window of faith.

He said, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believes. That's the window. The Lord says, If you believe, everything's going to be alright.

And I like what I read next. Straightway. Immediately.

He said, Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. Immediately.

The window was open. Immediately He responded. He said, Yes.

God, I believe. Folks, when the word comes to you like it's coming now, every time it comes to this pulpit, and God challenges your faith, and you're in a hard place, and the word comes and says, God is able and God speaks to you about faith, that's the time to respond. Straightway.

Immediately say, Yes, Lord, I believe. And if there's any unbelief in me, take it away. Take it out.

Lord, I believe. Hallelujah. Straightway.

The father cried out with tears, Lord, I believe. Let me give you one more example before I close. Folks, that's exactly what delights the Lord.

Every time you come here, and you stand before an elder on Sunday afternoons in our healing services, every time you stand before an elder, that's a window of faith being open to you. Are you going to believe what God says? The Scripture says, If there are any sick among you, let a call for the elders of the church. They will anoint them with oil, and the prayer of faith will heal the sick.

That's a window of opportunity. Every time you stand in front of one of our elders, that's the window open. And it's open for every elder.

Every elder that prays, everyone you pray for, that's a window of opportunity. That's a window of faith. It's open to you now.

Will you believe for this one? Will you believe for this one? And this one? This one looks harder than the rest of them. This looks impossible. That's the biggest window.

The best window of faith ever presented to you. Hallelujah. The darker it is, the harder it is, the worse it is around you, the more impossible it looks, the greater the opportunity.

The better the window of faith. Hallelujah. One last illustration.

Remember Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue? He comes to Jesus and besought him that he would come to his house to heal his 12-year-old daughter who was dying. This ruler of the synagogue goes to him and said, I've got a 12-year-old daughter and she's dying. And Jesus is delayed.

Part of the delay was, remember, the woman touched the hem of his garment, and he had to stop for a moment. He ministered to her, and people were touching him and milling around him in a crowd. And in this delay, a friend or someone from the family comes and says, don't bother the master anymore.

Your daughter's dead. Your daughter's dead. Jesus turns to Jairus, and he opens a window of faith.

And actually what he's saying, now you heard what was said, and this looks absolutely hopeless. But listen to what Jesus said. Fear not.

Believe only, and she shall be made whole. That's the window of faith. It's just the word of God coming to you.

A simple word. Jesus turns. He knows this man.

Folks, what is more hopeless than death? She's dead. Just like Sarah's womb. Folks, the miracle comes out of death.

The miracle comes out of hopelessness. That's what faith is all about. It's the window.

Glory to God. Jairus took advantage of that window of faith. He says, come on.

They go into the house. He's got faith. There's no doubt.

Not a bit of doubt in this man's mind. The Lord lays hand on that daughter, restores her, and she's healed. Hallelujah.

You know what he said? Let me give it to you in two words. You want out of your mess? You want out of your trial? Only? Believe. That's all.

He didn't tell you to get on your hands and knees and walk up 3,000 stairs to some idol in Montreal. He didn't tell you to get on a slow boat to China and pray all the way. He didn't tell you to say 1,000 beads and what else.

He said, believe me. Only believe. Just trust me now.

Put it in my hands. Do you have no food for next week? He knows all about it. And he knows right where the grocery store is.

And he knows who has the money to go there and deliver it to you. Oh, he has a million ways to do it. If you quit trying to figure it out and quit telling him how.

And if you just say, Jesus, I trust you. I'm going to trust you. Tonight, I'm going to give you the other part of it.

The evidence of faith. And what God's going to do for us if we'll just believe him. Hallelujah.

God wants to deliver you. And he didn't want to have to take you. Now, there will always be hard times.

There will always be testing times. But folks, those testing times don't last nearly as long when the Lord knows, he sees in your heart that you're committed to trust him no matter what. That's what Job came to finally.

Though he slay me. Even if I don't see the promise, if I don't even get the answer, Lord, I'm going to trust you. I'll die trusting you.

Lord, I'm going to trust you. That's what God wants from us. Will you stand, please.

Folks, I have a message for somebody and I don't know who it is. It may be one, two, it may be fifty. This is something you're going through in your family.

In your life. And it's got you down. It's made you depressed.

It's made you wonder if God even hears you. It's made you feel like you're on your own. And you're really down.

It's brought depression and fear. It's even made you feel guilty and condemned that maybe it's all your fault. Where you went wrong.

Or something you did in your past is coming back to catch up with you. And I'm just speaking prophetically now as the Holy Spirit leads me, but God wants you to know now that it's not going to this book and reading and say, well, maybe if I read the whole Bible, God will undertake for me. And it's not, maybe if I learn to pray an hour every day and just cry and weep, maybe God will hear me.

Maybe if I promise Him to do better, He'll hear me. No. He's asking, will you trust me? Will you trust me? And I'm going to tell you how to know that you trust in Him tonight in the message, the evidence of faith.

Because if you're really trusting, something happens in your life. Something happens. Everybody knows it.

You know it. God knows it. Something happens when you believe.

There's a test. There's a way to know. I'm not baiting you for the service this evening.

These tapes are made available. If you don't hear it, you can get a tape on it. But I do know I'm speaking to a number of people.

And that's the first invitation. Maybe you've never come down this aisle. Maybe you've only been down here once to give your life to Jesus.

But you say, I need to walk down that aisle and confess my unbelief and fear. And I want God to baptize me with faith. I want to believe God before I walk out of this church.

I don't want to go on like I am anymore. Get out of your seat and come here. And we're going to pray and believe Jesus for you right now.

We're going to believe the Lord right now. Folks, hold up in the aisle. Just hold up right there.

Ushers, hold the people in the aisle for just a moment. We're going to let our friends be wheeled out. Because if the people come up here, it's just going to crush them.

They won't be even able to breathe. With those that push these wheelchairs, will you come and minister to them now so that they can go to their back out this way? Amen. Fellas, each one of you get behind a chair.

And you're going to be able to assist them. If you'll be seated, then let them wheel you on this way, please. Right this follow out this way, if you will, please.

Fellas, that's fine. Very gently, very lovingly. And let's pray for those that are in the wheelchairs that the message will be for them, that they will believe you and trust you, that you're a comforter, Lord.

You'll send the comfort to minister to them. And you will give them a strength that they've never had or known before. Lord, be precious to them.

Touch each one of them. We thank you for their lives. And minister to them, we pray.

All right, fellas. Right this way, please. Right out.

You'll have to go down this last aisle. Out this way, if you will, please. Right out that way.

God bless you. Into the lobby and make sure that everybody there is prepared. Are your backs slid? You need to get back to your first love.

You come right now and join these that are standing in the aisles. The Lord wants to bring you back to his heart. He wants to bring you back to his love.

Let's sing it one more time for those unsaved. How many of you that are up here now in the aisles say, Brother Wilkes, I'm coming back to Jesus today. I'm coming back to love him.

Raise your hand, please. You're coming back to the Lord. Raise your hand.

Amen. Yes, many, many over here. God bless you.

Today's your day. This afternoon is the time. Let's sing it one more time for those even from the balcony.

Wait, please. I want you to look at your hard times in a different light now. I want you to think about it.

When things are the hardest and the darkest, I want you to think about it in a whole different way now. This is an opportunity to trust God. This is a window of faith God's giving me.

He's brought me into this. How do you think you got where you're at? Did God forsake you and let the devil lead you to where you're at? No, God's with you. He's allowed you to come to this hard place.

You're in front of the Red Sea. God led you here. He didn't forsake you.

He's not let you down. But he wants to know. He wants to know if you're going to trust him, if you're going to believe him, and tell him that, and let him know.

Let him know. Hallelujah. I can't pump faith into you.

But if you'll just stop and say, this is probably the best opportunity in my life I'm ever going to have to see God do a miracle, to bring me out. Folks, can he open the Red Sea? Can he bring water out of a rock? I'm going to tell you tonight why God, some of us don't even know why Jesus said, if you had faith you could take this sycamine tree and cast it in the sea. Why would he tell you that? Because that's stupid.

A tree can't grow in the sea. There's a reason. If you understand that, about mountains being removed, if you had faith.

Jesus was pointing to something very, very profound about our faith. We're going to share that tonight, but I'm telling you right now, here and now. It is so simple.

Don't you understand? The Lord says, quit trying to figure it out. Quit being so restless. Lay down your fear.

Lay down your guilt. Lay down everything. Just lay it down and say, Lord, I'm your child.

I'm your servant. You've got to take care of me. I'm going to cast my care upon you now.

I want you to lift up your hands, and that means, Lord, I surrender. Why don't you say it? Lord, I surrender. I surrender all my figuring out.

I give you the best I know how, all my ideas, all my ways, and I turn to you, because your ways are not my ways, your thoughts are not my thoughts, your ways are above my ways, and I go your way, Jesus. Forgive me for my doubt. Forgive my unbelief.

Lord, I believe. You're bringing me out. You're going to answer prayer.

You've not forsaken me. I give everything to you. Now, just keep your hands up and praise him, and thank him for his goodness to you.

Lord, you will not abandon us. You will not forget us. You are with us.

Lord, I believe. I believe you. I trust you.

Glory to God. Glory to Jesus. Lord, I believe.

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