

Death of a Promise - Part 3

by David Wilkerson

Faith is the only thing that can see us through trials, and without faith, it's impossible to please God.

Duration: 48:07

Scripture: Exodus 15:1

Topics: "Promise"

Description

In this sermon series entitled 'The Death of a Promise,' the preacher discusses the concept of God putting a sentence of death on a promise. He uses the example of Abraham and how God promised him a son and to be the father of many nations, but it did not happen right away. The preacher emphasizes the importance of faith and how it is the key to receiving God's promises. He also highlights that tears, sincerity, and commitment alone cannot produce faith, but it is through hearing and meditating on the word of God that faith is built.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, P.O. 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 thank you for your presence in the service tonight. You have been so real to us.

Lord, we are humbled by the manifestation of Jesus in our midst. Lord, we don't boast in anything because that's not why you've come. You've come because you opened this church, you built this church, and you're in the process of expanding it, you're using it to your glory, and we step aside and just marvel at what you've done.

Now, Lord, we pray the word come to our hearts because it's truth, and truth alone that sets us free. Lord, I need you to just come upon me. Just bathe me, Holy Spirit.

Just bathe me tonight. And let the word come forth freely. Lord, let it be a word that sets people free.

Lord, it's nothing profound, very simple, but I hope and pray, Lord, that many will be set free. In Jesus' name, amen. Now, we learn by repetition.

That's how we learn. God keeps just pounding it, pounding it, pounding it. So let me go back with you and just quickly give you an overview of the first two messages, just very shortly in a nutshell, and then we'll come to this.

Because you need to have the background if you haven't heard the other two messages. This is a series entitled, The Death of a Promise. And the concept is this, the conclusions that we've drawn by the word of the Lord.

Number one, when God makes you a special promise, you think it's going to happen right away. But God puts a sentence of death on it. He kills the promise.

Now, it's really not dead, but it's sleeping, but it appears dead. Not only does he kill the promise, but he kills all the ways and means by which the promise could be fulfilled. God gives Abraham a promise.

He's going to be the father of many nations, give him a son. He gave it to him when he was 75. He still had life.

His wife's womb was still open. It seemed like it was going to happen right away. It didn't.

It lingered. So he tried to help God, and he had an Ishmael. When he's 99 years old, the Lord comes back, speaks to him again of the promise.

He believes. But this time, the promise comes at a time of death. Scripture says, Abraham, considered not his own body, now dead.

And his wife's womb was dead. Everything dead. The womb representing the means by which the promise could be fulfilled.

It's all dead. It's all gone. And God brings us, we learned this afternoon, God brings us to that point of death.

He brings us to that point of absolute hopelessness, that he may open a window of faith. That was our message this afternoon, the window of faith, that set time and opportunity that is best in the whole world. It only comes at certain times, and God wants us to move into that window of faith, to believe him, to set an example to the whole world of faith.

Now, I'm coming now to the evidence of faith, and I want to speak about that tonight. Praise the Lord. Now, the evidence of faith, when we stop and consider, now folks, I'm not a teacher, but I'm taking on the role of a teacher tonight, and in this particular series, because this has really had an impact on my life, I don't know if I'm going to be able to get this out as much as I want to, or as clearly as I want to.

I see it. I don't know if I see it clear enough, but I think you'll see enough of it that the lights may go on. It may only be a 25-watt bulb, but if you just stay there, it'll get brighter and brighter.

Amen. When we stop and truly consider all the strange workings of the Holy Spirit, if you ever stop to consider how God works in our lives, all the strange things that happens, His providence, His marvelous workings in our life, He keeps bringing us into a place of death, He keeps stripping us of all human resources, He takes away all the props, everything we depend on, and you see God stripping it. Now, folks, if you haven't been stripped, you don't know God.

I mean, first thing He does, if you get a hunger for God, and you want to give Him everything in your life, the first thing He does is strip everything around you. He'll strip you of friends that don't belong with you now. He will strip the old churches where you've got nothing but candy-cut and preaching.

He will strip you of all the foolishness you were involved in. He won't let you watch dirty movies anymore. He won't let you go places that you could go freely before.

He starts stripping everywhere. And then you get all excited, you go tell everybody what God's doing, and you find out they don't want to hear it. God's doing something in you, and you think He's doing it in everybody, and you find out He's not doing it in everybody, and they think you're crazy.

And that's nothing until He starts inside. And then He starts stripping inside. And He starts just stripping away.

And when you think He's peeled the onion, where there's no peelings left, and you're crying because the onion's being peeled, and He hadn't even started. And you discover another layer, and then another layer, and say, Lord, there's not going to be anything left of this onion when you're done. But you have got to stop one day and say, the Lord's doing this.

He's after something. He's trying to get at something. What is it? Why does He keep working? Why does He keep bringing me into these hard places? Why does He allow this confusion? Why does He allow prayers to go unanswered for so long? Lord, what do you want from me? As Brother Carter tells us, he went out on the road one day and said, what do you want, Lord, blood? The answer is yes.

Not ours, but His. But, you see, God has all power. He can end our problems at any moment.

You know, I was just reading in Exodus what Miriam sang when the Lord opened up the Red Sea. She said, God blew His nostrils and opened the sea. I mean, God can... You know what that is? God can blow His nostrils and change things.

God can speak a word. He can do anything. He can change.

You know that. God can bring you out at any moment. You don't have to go through what you're going through unless God has a purpose.

Stop and think about that for a minute. I serve and God's able to deliver me at any moment, anytime. But if you don't deliver me, God, you're after something.

You're trying to get at something in me. God is after a life of faith. He's trying to produce in us that which He needs to use us.

God cannot use us without faith. For without faith, it's impossible to please God. Now, folks, not just to please Him because He has some innate desire to be pampered.

No. To please Him means to be a vessel of honor, to fulfill His eternal purposes. He puts you here not just to fill up space and eat steak.

He puts you here to do something for His glory. You've got a job to do. You don't just suck in the atmosphere.

You're not here just to fill up space. You're here to be a part of His eternal purposes. But He can't do anything to you and me without faith.

You can do everything else, but God wants faith. He wants people of faith. We know it's impossible to please Him without it, and we know that He can do no miracles without faith.

Jesus said that He could do no miracles in His hometown because of their unbelief. It ties His hands. God cannot work in you or through you with unbelief in you.

Now, there's a truth that every believer has to understand, or you have nothing left but a life of confusion, endless, futile strivings of the flesh. And it's this. Faith is the only thing that is going to see you through all your trials.

Faith alone is the only thing that is going to see you through. Prayer alone is not going to see you through. I mean diligent, long, effectual, fervent prayer is not going to see you through.

Not that alone. Extensive Bible reading with sincerity. Go from page to page.

Read it three or four times a month. Do what you will. Bible reading in itself will not do it.

All that is supposed to produce faith, by the way. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Tears alone will not do it.

Tears won't do it. Sincerity, those things, commitment, all those things will not do it. Without faith, you cannot make it.

Faith is what God is looking for. Faith is... I'm going to make a statement. I want you to hear it.

Absolutely nothing can stand in the way of faith. There is no difficulty. There is no problem.

There is no sin. There is no rebellion. There is no disappointment.

There is nothing that can withstand the power of faith. A sinner woman, remember, brought an alabaster box to Jesus. And she went and stood by him.

The Bible says weeping. And she broke an alabaster box of ointment, precious ointment, over his feet. And then she knelt weeping and crying and confessing.

And then she wiped his feet with her tears, the Bible says. And when Jesus, acknowledging her, he didn't say, Woman, thy tears have saved thee. He doesn't mention her tears.

He didn't say your generosity. You know, this is an expensive box of alabaster. Your generosity has saved you.

That you have been so loving. He doesn't mention her love. Doesn't mention her tears.

Doesn't mention her repentance. He mentions only one thing. Woman, thy faith has saved thee.

Go in peace. Thy faith. You can tell me that you pray for hours every day.

You can tell me you weep until there are no more tears. You can weep a river of tears. You can tell me you are sacrificing even your body to be burned at the stake.

You can give everything you have and all you are and be a living sacrifice to the Lord. But without faith you cannot please God. Faith is still that which is going to see you through.

Now let me speak to you about the evidence of faith. Evidence is proof. How do you know you have faith? How do those around you know you have faith? And God wants that because He said, We are to trust Him before the sons of men.

And those who trust Him before the sons of men are those who delight His heart, the Bible said. God delights in those who trust in Him before the sons of men. Folks, you can talk all you want.

You can preach to people. I mean, you can throw scriptures at them. But folks, the one thing that impacts people more than anything else, those that are in the world full of unbelief, is that in your trial, in your hard times, you don't murmur and complain, but you trust God before the sons of men.

How do you know you have that kind of faith that pleases God? Without faith it's impossible to please Him. How do you know you have that faith that pleases God? I'm not talking about just talk faith or written faith, but actual living faith. How do you know that you have that? Now I'm going to give you this statement, simple and straight, and I want you to remember it as long as you live.

The evidence of faith is rest. R-E-S-T. Rest.

It is peace of mind as a result of that rest. Here's the scripture, Hebrews 4.3, For we which have believed do enter into rest. I want you to repeat this after me.

I don't do this often, but I want you to get this in your spiritual mind. I want you to repeat this. No rest, no faith.

Again, no rest, no faith. According to Webster's Dictionary, rest is mental, spiritual tranquility, spiritual peace. According to Webster's Dictionary, it's relief and freedom from anything that worries, troubles, or disturbs you.

Freedom from all worries, all troubles, everything that disturbs you. That's rest. You know, I have looked at those scriptures on rest, The Remaineth Yet a Rest for the Children of God.

I've preached sermons about it. I've studied commentaries about it. I've never really been satisfied with what I preached or what I read.

Because I complicate it, and what I read is too complicated. Folks, it's just that simple. It's exactly what Webster's Dictionary calls it.

It's freedom from worry. It's absolute freedom of mind. And it's a rest.

You enter into that rest because you are no longer struggling. You're no longer trying to figure it out. You have committed it to God.

And because you've committed it to God, your soul is at rest. You have quietness in you. A man who walks by faith, a woman who walks by faith, has a quiet assurance, the Bible says.

If it is not faith, I mean, if it is not faith, if it does not bring you into this place where there is no anxiety, no worry, no fretting, no more looking at circumstances, no more feeling of being overwhelmed by

impossibilities, thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee. Why? Because he trusteth in thee. In other words, there is the evidence of trust.

Perfect peace of mind. God's people who have entered into the window of faith are not harried. They're not worried.

They're not going around thinking the sky is falling. There's a quiet assurance because they're no longer, they've ceased from their works. You know what that means? I've quit trying to figure it out.

I quit trying to tell God how to do it. I have quit waiting for an answer to prayer. And I said, Lord, in your time and your way, because God will not be boxed in.

He will not answer your prayer on your time. Never. You are not God.

I am not God. You cannot command God as far as the time. There's a Holy Ghost timing.

And remember what I said. The hardest part of faith is the last half hour, just before God answers. 95% of the people give up just at the time God's about to answer.

You know that. You've done that yourself. And so have I. The work of righteousness shall be peace.

And the effect of righteousness is quietness and assurance forever. Now, let me read it again. The work of righteousness shall be peace.

The effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. You say, well, wait a minute, Brother Dave. You have to have righteousness before you get peace and quietness.

You have to have righteousness. Well, where do you get righteousness? Where did Abraham get his righteousness? Abraham believed God and God counted that to him as what? Where do you get your righteousness? By believing, by trusting God. And if you will trust Him, commit the keeping of your soul into the hands of God.

And come into the rest of His keeping power. You are righteous. Folks, you will never make it on your own promises.

On all your efforts and all your sweat and all you try to do to please God. Live to be 250 years of age. You can't do it.

You're accepted by the Father through Jesus Christ the Lord, His righteousness. And you get that by faith. Glory be to God.

Are you righteous by faith? How many can raise their hands and say, by faith I am righteous and I'm accepted by the Father and Jesus Christ. What is the result of that? What is the result of that? The work of righteousness shall be peace. And the effect of this righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.

Glory to God. Abraham believed and God counted it to him as righteousness. You know, it's a shame that the majority of God's people go year after year and never do have rest.

They are in turmoil. They live a worried Christian life. They are always fretting.

They have never entered into this rest. And I'm telling you, the only way out is faith. Faith.

You say you believe and you trust the Lord. But do you trust Him to deliver you from all the power of lust? Do you believe that He can bring you out of the bondage of sin, break its power and the fear of falling? I want to talk a little bit about that. It's not through superhuman effort.

It's not through valiant self-denial. Now, there is self-denial in the walk of God. We deny ourself, take up a cross and follow Him.

But it's not in self-denial itself. It's not through vows and promises. And it's not through starving sin.

The devil has come at some of you sitting here now. He's come at you and he's put blow after blow after blow until he's worn you out. Till you're like a punching bag.

Black and blue with guilt and fear and condemnation. Because he keeps thundering and pounding and hitting at you by telling you that you're never going to make it. That you are not good enough.

That you are damned. That you are lost. That you have grieved the Holy Spirit.

You have... many, many... the devil tells me they've committed the unpardonable sin. I mean, we get that from all the United States. You've got to help me because I think I've committed the unpardonable sin.

Well, they wouldn't be asking for prayer if they'd committed the unpardonable sin in the first place. But the devil just keeps pounding and pounding because you have not learned. You have not yet learned where your victory is.

Do you know where your victory is? Over your lust? Over temptation? Over the fear of sin? The fear of falling? Absolute victory. The only way you're going to get out is to believe your way out. It is an act of faith in the promises of God.

An absolute act of faith. Jesus said, have faith in God. Then he added, Verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed and be cast into the sea, And shall not doubt in his heart, But shall believe that these things which he says shall come to pass, He shall have whatsoever he saith.

Then Jesus, on another occasion, said, If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, You might say to this sycamine tree, Be plucked up by the root, And be thou planted in the sea, And it should obey you. Now, folks, listen to me, please, Because I believe the Lord showed me something, And I want you to see it. I believe it can bring peace and deliverance and victory to your soul, Especially if you're fighting a battle.

You have a losing battle. You love the Lord. You've been saved, But the enemy keeps coming in, And you fall.

You grieve the Lord. And you want victory, But you don't have it yet. And you keep struggling for some key, Some way to get the victory.

Folks, this has been an age-old battle from the beginning of time. How many people over the centuries have tried through the flesh To get victory over their sin and their flesh. One man went on a flagpole.

He had a big pole. It was 30 feet high. And he had nothing but a hair coat made out of animal's hair.

And he sat up there with his legs bent, And had a little rope, And once a day they'd give him a couple pieces of bread and water. And he stayed up there, I think it was six months, Six months trying to get away from the world, All flesh, Came back down off that flagpole Without a bit of victory, Depressed, More convicted he was a sinner than when he went up. I mean, there's been flagellation where people, Even today, they beat themselves with belts And march them down until their backs are bloody.

That's what monasteries are. Monasteries were built for those who hungered for God, And they wanted to live so holy, They thought if we could just get away from the world, So they go, All the monasteries are built in inaccessible places, On mountaintops. I mean, you'd have to have wings to get to half of these monasteries.

They're going to be removed. But folks, Martin Luther tells how in those monasteries, He had more temptation than he did when he was in the world. His mind was always being tempted.

There was always lust. There was always a problem. He came out of that monastery with that scripture, That just shall live by faith.

That was the beginning of the Reformation. That great revelation is not by works, but it's by faith. So here comes Jesus.

He said, Now, if you had faith, Just a little faith, In my word, You could say to this mountain, Be plucked up and be cast into the sea. You could say to this sycamine tree, Be plucked up and be planted in the sea. Now, I want you to stop and just think for a minute.

Jesus says, The Lord says, Come, let us reason together. The Lord never makes a stupid statement. He never says something that's against His own nature.

He never says something that is contrary to nature itself. Now, you know as well as I do, A tree, a sycamine tree, can't grow in the sea. Why would God say, You can have faith and pluck up this sycamine tree and cast it in? Now, please keep in mind that in the Old Testament, The enemy was likened unto mountains.

Syria was a mountain. He said, Oh, mountain Syria, It's going to be cast down. It's going to be leveled.

The Bible talks about men being as trees. And at least four or five occasions in the Old Testament, The blind man says, I see men as trees walking. And men are likened.

For example, that one scripture said, Your sons shall be as oaks planted by the waters. All kinds of likeness of men being as trees in the Old Testament. The sycamine tree, the emphasis on the roots, The entwining roots.

I want you to go now, The Lord has given me something, And I want you to see it. I want you to go to the fifteenth chapter of Exodus. Please turn there, please.

I believe Jesus was referring to this. Because Jesus always drew from the Word. He drew from the Old Testament.

Fifteenth chapter. And I want us to read the first ten verses. I want you to see something begin to open.

And here's where the light goes on, I hope. Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, And spake, saying, This is Exodus fifteen chapter. Saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously.

The horse and the rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song. He is become my salvation.

He is my God, and I will prepare him a habitation. My Father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a man of war.

The Lord is his name. Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea. Now, folks, there's the sea.

His chosen captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths have covered them. They sank into the bottom as a stone.

Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power. Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. Folks, remember.

Folks, look at me, please. Take a break and look this way just a minute. The battle's not yours.

It's not mine. The battle's between the Lord and the devil. If some country declares war on the United States and I'm a soldier, that country didn't declare war on me.

It's on my nation. I'm just a soldier. The battle you're fighting, the devil declared war on Jesus.

And you are in this battle. It's not your battle. It's the Lord's battle.

He's the one that gets the victory. And in the greatness of thine excellency, thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee. Thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.

And with the blast of thy nostrils, the waters were gathered together. The floods stood upright as a heap, and the depths were congealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy, that's your devil.

That's the devil that comes after you. The enemy said, I will pursue and I will overtake. And now what the devil told you, he's going to overtake you.

He's going to get you before it's all over. He's going to bring you down. I will divide the spoil.

My lusts will be satisfied upon them. He says, I put lusts in his heart, and my desires won't be fulfilled against you. I'm going to get you.

I'm going to destroy you. That's the word of the enemy. I will draw my sword.

My hand shall destroy them. That's what the devil says. I'm going to destroy you.

Thou didst blow with thy wind. The sea covered them. They sank as lead in the mighty waters.

Now let me tell you what I believe is going to sink in your waters. There's a sea called the sea of God's forgetfulness, where all our sins are cast, never to be remembered against us. Folks, if that problem in your life isn't a mountain, I don't know what it is.

If that enemy that's risen up against you is not a mountain, what is? If that problem, that financial problem, that problem you're going through isn't a mountain, what is a mountain? And folks, what could be more entwining with roots in your heart than lust? The sycamine tree. The mountain is your problem. It's the enemy himself coming to destroy you.

But let me tell you something. Before you have faith to cast it into the sea, because God wants the sea not to grow in the sea, but to sink, because Pharaoh is the mountain, the sycamine tree are the soldiers that they saw sinking the bottom like lead. That sycamine tree is to be cast down because that's the sycamine tree of lust that is entwined its roots around your soul, and you're going to take a commitment to faith.

But let me tell you, before you cast anything in that sea, you've got to cross it. You stand against that impossibility. It looks impossible.

It looks hopeless. Lord, I've had this for ten years of battle and can't get free. Lord, I cry and I weep, and you stand in front of that sea, and God says, here's my word, march over, the victory is mine.

And folks, I'm going to give you just a moment a number of promises where God said, I'm going to keep you from falling. I'm going to preserve you. I'm your keeper.

I'm your preserver. And if you'll take a step of faith on that, and you cross that sea, you turn around and look, and by faith, you're going to see all of your mountains, and you'll see all your loss laying there, drowning, and going to the bottom of that sea. You see the picture.

Glory to God. Glory to God. You hear the word of the Lord.

You hear His promise. You lay hold of it and say, I'm going to believe it. I'm going to commit my life to that.

If God says, He's my preserver, if He's my keeper, I'm not going to try to preserve myself. I'm not going to try to keep myself. I will read the word.

I will pray. I will seek His face. I will trust Him.

I will trust Him that He will empower me to give me grace and mercy and strength to resist the devil. But how do you resist the devil that he flee from you? By faith. All your struggle, all your fight, the Bible says, fight the good fight of faith.

Well, folks, if you're going to fight a good fight, it's going to be a fight of faith. Not a flesh, but a faith. Hallelujah.

Glory be to Jesus. How many want to cast all of your roots of lust into that sea of forgetfulness and every mountain be leveled into that sea? All right then, you take the step of faith. And you do it tonight, Lord.

I'm going to believe your word. When I see it, I'm going to stand on it. Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of the Lord.

Hallelujah. Bless you, Jesus. Now, you say you're ready to believe God for victory in everything in your life? Then let me give you the word.

All right? Ready? This isn't David Wilkerson special. I'm a writer, but I didn't write this. Right out of his heart.

What does he say? If the devil's lying to you, you put on your sword right now. The sword, the spirit. And you take this word and you stand on it.

I don't care how many lies the devil tells you. I don't care how long you've battled God. It's not your experience that is the measuring rod.

It's God's word that is the measuring rod. What does he say? The Lord is thy keeper. Scripture says now unto him that is able to keep you from falling and present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

What did he say he would do? He will keep you from falling and present you faultless. Faultless. Think of that.

Not a single fault. And only the blood can do that for you. Only the blood.

Glory to God. What's the scripture say? It says his church is a vineyard. He said, my vineyard, I the Lord do keep it.

I will water it every moment. Lest any try to hurt it, I will keep it. I will keep it night and day.

When you're sleeping, the Lord is on the job. He's watering you with the word. He's watering you with his spirit.

He said, I'll do it night and day. I'll keep you. When are you going to stop keeping yourself? And remember who the keeper is? The scripture said he will keep him as a shepherd doth keep his flock.

For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. The devil was stronger than you. The Lord came down and just pulled you right out of his hands.

Hallelujah. My eyes are ever toward the Lord, for he shall pluck my feet out of the net. He plucked my feet.

The devil comes with temptation, comes with lust. He says the Lord is going to reach down, pluck me out of the net. The devil is laid.

The trap. God's going to pluck me out of it. You guys from Timothy House down here that were on drugs and alcohol, what did he do? He plucked you out.

You were stoned. You were ready to, you were just a step from the grave. You were going to go in that little box six feet under.

You were going to hell. You go right from the ground, right down into hell. Now it's not in the heart of the earth.

It's out there somewhere, but you were headed for hell. He came down and plucked you out by his own hand. He plucked you out.

Listen to this. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. He shall preserve thy soul.

He shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forward and forevermore. If you believe that, he that believeth enters into rest. If you truly believe that, there's going to be a peace come to your heart.

There's going to be a rest to your heart. And if you walk out of this church and you go out there and the devil lies to you and you say I'm not going to make it. And the fear comes over you and you are fretting and you're fearing and there's guilt and condemnation and fear.

You're not trusting God. You're not taking his word to heart. No rest, no faith.

Say it again. No rest, no faith. Now let me talk to you for just a few moments about that one thing you've been praying about for so long.

If you've been praying for a child or for children, unsaved husband or wife. You've been praying for a long time about a certain request. I have very sincere sisters probably once every two weeks will come to me.

And I'm sure Brother Carter said the same thing. I had either two or three today. I can't remember two or three this morning and even this afternoon.

I've been praying for a mate, husband or wife. Is that unscriptural? No, no, no. The Bible says it's not good for a man to be alone.

Well, that presumes it's not good for a woman either. One sister said, you mean I can stand on that? I said, yes, absolutely. That's scriptural.

But folks, let me tell you what you do. If you believe God's faithfulness word and you've asked God to send you a mate. And you don't want to consume it on your own lust.

But you say, I want somebody I can work for the Lord with. And I want fellowship in Christ. I want a Christian marriage.

And I want to be of service to the Lord. And your motives are pure in that. And you're not just looking for something in the flesh.

I tell you God is just as interested in that as you are. And He cares about you. And I don't care.

I don't care if there's, according to some preaching, you know, there's seven women to one man. But I'll tell you what. You walk in the Spirit.

And you love the Lord with all your heart. You'll get your man. You'll get your husband.

His time and his way. You don't have to manipulate. You don't sit around wringing your hands.

You know, oh God, when, when, when? Martin Luther said, if you are going to walk by faith, you must forever remove from your vocabulary the word why and when. You must remove from your vocabulary the word why and when. You say, well, I don't want to be 75 years old when it happens.

Let me tell you, let me tell you what's just as good or maybe better than meeting your mate. And that is to so walk in faith that you come into a rest that is so satisfying, so wonderful, that when God sends the mate, it's just icing on the cake. And I'm wondering sometimes if it isn't the rest that's more important than the answer.

Not so when it comes to your children. When God has, when you're praying for the salvation of your loved ones. But I'm going to tell you something.

Let me ask you. You're praying for a son or daughter, husband or wife. Do you have rest about it now? Have you come into a rest? Have you so believed God's word now that your prayers are going to prevail? And that you're going to, you say, Lord, that doesn't mean you give up praying.

You keep coming and praying diligently. But you keep coming by faith and then commit it to the Lord. Just commit it to the Lord.

Give it over to Him. Stand on the promise and go your way in faith and peace. Quietness and rest and confidence.

The Lord's going to save my son, my daughter. It may be ten seconds before the trumpet sounds. A striking of conviction and a cry out to God.

I don't know how. It could be like the thief on the cross. God knows why.

It could be just before a car accident and the Lord hears a cry. God save me. God will answer your prayer.

God will answer your prayer. Hallelujah. Finally, God simply cannot use doubters to accomplish His purpose.

He can't use you. Now, here's what bothers me. I can't fully comprehend it.

And I'm going to close here in just five minutes. The children of Israel are given that window of opportunity to go over. They say no.

And God shuts the window of opportunity, the window of faith, and they are told to go back into the wilderness. Now, folks, that is really tragic. God could have used them.

They could have gone into the promised land. They could have had a life of blessing and anointing wonderfully used to their dying day. They could have been very useful.

And, folks, I don't know anything more important than loving Jesus and being useful. I want God to use me to my dying day. That's my prayer.

God, I pray to my last breath I'll be doing something in your kingdom. I want to die with my boots or with my shoes on at least. Fighting for the Lord.

But isn't it a shame that a whole generation, God said, I have no place for you. I've got nothing for you to do. Here's a whole generation.

Think of that. There are no less than a million men. There's probably a million wives.

There are probably two million people that are sent back into the wilderness to just wait for death. Just to die. And, folks, the number of Christians now, because of their doubt and their unbelief and their lack of faith, that's all they're waiting for.

They want to retire. I have minister friends. All they're looking for now is to retire.

That's all they want. Retirement. I can retire next year.

I'm going to be 65. I retire within a year, I'm dead. I'll be a dead man.

I'm not against you retiring. Don't get me wrong. If you can retire, fine.

But what I can't understand are so many Christians, all they do, all they have to look forward to is dying. They sit around. They'll go to church Sunday morning.

I go to Florida and I want to die. No, that's not the right word. I get upset.

You go to a restaurant and all these retired people, all they're talking about is food. What are they going to eat tomorrow? Whether it's going to be baked beans or peas. Whether it's going to be steak or chicken.

And I'm listening to the conversation. The whole world, they're waiting to die. And they're sitting there.

You know who died yesterday? And all it is are hearses and funerals and restaurants. A whole little world. A tiny little world with little minds.

Not accomplishing anything. They're waiting to die. Christians are like that.

Waiting to die. They have nothing to do with God's eternal purposes. They're just dying.

Dying Christians. No life. Nothing.

I've gone to churches in retirement areas. I've preached in Florida and some of those places. I've looked out of congregations.

Nothing I've preached could move anybody. Nobody wanted to be moved. Because they're waiting for the death.

They're planning their funerals. Can you imagine? Can you imagine? I don't know who buried all these people. I tried to put a pin to it the other day.

Now, remember, these people didn't die naturally. They didn't die from disease. Because, Lord, I'll put none of the diseases of Egypt upon you.

So they didn't die of cancer. They didn't die. The Lord just took their breath away.

Their hearts stopped beating. I mean, they were dying suddenly. They were dropping like flies everywhere.

Because of their unbelief. It brings nothing but death. It brings little minds.

It locks you into some little thing. Oh, folks, I don't care if you're 80, 85, even up to 90. You can be used of God.

You can have the touch of God. You can be a witness. You can pray.

You can seek the face of God. You can come into God's house with joy and victory. A part of God's eternal purposes.

Hallelujah. I have more, but I'm going to stop right there. Let's stand.

Folks, there's something so exciting in my heart. What He wants to do for you and me. He doesn't intend for us to go through 1996 carrying worry or fear, guilt, condemnation.

He wants us to have a quiet, wonderful assurance through this year. Not being afraid of what man can do to you. Why would you be afraid of what man can do to you? Nobody can touch you.

You're under the blood of the Lamb of God. Hallelujah. I say it's time to remove your mountain and to pluck up your sycamine tree.

You can do that now. You can do it in the next five minutes. You can take a step of faith.

You say, God, if I'm going to have victory in my life over my lust, temptation, if I'm going to have victory in my life, it's going to be by believing you, by trusting you. And what your word says, I'm going to commit my life to that. I'm not going to be afraid.

David said, I will fear no evil. I'm not going to be afraid. Let me tell you something.

It's my turn this Sunday to preach twice. And I was tired and I said, Lord, never once will I believe that you send a soldier out in the field and he's out of ammunition and he calls for ammunition. Never will I believe that you won't send it.

You'll give me all the ammunition I need. And God's going to give you all the ammunition you need against the enemy. All you got to do is, Lord, I need help.

Ammunition, send ammunition. He sends his word. He sends the Holy Ghost.

You get all the ammunition you need. If you have something in your life that needs to be removed, I'm not rebuking you, neither is the Holy Spirit. He's giving you hope, a message of strength.

He's saying you can have victory. You don't have to have that tree sucking out your life anymore, entwined around your mind and your heart and your spirit. Speak the word of faith now.

Say, God, you said you'll keep me, you'll preserve me, you'll pluck me out of the net. And speak the word. He said, whatsoever you say it, shall come to pass.

You tell God, Lord, I'm leaving this church tonight with victory. I'm leaving this church with my mountain level. I'm going to throw it all in the sea by faith right now.

That's the sea of God's forgetfulness. Hallelujah. I'm going to walk right through it.

I'm going to believe God for my own forgiveness, own cleansing. Hallelujah. And I'm going to believe God.

If you're backslidden, if you've grown cold, come and join these. If you don't know Jesus, come and join these that are coming right now. Hallelujah.

Come and get your mountain cast into the sea. Cast by faith everything that needs to be cast out of your life. Come and cast it by faith out.

Hallelujah. Beloved, I want to come by faith against this fear. You can know in just a moment of time when faith arises in your heart.

True, true Christ-exalting faith. That's the moment the joy and the peace of the Lord floods your heart. When you lay down your fears, you lay down all anxiety, you lay everything else, and you say, I believe against everything I see.

Abraham believed against hope. He believed against everything that stood in his way, every impossibility. He believed that what God said he was able to perform.

God said it. He will do it. Now, God has said that he's going to deliver you.

God has said he's going to pluck you out of the net of the enemy. Now, lay hold of that now. The moment faith touches you, you're going to start rejoicing.

There's going to be a peace floods your heart, and you're going to have a rest. A quiet assurance floods over your heart right now. I want you to lift your hands.

Lift your hands. The whole congregation, let's pray it together. Let's believe God right now.

Heavenly Father, forgive my unbelief. I believe you. I believe your word.

Cleanse me, O Lord. Sanctify my mind. I give you my faith.

I give you my confidence. Bring rest into my heart. Everything you said you'd do, you are able to do it, and you will do it.

Give me patience until you do it. And give me confidence. Now, I just want you to love him right now, Lord.

I love you. I praise you. I thank you.

Glory be to God. I believe you, Lord. Lord, I believe.

This is the conclusion of the tape.

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