

Don't Judge Your Spiritual Condition by Feelings

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson emphasizes the importance of not judging one's spiritual condition based on feelings but rather on faith and the promises of God.

Duration: 1:00:29

Scripture: Ephesians 4:11

Topics: "Spirituality"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on 1 Thessalonians 4:1, urging the brethren to walk in a way that pleases God and to continue growing in their faith. The preacher uses the analogy of a child learning to walk to illustrate the process of spiritual growth. He emphasizes that Christians should be giving more of themselves, their resources, and their time to God. The sermon also references Ephesians 4:11, highlighting the importance of believers growing in grace and knowledge of God.

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. Thank you for your prayers. In our recent trip, we'll be talking more about it in the course of the message.

My subject this morning, don't judge your spiritual condition by your feelings. Don't judge your spiritual condition by feelings. Now, folks, if you get a hold of this this morning, the devil can't lie to you anymore.

About your position in Christ. If we can only learn who we are in Christ, our position, not our condition, but our position. If we can understand that, the devil can't sway you by feelings anymore.

Go to 1 Thessalonians, please. 1 Thessalonians, the fourth chapter. Fourth chapter, verse one.

Gonna read just one verse. 1 Thessalonians, fourth chapter, chapter four, verse one. Furthermore, then, we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as you have received of us how you

ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

Read it again. Furthermore, then, we beseech you, brethren, exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as you have received of us how you ought to walk and to please God, so you would abound more and more. Now, Father, take this word and multiply it, increase it, and cause us, Lord, to lay hold by the help of the Holy Ghost this morning, the truth that will deliver us from this everlasting terror of our feelings being up and down, hot and cold.

Oh, God, we want to understand by the word of the Lord, the power of the Holy Spirit, the steadfastness that you want us to have in Christ and in the word, so that in the days ahead when the world is spinning out of control and everything is out of kilter, we will be steadfast, immovable, and we will not be listening to the lies of the devil, will not be swayed and tossed by winds and waves of doctrine, but we will be steadfast, immovable, and ever increasing in the grace of God. Anoint me to preach this word, I pray. Amen.

Now, Paul, in this verse, is saying to the Thessalonians, you can't say you haven't been well taught. He said, I and others have taught you well. We've shown you how to walk and how to please God, and therefore we're asking that you abound in that.

Now, the word abound means to increase. Paul is saying, if you, and I would say this to everyone in this congregation, if you've been sitting under a pure gospel, if you've been hearing the word being taught from consecrated vessels, and the word is strong, it's pure, it's life changing, you should be increasing in faith, in the knowledge of God, you should be increasing in the love of the truth, in love of the brother, in the knowledge of God, in the love of God. You should be increasing, there should be an abounding.

He said, you've been well taught, so we're saying you need to abound. You need to increase in the knowledge. You have a foundation, we taught you, now there should be an increase in you.

Paul spoke of abounding or increasing in utterance, in knowledge, in love, for the ministry, in prayer, in the ministry to the saints, and in giving. He said you should be giving more of yourself, of your money, of your time, your talents. There should be changes happening in you.

You should be growing in grace and in the knowledge of God. Christians who have been fed the word of God are, according to scripture, expected to grow. Would you turn with me to Ephesians? Turn left, please, to Ephesians, the fourth chapter.

Ephesians, the fourth chapter. And begin with me in verse 11. Now, wait till the rustling of the leaves stop.

By the way, if you're new in Times Square Church, you notice that everybody brings their Bible. I noticed at ministers' conferences there were very few Bibles. I said, you need to come to Times Square Church and learn to bring your Bible.

Bring your Bible if you're just starting here at Times Square Church so you will be able to follow us. Verse 11, beginning to read, He gave some apostles, some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come into unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure, the stature, the fullness of Christ. In other words, do you understand what he's saying? All of these preachers and pastors and prophets, evangelists and teachers, all of this word that you've been receiving, it's that you come into the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to be a

mature person, measuring up to the stature, the fullness of Christ, not obeyed anymore, but growing.

Verse 14, that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of man and cunning craftiness whereby the lion wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, you may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. That you may grow up in Christ in all of your ways.

Jesus said, didn't he? I am come that you might have life and have it more abundantly. In other words, an increase, a constant increase in your life, of all these things we're talking about. Jesus commended the church at Piraeus Tower, remember? He said, you're increasing, and here's how he stated it.

I know thy works and thy charity, and the last to be more than the first. He said, you are more intense now. You are growing more than when you first started.

God, Jesus himself, commends them. He compliments. He said, I see something in you.

You have more of love of God. You have more of the things of God in you. You are more intense, more on fire for God than you were at the first.

How are you growing? What is happening in your own life? That is my question. Proverbs 4.18 says, the path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more until that perfect day. It's shining more and more.

Is the word opening to you more and more? Do you have the love of God growing in you, the knowledge of God? Is there an ever-increasing walk with God of faith, of giving and serving? We see there is no place in the Scripture allowed for sloth, for laziness, for stunted growth. Job said, the righteous shall hold on to his way, and he that hath clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger. He that is clean before the Lord will grow stronger and stronger.

Now, I ask this question again of the congregation, all of you hearing me. Are you growing in the Lord? Has your growth been stunted so that there has been no growth this past year or this past month? My question again is, how do you know? How do you measure your growth? How do you know that you're further along the road than you were last year? How do you compare now to the time when you first came to Christ? Tragically, many, many Christians judge their spiritual growth by how they feel. They judge it completely on feelings, and this is where Satan can totally deceive and seduce you.

This has been a life-changing word that God's been speaking into my heart for a number of months, but I'm just now laying hold of it, and I want you to see it. And I pray God help me to show it to you this morning. Most of us claim we walk by faith and not by feelings, but in all practical truth, when it comes down to the real issues, we do live primarily and judge our spirituality by our feelings and not by faith.

We say we walk by faith, but we get down and discouraged because we are judging who we are, what we are in God, and we're judging our growth in Christ by how we feel and our feelings. I'm talking about Christians who doubt that they are growing spiritually. People who read the word, they pray, they go to church, and deep in their heart, they love the Lord.

But as one told me recently, he said, I just don't see much progress in myself. I should be so much stronger in the Lord. I should be more heartbroken.

I used to weep and pray, but I don't retain much of what I hear from the pulpit and what I'm taught, and I really feel I'm studded in my spiritual growth. A lot of us feel that way. We judge ourselves, and we hear so many sermons.

We hear so much of the word, and we retain. We feel like we retain so little of it that it has not caused the growth that we believe it should have created in us or caused. Let me give you a few insights on this matter of spiritual growth and how to judge it properly.

I'm not going to yell at you. I'm not going to scream at you. I'm going to be a teacher this morning, hopefully, if you believe that, that I'm not going to yell or get excited.

You've never been here before. First of all, I believe you could be growing in grace and not know it and not being able to discern it. For example, don't turn up in classes 219.

Paul speaks of the body being a body of Christ being nourished in every joint and fiber of the being from the head, the nourishment. Now, I want you to know the head is Christ, and he never sleeps. And I want you to know right now that he is life.

He is emanating life. Christ is always emanating the life that is in him. If it's not giving, if it's not nourishing, it's not life.

Life produces life. Jesus Christ, if you're abiding in Christ, you have a life flow in you. I'm going to tell you something right now.

If you have Christ in you, you're abiding in Christ, and you're trusting in him, and you love him with all your heart, you're growing even when you're sleeping. You may wake up in the morning, and I don't care how you feel. I don't care how blue you feel or green or yellow or any other color.

It doesn't matter because there is a life force in you. When you are picked up out of the kingdom of darkness, you are planted in Christ, the Bible said. You're translated, and you're planted like a tree, and you take roots.

What do roots do? They draw. They suck life out of that good soil. You've been planted in good soil.

You've been planted and rooted in Christ. It's impossible to be rooted in Christ without drawing life because he's the one who puts the life in you. He's the one who, in other words, infuses you with that life power.

He is an emanating life, always giving, always flowing. And he said, he shall be in you to the Holy Spirit. What? A river of living water springing up.

You don't pump it up. It springs up. It comes because you're in Christ.

It's a natural life flow. Christ is also manna, the Bible says. Why didn't Israel suffer all of the plagues of Egypt? Why is it that in the wilderness they went for 40 years, and all around the people were dying of plagues, the Canaanites, Philistines are dying, diseases that they knew nothing about.

Why is it that they weren't dying left and right? God said, I'll not put on you the diseases of Egypt. Why? Because manna was angels' food. It had every nutrient to build up the immune system.

They had nutrients, natural nutrients flowing. Now, they may have gotten tired of manna burgers and manna for breakfast and all kinds of, what a cookbook that would have been. The manna cookbook, trying to spice it up.

But I will tell you, they didn't know it, but there were nutrients in there. And they, you can't see it. You can't feel it.

There are no signs of those nutrients at work. I take barley green in the morning. I take 10 or 12 different kinds of nutrient vitamins every day.

And that's why I look so good, and that's why I feel so good. Gwen's going to lecture me at lunchtime, I know. I don't see those nutrients at work in me, but something is happening in my body and my immune system.

Thank God, and I give God the glory. I haven't had a colon since I've been doing that, and I enjoy good health and strength in the Lord. But the Lord told me to take these nutrients, and that's what happened when you're planted in Christ.

You can't see it, but you're growing in this special way that God is building up your immune system against sin. He's building up your immune system against the disease of sin and all these things, and you don't see it. But I'll tell you what, why is it that right now, you're not thinking of X-rated movies? Why is it now that when you're out walking the streets here in New York, you're not thinking like anybody else is thinking? Why is it that they're thinking, it's Thursday, and they're thinking, tomorrow night, party time! And you're walking there, tomorrow night, prayer meeting! Saturday night, they're thinking about all of the vile things they're talking about getting drunk.

They call that a good time. They vomit half the night after, and then they go to work and say, I got a headache, and that was a good time. And you're walking the streets Saturday and said, three services! Why? Because he's been, while you've been sleeping, while you've been getting these messages, he's been building up your immune system.

And you don't think like the world, you don't talk, you're growing! You may not feel like it, you may get up and say, I feel backslidden. I feel backslidden half the time. I don't believe a word of it, but the devil will try to tell me, you're not preaching like you used to preach, you're not as fiery as you used to be, you don't cry like you used to cry, but I bleed better than I've ever believed.

I don't have to go around worrying anymore about whether I'm retaining anything. Because you see, he's a constant flow. There's something fresh and new every day.

I may have forgotten what Pastor Carter preached two weeks ago, but I know he's going to be here this afternoon. I'm going to get another fresh word, another revelation. I don't have to worry about what I'm retaining.

Because when you're walking in Jesus, you start from the ankles and the knees, and then you're finally swimming. Don't worry about it, folks. You're going to be swimming one of these days.

You don't have to worry and let the devil tell you, well, why don't I retain everything I hear? You didn't retain everything you heard in school either. You didn't retain hardly any of what you learned in school. Why is it that you grieve over sin now? Why is it so difficult? Why is it that when you even sin and when

you fail, you are grieved as you've never been grieved before? Because you don't know it, but you're growing.

You don't sense it, but you're growing. Hallelujah. Look up when you go out at night.

Now, you can't do it in New York with all these lights. But you can see the moon. You can see the sun.

Occasionally here in New York, you see stars. Not the walking kind on the streets. I'm talking about the ones up there.

But you ever notice, you look up, they look like they're fixed. They're not moving. There's no sign of movement.

But I want you to know they are racing hundreds and hundreds of miles an hour, racing through the heavens. They're set in their orbits and they are moving constantly. And so it is with those that are planted in Jesus Christ.

Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. Now, that's a covenant promise. When you are in Christ and you're simply believing his word and you say, he's my Lord and he's my God.

He has made you a promise that you are going to flourish. That word flourish means bloom like a bud bursting with life. You shall flourish.

You're going to bloom. You're going to burst out with life. And you shall be bearing fruit, even in your old age.

Some of you were there ought to say amen to that. Whether you see it or not, whether you feel it or not. God has made a covenant promise to everyone that's in Christ Jesus.

You are rooted. There is life flowing in you. Whether you feel it or not, whether you sense it or not, whether you discern it or not.

There is life flow in you. You are changing. And he said, you will flourish in the house of the Lord.

You will have life bursting out. And you don't know until one of your children or one of your friends are in trouble. And suddenly they call upon you and you go to their house.

And when you thought you had not learned anything and you thought you were spiritually dry. Out flows a river of comfort and compassion. Things that you have learned when you need it, it's there.

Come on now, right or wrong? I noticed Gwen in Indianapolis the other night, the ministers conference. I called all the ladies forward, pastors. I felt such grief among many in need of healing.

And Gwen hadn't been feeling too good that day. And I know she wasn't feeling very spiritual. Because the way she was talking to me.

Number two, strike number two. What I'm saying, when she went to service, I'm sure she was not feeling physically. I know she wasn't feeling well.

But I noticed, I looked down and she was ministering to a pastor's wife. The pastor's wife was just weeping and broken. She was ministering.

Life was flowing out of her. No matter how she felt, it was there. There had been nourishment over the weeks and the months here in this congregation and walking with God.

And when, you know, if you were to ask her, how do you feel? I don't feel very saved. I don't feel like I'm growing. But folks, there was life flowing out.

And that woman's life was transformed. It was there. Glory to God.

And secondly, we falsely judge our spiritual growth because of the repetition and sense of boredom that's common to all men. The repetition of life, the things that we do over and over again that sometimes become boring to us. It's common to all men.

We get this feeling, let me say it like this. I must not be growing or increasing in grace because I'm doing the same thing I've always done. I've been praying.

I've been doing that before. Nothing has changed. I read my Bible.

I go to church. I sing in the choir or I'm an usher. But every Sunday I get up.

I do the same thing. And I hear the word in every service. I search my heart.

But I've always done that. I've filled my capacity. I do what I'm supposed to do in the church.

But I don't feel like I'm doing anything special for the Lord. I don't feel like I'm accomplishing anything special for the Lord. There's no variety.

That's a lie from the devil. This can get you into more condemnation and it can rob you of the grace of God. And this is something you've got to understand.

When you go to the job, for example, you get up and it's kind of boring and repetitious. You usually get up the same hour. You eat the same kind of food every day.

You know, there are thousands of restaurants in New York. I end up right down here where I've been. I eat there every day.

I don't even have to have the menu. I am so stuck. I'm so monotonous about eating.

I eat the same thing. Chicken, palo castelli in Spanish, and veal marsala. I walk in and as soon as I walk into the restaurant, I know.

I don't even have to order. I am bored. I am stuck.

It's repetitious. You're the same way. You take the subway the same way.

You see the same people. You stop at Starbucks. You drink the same kind of coffee.

And you go over and over and it gets repetitious, doesn't it? Same thing every day. You sit in the same place in the choir. Most of you sit in the same place here.

Same boring thing. No husband, no wife. I'm not trying to be facetious, but folks, most of our lives, most people have jobs and life is rather boring.

It's repetitious. I dare you to get up tomorrow and try to do everything different. Don't shower.

Do everything different. That's not going to change anything. You're going to go back the next day the same way you were before.

So let me talk to you about what it means to grow in grace along these lines. It's not in doing other things or greater things or more spectacular things. It's not in doing a great variety of things.

True growth in grace is doing the same thing over and over again and doing it better each time with more heart assurance and more love for Jesus. Now, when I was in first grade learning to write, all I did for the first two months was draw circles and lines. Come on now, you don't remember? When you were learning? Now, this is English.

I don't know about the hundred other languages that are represented here. But in English, you drew big circles and you drew lines like this. And then you did capital letters.

Great big A, took the whole page. A, another page. B and C. And then it took a long time to put sentences, words together and then sentences together.

And folks, that's assumed. Even though you're using the same letters and you're doing the same thing, you're writing. Now you compact it in and it becomes easier.

The words become smaller. You make sentences. It's doing the same thing.

It's same repetition. But you're learning and you're something is being accomplished. And eventually somebody might write a book or a novel.

But you're learning. Grace is learning to please God and grow where you're planted. And not allow the devil to put a spirit of boredom on you.

Or saying, I'm not doing anything special for God. To every usher, to every teacher, to everybody listening to me. The most important thing in the sight of God is that when you are planted in a place and you're taking root.

That you do it as unto the Lord. No matter how sick you are, no matter how weary you are. And the devil tells you, you're not accomplishing anything.

Folks, I came home from a conference preaching to hundreds and hundreds of preachers. And on my way home, I'm not doing anything for God. The feeling of, I'm still not reaching out and accomplishing what I really want to accomplish.

That's in all of us. Folks, set all of your accomplishments and all your desires to do something for God. Focus in on learning to love Jesus from your heart more than ever before.

That's what he's looking for. I do this because I love him. I'm planted here.

I don't judge my spiritual growth by any feelings of repetition or boredom. I don't do that. Do you understand that? Glory be to God.

You can be growing in grace, yet feel that you're not increasing because you think you've lost your fire and intensity. Because you feel you've lost something that you had when you were first saved. When I was first saved, someone says, I was a total fire for the Lord.

I had such freedom, such great joy. I wept. I was so tender.

I was easily moved. My heart was always broken. When I prayed back then, I seemed to be so intense and on fire and so strong.

I testified to everybody. I felt so alive. But now I feel my heart is lukewarm or cold.

There's a deadness compared to my early years. It's harder to move me now. I don't weep much anymore.

I don't believe I have that simple tenderness I once had. I'm going to tell you now, and I want you to listen closely. For all of those weary-hearted people who think that way and judge their spiritual condition by comparison to the time you were first saved.

When you get first saved, that's a sudden, spectacular thing. It's a wonderful experience. There is brokenness.

There is weepingness. Now, God must love tears because he bottles them. That's a good sign.

That's a wonderful thing to have. But it's not an ability. It's not something that you can conjure.

It's something of the work of the Holy Spirit that usually comes. These exciting emotional experiences, I compare it to a child learning to walk. Now, I've gone through this with four children and 11 grandchildren.

It's a wonderful experience to see the baby take its first steps and especially to walk across the room. There is such excitement in that room, and that little baby is the center of attention. Come on, baby, you can do it.

And so you pick him up and stand, and he wobbles, and you hold your hand. I've done this over and over again. This is the end of side one.

Come on, come on, come on. Come on. You can do it.

And so he takes two or three steps, and everybody claps, and he falls, and you go pick him up. Here we go again. He takes four steps.

Everybody's clapping. Everybody's cheering. All the other kids are in there saying, good boy, good girl.

And finally, here that little child comes right across the room, smiling and giggling, laughing because he made it. A wonderful emotional experience. And then mom gets on the phone, calls mom, dad, grandma, grandpa.

Hey, Bonnie just took her first walk across the room. She's walking now all through the house. Two days later, that little girl is in the kitchen, tearing every pot and pan out of every place.

There's no excitement anymore. She's not the center of attention. It's not an emotional experience now.

It's time for discipline. You see, the Bible said you're not to stay a child. There's one thing of learning to walk rightly before the Lord.

You've got to be taught that that little child has to be taught you don't go out in the street and just walk across the street. You don't walk into a fire. And you see, a lot of people judge themselves.

Well, I had such there was such excitement every time. Yeah, every the Lord had to give you special attention because you were baby. You didn't know how to walk.

And every time you feel you to pick you up. Now, three days later, get up. You put yourself up when you walk because you're walking by faith now.

You're looking around for somebody to pick you up. There's nobody there to pick you up. You've got to stand on the word.

Now you've got to stand and walk by faith. You're not a baby anymore. Yes, it is possible to lose first love.

The Bible said to grow lukewarm, slothful, careless. There are many Christians in that awful state. But Satan has done a lot of damage to Christians by making them believe that they're not as good.

They're not as faithful. They're not as righteous as they once were before that they have lost something in the Lord. But you see, all of these scriptures in the Bible that warn against lukewarmness and sloth and carelessness and losing first love.

All of those scriptures have nothing to do with those who are fully planted in Christ and walking by faith. Those scriptures don't apply to you because the very fact that you're concerned about it is proof that you're growing. You wouldn't be you wouldn't be thinking that you would be sitting in pride and thinking everything is all right.

But you see, you are concerned about it. You're thinking about it. You're praying about it.

You said, oh, God, I don't want to lose that first love. You're concerned about that. But that very concern is evidence of growth.

Is anybody understanding what I'm saying here? The very fact that you are concerned about falling back is. And you examine your heart about growing in gracious evidence. But it's a terrible sin to doubt God's love for you and get down on yourself because your feelings tell you that you're not what you used to be.

I hope you're not what you used to be. Paul, the apostle, said, forgetting those things which are behind me, reaching forth unto those things which are before. Forget what you once were.

I want to tell you something and get this and get it good, please. Your position in Christ has nothing to do with tears. With mourning.

It has nothing to do with something you did in your past life of works because you're not saved by your works. You're not saved by feeling intense. You're not you're not saved by by zeal, ambition.

None of those things save you. You are saved by faith in the covenant promises of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not by works least any man should boast.

And you can look back on all the past good things you've done and say, I felt so good when I was doing that. I had a preacher. I know the minister who said he was so happy.

He said, I've gotten back to where I was when I was a young man. Man, I used to preach with fire and I prayed and I am back into the word and getting red hot messages from the Lord. And he's telling me all these things he was doing didn't last very long.

Because you see, a lot of people live on on renewals. They'll go for 30 days red hot. New touch from God and new anointing.

And God, there are renewals. There are fresh anointings. But, folks, that's not what you live on.

You live on a constant faith in the covenant promises of God. I'm shakable. No, no matter how you feel, no matter how many lies the devil tells you or anything else, you know that God's going to keep his word to you.

He said, I'll keep you from falling and present you faultless before his glory with exceeding great joy. And you lay hold of all of these promises. I will cause you to walk in my ways.

You lay hold of those promises of God. It doesn't matter how you feel or what you have done in the past, because right now you are walking in faith and standing on the word of God. Forgetting those things that are behind me.

Boy, I'm so glad I can forget some of those things that are behind me. He said, I forget the past and I move on now. Don't let your past hold you.

Don't let your feelings of what you once were try. Don't judge your present conditions by what you once were and try to measure if you are as red hot or as cheerful, as prayerful as you once were. You look on to what God has promised to make you.

If you'll stand on his promises, whereby we are given are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises that by these you might partakers of divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world. Now, there did you hear what I just said? How do we how do we get his divine nature in us? By appropriating the covenant promises were by given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, whereby we become partakers of the divine nature and learning how to escape the corruption that's in the world through the power of the Holy Spirit. Hallelujah.

Now, I've got to move on quickly. Oh, my. There are many evidence of spiritual growth, but I'm going to give just a few, please.

How can you tell if you're growing? Evidence number one, when you find yourself in a crisis or temptation, you quickly run to the Lord for answers and comfort. The surest sign, one of the sure signs that you're growing is that when you get in trouble and difficulties come or crisis, you don't get on the telephone. You don't call somebody.

You don't sit around talking about it. You run to Jesus. You go immediately to the Lord.

You have learned that you have a place to go. Those that are growing in the Lord tell it all to Jesus first before you tell it to anybody else. You know, there are some people that are professional complainers in the church.

They are pros. They wouldn't have anything else to live for if they didn't have a trouble to talk about. Now, folks, there are a lot of people that are really, truly suffering.

We received yesterday in the mail, a lady from this church, I mean, and a daughter with a lump on her breast. Another son-in-law that just died, a child with AIDS, and the husband just diagnosed with bone cancer. A whole letter full of these.

And there is a lot of grief. There's a lot of pain. And this sister said, but we have found God's grace sufficient.

She was just asking for prayer. That's a different story. But there are some people you meet.

Every time you meet them, there's another problem. They live. I mean, it just gets incredible.

Every time, you know, just as soon. Have you heard? I don't know what I'm going to do. I can't take it anymore.

So help me if anything else happens. It's just over my head. Just when I thought you want to say, where's your God? You don't have a God.

You hear every time they just pour out one crisis after another. And they're really not big crises. And you know they haven't been to the Lord.

That's why they're coming to you. You know, you just want to scream lovingly. You have no resource.

You don't know where to go. Have you been to your niece? Have you been to the secret closet? That is the sign of growth. You take everything to God.

Your family, your children, your grandchildren, your job, your career, everything. You take it to Jesus. And if you don't have any other place to go, it's because you have not really focused on where you should be.

Run to Jesus immediately. Hallelujah. Here's another sign.

You're growing spiritually when you depend less and less on outward signs, physical evidence, and inner voices. This is a sign of maturity in Christ when you no longer challenge the Lord to produce or prove himself to you with visible evidence or some kind of a sweet, still voice. You know, God does speak.

He said, my sheep know my voice. They hear when I call. Yes, I do believe that he speaks.

But he speaks to us. The Bible said these last days through his son. The scripture says God, who at other times, at various times and in different ways, spoke in time past under the fathers by prophets.

Now he has in these last days spoken to us by his son. Now, those words are recorded here in this book. And then the Bible says and promises the Holy Ghost will come and he the Holy Ghost will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance whatsoever I've said unto you.

He said he's already spoken. Here it is. This is the spoken word of God.

And when you depend on inner voices or you have to have God give you signs. Now, see, that's all right. Under the Old Testament, you can ask for a fleece in the Old Testament, you know, like Gideon did.

But, see, we're in the New Testament. We don't need the fleece now. We have the Son of God who is speaking clearly.

And we have the Holy Ghost abiding in us, bringing that word to life. Now, we open ourselves to incredible seduction when we listen to those little voices without having gone first to Jesus, having searched his word and allowed the Holy Ghost to speak to us through his word. May I illustrate it? I just came back and I'm not going to preach too much longer.

I just came back from two ministries conferences, Detroit and Indianapolis. And I told Gwen all the way up. I said, I don't know whether God wants me to preach to preachers or not.

I said, I love preaching at Times Square Church and that's enough. I don't like to travel. And if God wants me to do that, he's going to have to give me a sign.

He's going to have to give me evidence so clear. And I don't know what I was looking for. But I challenged the Lord.

I said, you have to prove to me, Lord, if I see evidence that you're blessing what I preach, then I'll go anywhere in the world. I'll even fly in airplanes. How else do you get to Europe? I mean, but I went to Detroit and God did bless.

The word was preached on prayer and I saw preachers come and fling themselves on the floor and cry out to God. But that wasn't enough. So I went to Indianapolis and all afternoon.

In fact, I went out with an associate couple to shop while I prayed. And in the afternoon, I poured more honey. I said, I said, Lord, I'm tell you, I challenged the Lord.

So help me. And I was weeping. I was crying and praying and walk in the room.

I said, Lord, you have to give me evidence tonight. I'm not going to do this. This is going to be my last.

I am not going to go out preaching unless I know I'm being effective and unless I know the word is piercing and getting in the hearts. Now, who do you think heard that prayer beside the Lord? Because you think the devil wants any preacher to preach to preachers and stir them up and get them on fire for God. So the sweetest voice I've ever heard tonight, David, you're going to see the greatest evidence you've ever seen in your whole lifetime.

It'll be so clear. It'll be so overwhelming that you'll know it. You don't have to do anything.

You just stand there and I'm going to just sweep over that house and give you evidence on every side. I call you to God. Wonderful.

That's what I've been praying for. And I went with that voice. Now, folks, God was there.

The Lord anointed me to preach. There was a true anointing. I felt the prayers of a lot of people.

And God was there. And God was moving. But when I was done, I just closed my Bible.

And I what I did, I bobbed my head, said, Now, Lord, it's your turn. Do it. I'm going to stand here.

Did you do it? Nothing happened. People wonder what's going on. I said, folks, please, I'm just waiting on the Holy Ghost.

I don't know whether I expected fire or whether I wanted to see everybody laying on the floor. The Holy Ghost is coming to sweep everybody. I don't know what I was looking for.

But I had this sweet voice. I said, I'm going to show you something. And nothing happened.

So I thought, well, I'm going to have to do something. So I didn't know what to do. But I said, let's just everybody raise our hands and love Jesus.

And let's just praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. Wonderful spirit.

Quiet, gentle spirit of the Lord. And I saw some pastors. I just said, I won't let anything.

I said, I want all the pastors. I get up and come and just stand here and I want to pray for you. And I want you to take hands and pray for one another.

A sweet spirit. People were God was healing and touching. A sweet, gentle spirit was there.

And it lasted quite a long time. But there was no lightning. There was no thunder.

There was no evidence. A supernatural type of evidence. It was so quiet.

Just an ordinary, beautiful work of the Holy Spirit. And before I asked them to raise their hands, I got peeved at God. I really, inside, I was peeved.

I said, Lord, this is a big thing with me. I don't plan. I'm staying here as a pastor.

But occasionally I'm going to be going up preaching to preachers. I just have to tell you this, because this is the way a lot of you, many of us are. And how dangerous and how seductive it is to listen to still, small voices.

And I went home. And I went back to the apartment. And I was downcast.

The next morning, in the elevator, a woman's there. She's just glowing. Her life had been changed.

Pastor's wife. And then the testimonies of how lives were being changed. And I began to see what the enemy was trying to do.

Because, you see, the enemy was trying to stop me. The enemy was trying to say, that's it. God spoke to you.

He didn't meet your requirements. He didn't give you the evidence. Take that as a sign you don't go out anymore.

That's it. And, folks, that's why I'm preaching this message this morning. God dealt with me all week.

Ever since, he said, no. You opened yourself. Because you're challenging me.

I already told you to go into all the world and preach the gospel. I opened a door for you. And I gave you the message.

All you had to do was deliver it and leave everything in the hands of God. Just leave it. Don't look for evidence.

Don't look for signs. You just obey me. You do what you're commanded to do from the word of God.

And that's it. Are you waiting for a voice? Are you waiting for a sign? Are you going to get on the bus or train to go to a meeting where you can see signs that you challenge God? And you want some prophet to lay hands on you and speak a word into your heart? And you're not going to pray and seek the Lord and get into his word and get it right here? Folks, you are mature when you don't have to challenge God anymore. You don't have to have God prove anything to you anymore.

You don't have to have a still, small voice in you anymore. You believe that he's going to see you through no matter what. Because you're in his hands.

There's more I wanted to say, but I want to close in just for a moment here. I have to mention this before I close because of the Middle East crisis. I don't like to preach more than 45 minutes, but I'm going to go over a few minutes today.

Still with me? All right. Here's where we're going to be tested. And here's where only mature Christians are going to be able to survive and to grow as God wants us to grow.

This has to be that we never allow the headlines to inflame our passions or prejudices. Only a mature Christian, only one who's growing, can see the headlines and listen to news reports. When you see Palestinians dropping stones from the top of the wailing wall on Jews that are praying at the wailing wall.

And when you see Israelis shooting and killing 2,000 Palestinians. All the passions. Here's the Serbs moving into Kosovo and killing hundreds and even thousands.

And now Kosovo retaliating, doing the same thing. And all over the world, you see these racial, ethnic uprisings. And now we have it here in New York.

The Palestinians have been marching. The Israelis have been marching. And folks, there have been threats now all over Asia.

The Muslims are threatening Christians and Jews. If you look at New York Times today, it's incredible what is happening. The Time magazine, it's today, in fact, this week's issue.

The Jews, it says, are convinced that the 35 acres where the mosque is located belongs to Israel. And that God has prophesied, this is an October 16th issue, titled, A Bloody Mountain. The Bloody Mountain, referring to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

The Palestinians call it the Noble Sanctuary. It's holy ground to the Jews and to the Arabs. And there is the golden dome of the rock, that golden dome of the mosque.

Jesus called it the abomination of desolation, standing where it ought not. Standing where the Temple of Solomon was built. The Jews are convinced now, and I'm reading, the Old Testament prophesies that the Third Temple will be rebuilt on the very spot that the mosque now stands.

Time magazine reports that the young mullahs and rabbis say God told them it's going to be retaken only by blood. Rabbi Hayim Richman's researchers have recreated all the priestly garments, the tools that will

be needed for the Third Temple. They've also produced a silver mizrach to collect the blood from sacrificial animals.

They have produced a million dollar menorah, golden candlestick. Rabbi Richman points to the dome of the rock and says the Temple will be built right here and nowhere else. In another account, the final plans already in place for the building of the Third Temple, fears of militant Orthodox Jews digging through underground tunnels that Solomon had built to blow up the mosque.

Folks, one of these days, don't be surprised if you turn on the radio, you hear the news, there's been a great explosion in Jerusalem because the Palestinians are about to announce Jerusalem as their capital. There may be a temporary peace, there may be a truce, but Bible predicts there's going to be a war in Israel. It's clear as anything in the Bible.

The Bible does talk about the rebuilding of a temple and it's going to rebuild, it's going to be rebuilt right there. And if there's a war, if you notice, the Palestinians were here with rocks and the Israelis were there with helicopters and machine guns and so forth. And there's no question that Israel would win the war.

But what do I do as a Christian? What is our position now? We're going to have racial tension here in New York City and in the United States between blacks and whites, Arabs and Jews and all the ethnic groups. The Bible said that this is going to happen. What is the attitude? Jesus said, love your enemies.

Pray for those who misuse you. He said, if your enemy hunger, feed him. Are you and I going to be able to keep our prejudice from being inflamed by the headlines and the news reports? Are you going to be able to say, oh God, keep that out of my heart? Would you be willing, if you're a Jew and you're a Christian, would you be willing to go into a Palestinian camp where they set up an army field hospital and minister and nurse soldiers who were shooting Israelis? If you were in the medical profession, could you do that? Could you go there and pray, Lord, save him, minister to him? Could you have that kind of spirit that was in Christ, that he said even to those who crucified him, Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

We have got to look at the world. Everyone, black, white, no matter what color, what race, they are lost and without Christ. And Jesus died for the whole world.

And you can know whether you're growing in grace. You can know if you're becoming mature in Christ. When you can look at all of this and hear all of these things, then you can rise up against every passion that tries to rise up.

Every bit of prejudice and say, in Jesus' name, I reject this. I take Christ's authority over this. I will love all mankind.

I will preach against, I'll preach against adultery, but I'll love the adulterer. I'll preach against homosexuality. I'll love even the militant homosexuals and even murderers and rapists.

Because you understand in prisons all over America and around the world now, those who have murdered and maimed and raped have been saved and baptized with the Holy Ghost and are serving Jesus. Because somebody loved them in spite of their sin. And God, help us.

I am not a mature preacher if I allow anything to come in. I'm not a mature Christian if I allow any racial prejudice in my heart or anger. I have to keep it up.

The same thing goes for Republicans and Democrats. I'm not joking about it. You can get so riled up about Hillary or Lazio or whoever.

You can't do it. You keep that out of your mind. When you go into the voting booth, you say, Lord, why don't you just bow your head and pray for both of them? Both presidential candidates.

Why don't you pray? Just pray. The only way I can keep prejudice out is to pray for people. Pray for those.

If you can love those that others hate, you're growing. You're becoming mature. Mature in Jesus Christ.

Will you stand, please? Heavenly Father, we don't want to live by our feelings. We don't want to judge ourselves by our feelings or our spiritual condition anymore. Let this word take root.

Let the word take root in the hearts of the people that are gathered in this house today. We love you, Jesus. We've been planted in good soil.

And that life is flowing. Help us, Lord, to get our eyes off our feelings. Help us to reject our feelings.

And simply rest in what God has said he will do. And that is doing because we are rooted in him. We are planted in him.

The Bible says that we shall take on wings as eagles. We'll run and not be weary. We'll walk and not faint.

That's your promise. And I stand on that, God, no matter how I feel. You said, I'm going to mount up as wings, as eagles.

I'm going to run and not be weary. Walk and not faint. Thank you, Jesus.

That's one promise that will take us right to glory. We thank you for it in Jesus' name. Hallelujah.

This is the conclusion of the message.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/4/SID4285.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-wilkerson/dont-judge-your-spiritual-condition-by-feelings/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net