

Learning How to Love the Lord

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon teaches that true love for the Lord is expressed through obedience and actions rather than mere words or emotions.

Duration: 57:56

Scripture: Matthew 22:37, 1 John 3:18

Topics: "Worship And Praise", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of expressing love and praise to the Lord. They envision a powerful scene of millions of believers coming together to worship Jesus, creating a thunderous sound that only angels can hear. The speaker acknowledges the battles and trials believers face but encourages them to stand on the promises of God and cling to His love. They urge for prayer and support in the midst of spiritual warfare and emphasize the need for a 24-hour lifestyle of living in love with Jesus, following His commandments.

Transcript

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. ...this morning on how, or learning how to love the Lord.

Very simple message, learning how to love the Lord. Heavenly Father, I thank you this morning for the love of Jesus. I thank you, Lord, that you loved us first, and you found us.

Now, Lord, I pray for a special anointing of your Holy Spirit to be upon me, rest upon me, that the word of the Lord would come forth and produce life. Lord, only life produces life, and I pray that the life that you placed in me by your Holy Spirit would come forth and produce life in the heart and the ears of the ear. Lord, we want to learn how to love you.

We thought we knew how, Lord, but you examine us by your Spirit this morning to see if we have really learned how to love you. Lord, I pray for a revelation, a simple revelation to revolutionize our thinking about how we love Jesus. Lord, I thank you for your presence this morning.

Cause your word to change our lives, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Now, I've always believed that love is not something you say, but it's something you do.

It's something you do. I've always believed that, and I've preached that. And the Bible confirms that with this following admonition.

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. God says, don't love me with just your words. Don't just love me with your tongue.

Show me your love by your deeds and your actions. Jesus reminded the Pharisees of the one great commandment. He said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, all thy soul, all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment. And in fact, in Jude verse 21, we read, keep yourselves in the love of God. Now, if I were to ask you this morning, everyone in this auditorium that calls yourself by the name of Jesus, do you really love Jesus with all your heart, mind, soul, body and strength? Do you love him with everything in you? And the majority would say, well, I hope so.

I think so. The best I know, yes. Let's examine that in light of the word this morning.

I believe that most Christians really do want to love the Lord. I can't conceive how you'd want to follow Jesus without wanting to love him with everything in you. Can't even conceive that in the mind of somebody who says, I have been saved and the Lord has redeemed me.

How could you want anything else in your life but to love him with everything in you? But you see, what we have done, especially in the past 10, 15 years, we have sentimentalized the love, our love for the Lord. We have equated our love for Jesus as human love. We have put it on that level.

We've tried to think of loving Jesus the way we'd love a husband or love a wife. And we've got it down to feelings. We've got it down to emotions.

And we express very tearfully and very emotionally our love for Jesus. We go into the secret closet of prayer. We spend some quality time with him and we cry and we pray.

We lift our voice and say, Lord, I love you. I adore you. I praise you.

And we give them these great expressions of heartfelt love. We come out saying this was a wonderful time of loving Jesus. I had a love session with my blessed Savior.

And other times that we come to God's house, as we did this morning, and we lift our hands to the Lord. And corporately, we enter into praise, worship, and we sing such sentimental songs to him. Sweet Jesus, oh, how I love Jesus.

Think of the words that we use, very sentimental words in expressing our heart, love for the Lord. Sweet Jesus, oh, how I love Jesus. Jesus, lover of my soul.

And we sing this more than ever before. Lord, I love you. Now, am I saying that that is wrong? No, I'm not.

Am I saying it's wrong to be sentimental about Jesus? Is it wrong to have emotion? Is it wrong to have great feelings of human emotion when we express our love to Jesus? No, not at all. Not at all, because if you turn to the Song of Solomon, you'll find very emotional, sentimental words that we understand, loving words that the human mind understands, the kind of words we express between husband and wife and those who are deeply in love. No, I'm not saying that that is wrong, but it goes beyond sentiment.

It goes beyond feeling. It goes beyond our emotion. There's something far beyond what we have really learned about loving Jesus.

There's nothing more beautiful than Song of Solomon, especially these words. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

Now picture with me, if you will, every Sabbath, and especially let's talk about today, and all over the world, millions and millions of believers are meeting in sanctuaries all over the world. Can you imagine what it would be like to hear one mass choir of these multiplied millions expressing their love for Jesus on any given Sabbath? Can you imagine how it would sound like absolute thunderous worship and thunderous love going up? It would be something that only angels could hear. And you would think, that must be wonderful, how that must move the heart of the Lord, how the Heavenly Father must rejoice as He hears multitudes that have been redeemed loving His own Son.

How that must move the heart of God, how the angels must rejoice. Now some of you here this morning are not going to like what I'm about to say. And some of you say, well here he goes again, he always sees the negative of everything.

But see, I want to teach this body how to truly love Jesus. I want to teach that this morning, because the Holy Ghost has been teaching me, and I'm a shepherd and that's my work, that's my calling, to teach you how to truly love Jesus with all your heart, your mind, soul, your body and strength. Now you already know the Scripture says to love Him is not in word and in tongue alone.

That's part of it, but that's not the true parameters of love. That's not the manner in which the Lord Himself is prescribed to love Him. There's a grand song of the church that says, Oh for a thousand tongues to sing His praises.

But I want you to know that my Lord Jesus filters every voice. He filters every song. He judges every prayer that comes as incense before His throne.

He judges it, He filters it, He examines it. And sad to say, the majority of what ascends into the heavens supposedly as incense is rejected. In fact, I can prove to you, and I will in just a moment, that it can be nothing but an abomination to His ears, and He will just spew it out, He will shut His ears to it.

Remember Moses and Joshua coming down from the mountain because the children of Israel had erected an idol, and they were singing and dancing around it and worshiping the idol. And God said to Moses, Go, get you down, for thy people have corrupted themselves. Joshua and Moses are coming down from the mountain, and they don't see the camp yet, but they're not even probably in eyesight, but they're in earshot.

They hear it, and Joshua is the first to pick it up. He said, I hear the sound of the noise of war. They've either been defeated, and they're screaming in pain, or they've had victory, and they're shouting.

Moses had a discerning ear. He said, No, no, no, no. He said, That's not it, Joshua.

It's not the voice of them that shout for mastery. Neither is the voice of them that have been overcome. That's the noise of them, he calls it noise, of them that sing do I hear.

He said, It's a strange noise. There's no music to His ears. Now, if a human, a mere human can discern, and without even seeing in all of these sounds coming, he can discern that that's not worship, that's not the right sound.

How much more our blessed Savior is able to discern the voices, and the kind of expressive songs that we sing. How He deserves what comes from our hearts. Without a doubt, every Sabbath millions sing love songs to Jesus with great feeling and great emotion.

But let me, let me show you something from the Word that I hope will once over all change how you think about how you love Jesus. Let me explain. Jesus said, In no uncertain terms, to love Him is to hear and obey His commandments.

In other words, it's impossible to love Jesus only with your words and your tongue. Impossible. It is something you do, it's something I do.

Listen very closely to our Lord's description of what it means to love Him. John 14, 15. If you love me, you'll keep my commandments.

John 14, 21. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, He it is that loveth me. John 14, 23.

If a man love me, he will keep my words. Verse 24. He that loveth me not, does not keep my sayings.

He that is not loving me, he's saying it's impossible to love me unless you keep my sayings, you keep my word. And here, it really nails it down, 1 John 5, 3. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous. Now, nothing could be more clear in the Word of God.

Love for the Lord goes beyond sentimentality. It goes beyond emotion, beyond our feelings, beyond our words, beyond our singing. Love for the Lord, as it's prescribed here by Jesus Himself, is obedience to His every word.

Obedience to His word. If you keep my commandments, you shall abide or live in my love. He said, you want to really, not just come to me with sessions of love, not just expressions of love, but you want to live in love with me.

Now, when I love my wife, it's not a certain hour, a certain time, like coming to church for an hour and worshipping. It's a lifestyle. It's a 24-hour lifestyle.

He said, if you want to live in love with me, if you want to live the love life with me, He said, if you keep my commandments, you shall abide or live in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and I abide in His love. You find it all through the New Testament. You can't miss it.

I was driving my car recently from New Jersey here into the city this past week. And it was a busy week for me because I had jury duty. And of all things, they wanted to put me on a trial.

They wanted me to be a, what do you call it? A juror on a case with a drug pusher. I told the judge, you got the wrong man. So they dismissed me.

But with jury duty and so busy this past week, I was driving in and I was talking to the Lord. I said, oh, Lord, I have not loved you this week like I should. I have not had the quality of time that I need with you.

And I feel so dry and empty in my love for you. And I was saying, oh, God, I feel bad about it. Please forgive me for not loving you like I should this week.

Because, you know, I hadn't had that time to just lift my hands in his presence and just let the love words flow out of my heart. And I was feeling really cold and empty and dry. And and I was apologizing to the Lord for it.

And for the spirit of God came on me. And Lord said, wait a minute, David. Very clearly, you said loving me has little to do with how much time you spend shut in with me in prayer.

It has little to do with those deep feelings and expressions, even your tears or your promises or your songs. Loving me has everything to do with obeying me in your hunger and in your desire to know my commandments, to hear my word, to obey my word fully. That is to love me.

If you seek me and by the help of the Holy Ghost to understand my word. And if you will pray for the Holy Ghost to give you ability and power and an enablement to keep my word, then you're loving me. And, you know, it just dawned on me.

I've spent so much time in my past life judging my fear of my love for Jesus by my emotions. I love him when I'm red hot. But when I'm down, I don't love him like I should.

And Lord said, that's not it. You're missing the point. You're missing it.

You see, your feelings are no barometer for the love of Jesus. Not at all. You can be you.

You can feel in your emotions. Absolutely nothing. But if you're walking in total obedience to the word of the Lord, to the power of the Holy Ghost, you're loving Jesus.

David loved the Lord with all of his heart. I don't know anybody in Old Testament that expressed that love more than David. David said, oh, how I love thy law.

I love thy commandments. I love them exceedingly. I love thy precepts.

I love thy testimonies. You see, David understood the manner of love. He understood what God expected of him if he was to truly love him.

Not just his love songs out on the hill as a shepherd with his little harp. That was not love. It was his absolute respect for the law of God.

Respect for the word of God. That's why he said, I love thy law. I love thy commandments.

I love them exceedingly. Your precepts. I love your testimonies.

No other saint in the Old Testament sang more love words and songs than did David. He said, I will sing. I will sing praises.

I will sing aloud. I will sing with my heart. I will sing in the night.

I will sing a new song. I will sing with the psaltery. I will sing of his mercy.

I'll sing of his power. I'll sing. And he cries out, sing all the earth.

He was a singer of love songs to the Lord. Yet David understood that all of his singing, all of his words, all of his, whether it's written or verbalized, had to come out of an obedient heart. He said, if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

In spite of all my songs, my love songs, all my expressions of love. If I regard and the word regard there means if I've made peace with my sin, if I've decided to live with it and live in this disobedience, God will not hear me. Now, not every act of disobedience cuts you off from God.

Not every act of obedience shuts down your prayer or yours, your love songs to him. It's a commitment to a life of disobedience. It's having got to the place where I will not give this up.

I will live with my sin. I've made peace with it. There's no more conviction.

I want nothing to do with being convicted. That will absolutely shut you off from the love of Jesus Christ. You cannot possibly love him.

You cannot love him. Oh, his love for you is undying. His mercy is everlasting.

But there's no possibility that you, he could receive love from that kind of a heart. Psalms 28, 9, he that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination. He said, you turn away from my word.

You show disrespect and dishonor and you will not work this into your body and into your mind and soul. You will not live according to my word. He said, all your prayers are an abomination to me.

When Israel was walking in disobedience, God sent Isaiah with these words. He said, when you spread forth your hands, I'll hide my eyes from you. Yea, when you make many prayers, I will not listen to them because you need to wash, make yourself clean and put away the evil of your doings and cease to do evil.

He said, deal with your sin. Obey my word. And folks, he didn't make us a commandment to obey his word without in the New Testament giving us all the power of the Holy Ghost.

We need to do what he told us to do. He didn't leave it up to us. That's the new covenant.

David said of the deceitful person, let even his prayer become sin. Prayer becomes sin? Prayer an abomination? Had a young minister sit in my office, tears in his eyes. He just told me he had just come from his house and told his wife, didn't love her anymore and was leaving.

Left his wife and children. I got my Bible out. I said, no, no, wait a minute.

Before you go another step, I want to show you what the book says. I took him to Malachi. I took him through the word.

I took him all through it. Of what God, how God sees it, what God has commanded, his responsibilities to his family, to his marriage, to his vows. Went right through it.

And suddenly I stopped because I realized he wasn't listening. He said, you don't understand. Brother Dave, I have total peace about this.

God doesn't expect me to live in turmoil anymore. Our marriage has been a mess from the beginning. God doesn't expect it of me.

And he said, I have peace. But he said, I want you to know, I still love the Lord with all my heart. He said, I determined three months ago to get out of this mess.

And so I told her yesterday and he said, all I want you to know, pastor, is that in that three months, I've drawn so close to the Lord. I have wept more than I've ever wept. Prayed more than I've ever prayed.

I have peace about it. I know it's OK. And he said, I intend from here on out to love Jesus as much or more than I've ever loved him in my life.

Here's a young minister who has soothed his feelings, his conscience by washing them with his crocodile tears. And he thinks that he's loving the Lord. He thinks the Lord is going to receive his offerings of love.

He's going to go to church, raise his hand. He'll stand in the pulpit and preach about love. Or talk about it.

But he's living in disobedience. So his prayer is sin. His praise is sin.

His love is an abomination. Every word that he speaks are wasted. They don't get above the ceiling.

Jesus began by saying, he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he that hath my commandments. Now, what does that mean to have the commandments? It's not just to hear the commandments. It means he who has them engraved in his heart and mind.

Who meditates on them. Who truly believes every word is the voice of God. Folks, this is Christ.

In the beginning was the word, the word was God, the word was with God. This is Jesus. Every word is the voice of the living God.

If we don't have this, we have nothing to stand on. I was shocked when I was in jury duty. And they call about a hundred people at a time in a room.

And the lawyers questioned them. And a lawyer gets up before the whole group here. And he says, I want you to know.

When the witnesses come in, they're going to take a Bible and they're going to put their hand on the Bible. And he says, I want you to know that putting your hand on the Bible means no more than putting your hand on the daily news. And everybody laughed.

You know, there's a big thing. I looked around and said, I'm living in a country I don't even know anymore. I don't even recognize.

Because just 50 years ago, when I was a young man, I always get trapped. David, think before you speak. This word was honored in the courtroom.

This word was honored in America. Now, they don't even know why they do it. But that's why we have no real justice.

That's why we have a nation going into this great moral landslide. Because there's no respect. There's no honor for this word.

David said, thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee. That word hid in Hebrew is to hoard. I have hoarded up the word of God.

So that when I face sin, when I face temptation, I have the word hidden in my heart. That's why we beg you. We beseech you.

We plead with you to read and to study and get into this and pray. Holy Ghost, make it real. Hoard it up.

Build it up in your hide it in your heart that I might not sin against you. Oh, Lord. Let me stop for a minute.

I believe David was called by the Lord himself, a man after his own heart. Is anybody in this building ever committed adultery and ordered the murder of the husband? Anybody here done that? And then take that dead man's wife, take her as a wife and make her queen? No, no, no. David sinned as hardly anybody in this country or in this building today has ever sinned.

And yet God calls him a man after his own heart. How can that be? Let me tell you why. David was constantly meditating on the word.

He was hoarding it. He studied it and he knew that he had the law. He had to order God that he could measure everything.

And he lived in absolute terror for that year. And what a relief it must have been when the prophet came to him and said, you're the man. He knew it all the time and he knew the word would come to him eventually.

David lived. I know that time in repentance. He lived in Godly sorrow because the word was in his heart.

How quick he was to repent when the word came to him. Listen to what David said. By thy word, I am quickened.

He said, when I'm about to die, I come back to life by the power of the word of God. He said, I delight myself in his statutes. I will not forget thy word, O Lord.

And here's his heart. Listen to his heart. Lord, make me to go in the path of your commandments.

For then do, therein do I delight. Take not the word of truth, holy, out of my mouth, because I do love thy commandments. Listen to him.

He says, O God, when I'm going astray, make me to go in the right path of your commandments. I love your word. I love to be reprov'd by it.

I believe that the test of real holiness is that a man loves to be reprov'd by the word of God. He's not afraid of it. He wants it.

He desires godly reproof. I love to sit in a meeting where the sword of the Lord shows me an area that I didn't know. And suddenly he brings it to the surface.

Thank God for that. Cutting knife of the Holy Ghost in his word. You may be sitting here thinking, there's some disobedience in my life.

There's an area in my life that I'm failing the Lord. And I don't want to be mouthing love songs and praise the Lord that are not acceptable. What am I going to do? Because I'm going through a battle.

I'm going through a struggle. Is he not going to hear my cries? Is he not going to accept my love until I get everything straight? Until I got it all figured out? Nope. Not at all.

And I want you to listen now. And this will bring encouragement to your heart. Let me tell you what God's looking for.

It's the very thing he saw in David and he's looking for another. It's a heart that simply and honestly reaches out and asks, Lord, help me to understand. I want to have that half of my commandment.

I want them in my heart. Folks, about two years ago, I read that scripture and it so gripped me. He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.

And I said, Lord, I don't know if I have your commandment. I don't know if I know them. You said, he that hath them.

He that is hoarding them. He that has read them and understood them and praying for understanding. I said, Lord, I don't even know what you're asking.

I don't know what all your commandments are. I know I'm to love my brother as myself. I know I'm to be forgiving.

And I listed a whole bunch of things. So I got a new Bible and a pen. And I said, I'm going to start Matthew.

I'm going to go through the New Testament. And I'm going to mark down every promise. I mean, every commandment, every statute of the Lord Jesus Christ that he's given.

I'm going to memorize them, and I'm going to live by them fully. I didn't get halfway through Matthew until I got so discouraged. I found dozens and dozens halfway through Matthew.

And all I succeeded in doing was laying a grievous burden on my back. I said, oh, Lord. All of these things.

He said, my yoke is easy. My burden is light. He said, my commandments are not grievous.

But I was grieved. I was heavy laden. It wasn't an easy yoke.

I thought, how in the world. And then the Holy Spirit began to speak to me. He said, this is why I've been given to you.

That's why I abide. Because he said, when you're brought before governors and magistrates. He said, you're going to be brought and you're going to be persecuted.

He said, you don't even have to think what you're going to say. Because in that moment, you need me. The Holy Ghost will be there, and he'll put words in your mouth that are not even yours.

You won't even have to premeditate. And the scripture says that the Holy Ghost, when he comes, he's going to lead us into all truth. And bring to our remembrance all the words of Christ.

All his commandments. All his statutes. Every love commandment of Jesus Christ.

That's the work of the Holy Ghost. I don't have to have a tabulator up here. I don't have to have a list of rules or anything else.

All I have to say, Lord, I want to obey you. Holy Ghost, speak to me. When I first came to New York, we started winning drug addicts.

And I started teaching about the Holy Ghost. I asked one boy to stand up and tell me what the Holy Ghost meant to him after he heard my teaching. He said, well, best I can figure it out, Pastor.

You know, they call the cops blue coats. This is the end of side one. God knows that when you get saved and you love Jesus, he puts a blue coat in your heart.

And he stands up when you go to do bad, and he says, stop. And he says, all right. He says, green light, go.

Folks, a Holy Ghost is a blue coat. A Holy Ghost cop. Hallelujah.

But you see, there's such a lack of respect for the Word of God. Let me give you an example. A young divorcee wrote.

She said, my schizophrenic husband divorced me. Later, I found out that he'd been molesting our little daughter and both of our sons. He gave herpes to my daughter.

She said, I have no family left. I have no support. I have to go on SSI.

Now my oldest son has been hospitalized with mental illness. It's more than I can handle. So in my distress, in my stress, I started back smoking, drinking, and partying.

She said, Pastor David, I'm so ashamed. I'll let my Lord down. I'm so scared because I failed him.

Could you please pray for me? I want to tell you something. God's going to hear that woman's cry. You know why? Because the Word has reminded her.

The Lord has convicted her by the Word of God. She feels a conviction. In fact, she's asked for it in a letter.

She said, I ask. I want God to move on my heart. There's a desire.

She's failed the Lord. There's disobedience. But her heart has turned to the Lord.

She wants to obey God. And when she cries, God's going to hear her. But how different it is, this letter I received from a Pentecostal pastor's wife.

It says, My husband left me and five wonderful children, ages 3 to 17. After 19 years of marriage, he ran off to Mexico for a quickie divorce that was not legal. He moved to another city and started pastoring again with his new wife.

In fact, he was quite successful by human standards. Ten years later to the day, he shows up at my door and asks me to go back with him. He left his other woman.

He said, since we were not legally divorced, we could live together now. So we started over, and he returned to the pulpit. After being together three and a half years, he got involved with a 20-year-old girl at the age of 54.

He found her in church. He found both of his women in church. That's a sad commentary.

I've seen young ladies walk in here, just eyes for guys. No eyes for Jesus, they have eyes for guys. He moved in with this 20-year-old girl and crushed me.

He justified it by telling me, quote, God told me I'm not really married to you or the other girl. My husband is now in his 70s. They found a spot in his brain as diagnosed as a brain tumor.

His life is at stake. Pastor Dave, my faith has been severely tested. Will you please, please pray for me? You see, he heard a voice.

I'm going to tell you something. When you live in disobedience, you're going to hear voices loud and clear. Oh, it's clear.

You hear clear voices. Yes, and it's the devil himself, his demonic powers. You're okay.

Everything's all right. Nobody hears clearer voices than those who are walking in disobedience. Here's a man, a pastor, who has no regard for the commandments of the Lord.

He knows what God said about lust, about adultery, about divorce. Yet he's callous and he chases after his lust, stands in the pulpit and preaches about the love of God and believes that he's truly loving the Lord. God has not heard a word.

It's all wasted energy. The Word says his commandments are not grievous. And what he's really saying, what I demand of you is not going to crush you.

It's not more than you can bear. Not at all. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things and bring all things to remembrance whatsoever I have told you.

Hallelujah. Folks, walking in the Spirit is saying, Lord, I really want with all my heart to walk in obedience to you. I don't want to live in disobedience.

I have an open heart. I don't know what you fully ask of me. I do know some things about it, but Holy Ghost, teach me.

The Holy Ghost will never, ever refuse that kind of a cry. He'll never refuse the cry of a hungry heart. Teach me.

Search me. Show me anything in my life that even borders on disobedience, Lord. And then even if I feel that I'm too weak to fulfill it, I'm going to ask you, Holy Ghost, to come down and do the work you've been sent to do and give me the authority and the power to walk in obedience before the Lord.

Hallelujah. The only way I can release the power of the Holy Spirit in my life to do what I'm talking to you about so that my love is acceptable to the Lord as I walk in obedience to Him, the only way to release that power of the Holy Ghost in my life is by faith alone. It's not by making promises, not by striving.

It's by exercising faith in God's Word. God said it. He will do what He said He would do.

He sent the Holy Ghost. Do you think the Holy Ghost comes to abide in us to be a silent partner? That He would stand by when you cry and weep and not lift a finger to teach you, to lead you, comfort and guide you? That would be to call God a liar. I've read so many pitiful letters from people in the past months.

My wife, you know, we're going toward, as you know, nearly a million people on our mailing list, and we get up to 50,000 letters a month at times. And Gwen reads night and day, I mean constantly, and then she'll hand me these letters. And I told her yesterday, I said, This is incredible.

These are Christians, the sorrow, the suffering, the crises. And some of them, it looks like the devil himself has come in and just steamrolled it over everybody. It seems like there's no barriers.

I said, I've never. We've been reading these letters now for many years, for 30 years. And in the past year, it has exploded.

It's mind-boggling. In fact, there are times I just have to back away. I can't handle it.

I don't know how Gwen does. I pray God keep her mind from being crushed by the burden of these letters. And yet the majority of them, there's one thing in common that goes right through them.

I grieve and I say, Oh God, I can't believe the troubles, incredible troubles. But there's one thing, there's a thread that goes through in their time of crisis. When things are getting bad and trouble piles upon trouble, very few of them turn to the word.

Very few of them go to the Holy Ghost for comfort. They either get bitter, they begin to murmur and to complain. They get on the telephone and they call everybody they know and try to commiserate in their troubles.

And I hear very little in the letters. I know I'm going through it. Things are bad.

Things are difficult. But I know God's faithful. And this past week, I've been in the word of the Lord and I've gotten a promise from the word.

Very few of them would think about disobedience as being part of their problem. Now folks, I know, I know because I've studied Job. I know that all suffering is not a result of sin.

That the righteous can suffer. And I'm going to read a letter to you, a heartbreaking letter in just a moment to prove just that. But I'm telling you, I don't care what you're going through in your life, when you first check this matter of obedience, has God spoken to you about something in your life that needs to be dealt with? I know what it's like when I was a young pastor, God was dealing in my life about some things in my life.

And I was in disobedience. And I knew there was something. I had some kind of inner knowledge that my prayers were not being effective.

That I was wasting my words. Because God was waiting. He said, wait a minute David, you deal with this.

You deal with this. I'm no respective person. You're not special when it comes to obedience.

Nobody is special when it comes to obeying God's word. He said, I expected of you, expected especially of you, if you're going to maintain the anointing of the Holy Ghost on your life. The Lord made it clear that I could never, when I traveled as a young pastor, I could not turn on television and watch pornography.

He said, if you do it one time, I just flipped it on, and you know, that curiosity for a few moments. The Lord said, David, you keep it up, I'm going to take your anointing from you. You can't have the anointing and

pollute your eyes.

That's my word. You're not special. You must obey.

I thank God he put his fear in my heart. By the fear of the Lord, men turn from their iniquities, the scripture says. I thank God for that.

But then there, that's first of all, check your obedience. Lord, is there an area in my life, and go back, let the Holy Ghost examine and then say, Lord, give me power to obey. If I have to go make something right, I want to make it right.

I want to walk in obedience. I want to believe this word. And folks, get into this book.

And when the Holy Ghost, when you come to something in this word that the Holy Ghost wants to do with you, he'll stop you at that point. He'll say, wait a minute, read it again. He will speak to you.

He will tell you. Hallelujah. The Holy Ghost has a voice.

It's not just the conscience, the voice. The Holy Ghost has his own voice. Hallelujah.

You may have seared your conscience. God will bypass that. He'll get right to the heart of it.

He'll speak. How many of you ever had the Holy Ghost speak to you? How many of you ever had the Holy Ghost say, that's wrong? How tender he is. How faithful he is to let us know where we failed.

God, that's why he's here. That's why he abides. Then he comes, if you'll obey me, I'll give you the strength.

If you want that, even if you want the heart to obey me, I'll give you that heart. I'll take the heart of stone out of you. I'll give you the heart of flesh.

I'll give you a heart. I will put my spirit in you. The scripture says that's the new covenant.

And I will cause you to walk in my ways. That's the prayer David had. Let me read to you a letter Gwen handed me last night.

And I prayed about it. I'm going to call this family this week. In fact, after I read this letter, you and I are going to stand.

We're going to pray for this family. She said, Dear Brother Wilkerson, the following is an urgent request for prayer. Our daughter-in-law suffers from manic depression.

If left untreated, it leads to uncontrollable suicidal compulsions caused by chemical imbalance in her brain. However, over 18 years ago, she quit taking her medication before she married my son, not telling him about her illness. She was afraid he wouldn't accept her.

Her secret was exposed 15 months ago when she slashed both wrists and had to be taken to hospital for several weeks. The torment she'd gone through and the torment of my son and their children, what they went through is difficult to even impart. For several months after she was hospitalized, she seemed to be improving.

But three months ago, she made another attempt at suicide. She hears a deep voice calling her name, and then it tells her how worthless she is and to take her own life. In spite of what the doctors say, we believe there are spirits involved in this.

She's continued to lose ground. She's withdrawing more and more into her own needs and feelings. She has no concern now for her husband and children.

She refuses to cook or clean. She has no quality time for them. My son says, Mom, this is not the woman I married.

She's become another person. In addition to this, my grandson, age 15, their son has developed oppressive compulsive disorder. She admitted recently that our daughter, our granddaughter admitted that two boys held her down in the school ground, choked her and attempted to molest her.

She held it inside because of fear and shame. She's only 12 years old. She's become manic depressive also.

She sees nightmares now for the past two years. Insurance doesn't pay anything for mental illness now. All the benefits have run out, and it's costing \$700 a month.

We're deeply in debt. My husband's retirement savings are all gone from trying to help. She goes on, this whole family is in danger of being torn apart.

This family is Christian. We have walked according to God's ways, and we attend church regularly. My son continues to cry to God for help in spite of her illness.

He deeply loves her, and he loves the Lord. We attend an Assembly of God church and have done spiritual warfare on their behalf throughout all of this. However, with a few exceptions, we've been shocked at the response of Christian friends and the pastors and clergy.

When my daughter-in-law was in the hospital, the Lord told me to read the book of Job. I was struck by the response of Job's comforters. They insisted his problem was sin.

They suffered only with him a short time, and then they laid the whole burden of the circumstances at his feet. Many Christians have done that to us. They don't know how to deal with mental illness.

Some were willing to pray at the start, but now they avoid us like the plague. If you don't get instant answers, they say, then it's your fault. We have never prayed so long and so hard for anything in our lives.

We've come against demonic spirits. We've won some battles, but we haven't won the war yet. We know the Word, and we stand on the promises of God.

Our children cannot take any more. Brother Dave, we can't take much more. We are near the point of breaking.

We know the Lord Jesus is Lord. His name is greater than my trials. We cling to His love and believe for a miracle.

But, Brother Dave, we're suffering battle fatigue, with even our own minds becoming stressed. We're even forgetful now ourselves. Please, won't somebody stand with us against the evil, trying to destroy our

home? Please hold up our hands in this battle.

Our lives are at stake. Please, somebody pray. Now, folks, you see, here's someone who says, I stand on the Word.

In fact, some of the letters we get make Job's trial pale. Literally pale. Honestly, there's some things that are worse than the book of Job.

But occasionally, you'll hear this word from somebody. I know the Word, and I stand on it. We're going to stand and pray for this family.

This family is from Washington State. And we're going to get in touch with this family tomorrow. And we're going to remind them that this whole congregation stood in prayer.

And while we're praying for them, I want you to pray for these thousands and thousands of letters coming into this church. Of people suffering. And some of you in this congregation right now may be suffering.

You say, Brother Wilkson, I have battle fatigue. I am going through it. And I don't want to lose my love for Jesus.

I want to be obedient in all my ways. But if you can stand here this morning and say, I know the best, I know how. The Holy Ghost has not put anything, any finger on anything in my life.

The best I know, my heart is open before the Lord. And I want Him to undertake now. The Lord will do that this morning.

I want us to stand, if you will. I want everybody to stand. Now, here's what we're going to do.

Up in the balcony. You can go to the stairs on either side and come down anyhow. And here on the main floor.

I don't want anybody to come forward except those who are being ministered to and touched by the word of the Lord right now. This particular word. And you're saying, as you stand here before me now.

Pastor David. You're describing me. I am going through so many troubles.

Pastor David. You're describing me. I am going through so many troubles.

I have battle fatigue. I am weary. I'm tired of the battle.

And if there's anything of disobedience, I want God to deal with it. But my heart is open for the Lord. Or you say, I don't know of anything in my life right now that would hinder God's work in my life.

I know he loves me and I know I love him. But I need a touch. I need deliverance from this absolute harassment from hell.

I want you to step out of your seat. Now, if you're not right with God, you can come. If you're not saved, if you're backslidden, you can come with these that are coming.

This is open right now to everybody in this building. And after we have this invitation, I'm going to pray for this family. And I'm going to ask you to join with us and pray with this family and all the others that we

promised that we would pray for if they would send their prayer request to this church.

Beloved, we don't do that as a gimmick to raise money. Every Tuesday in our pastor's meeting, we lay hands on these boxes and we pray diligently over them. Our staff prays over them.

We pray for them in our all-night prayer meeting. We pray for them on Thursday nights. But I want us to pray for those in this auditorium and those who have written to us.

Obey the Holy Spirit. Come. Come forward and look this way for just a moment before we go to prayer.

You know, here's the temptation that I faced this week just being inundated with all of these problems. And I said, Lord, these people are hurting so bad, going through so much trouble. How can I come with a reproving word? How can I add? I'll just be adding to their burden by coming down with the word, with the knife of the word.

But I want to tell you something, folks. Listen to me. This is not some sentimental game.

Sympathy is not what we need. We need truth. Only truth sets us free.

See, no matter what you and I are going through, the word of God still stands. The word of God is still true. It's outside of our problems.

It's outside of our troubles. It's here to minister to us and life. And I'm telling you now, whatever I tell you, you may be going through tremendous trouble, tremendous problems.

Is it God saying something to you? Is God saying, are you willing to look at your life now? Are you willing to lay down your sin? Are you willing to obey me? Will you let me examine you and show you where the problem is? There can be a sin problem. I'm convinced the majority of the problems, marital problems and all these other problems, are a result of sin. Lust, disobedience to the word of God.

You've heard that and you're going to hear more of it. That has to be dealt with. And the worst thing I could do is stand up here and try to just hug you and empathize with you and pity you.

And say, well, poor dear little saint, you're going through so much and pat you on the head. But if we bypass the root problem, I'm going to have to stand before God and answer. I'm telling you now with all the love in my heart.

If you want to love Jesus, you say, I want to serve the Lord and love him with all my heart. Then you're going to have to stand right before his presence right now and say, Lord, I know now that I can't love you unless I obey you. I have to obey your word.

You say, I don't like that word, I have to do it. Oh, brother, sister, I thank God that he gave me his fear. He put his fear in my heart, the fear of the Lord.

This is the beginning of all my wisdom. Will you right now open up your heart and say, Jesus, in this next week, send the Holy Ghost into my life. Because if you're saved, you have the Holy Ghost there to comfort and strengthen, convict.

When he comes, he said he'll convict of sin, righteousness and judgment. He'll warn you of the judgment on sin. He'll lead you into the path of righteousness, but he will convict of sin.

And then when you deal with that, then it opens up the door that the favor and the blessing of God can begin to work again in your heart. There are others of you standing here saying, Brother Wilkson, best I know, I am not walking in any disobedience. But I am, I am weary of a terrible battle struggle in my home or in my life.

Would you believe that the Lord is faithful when he said, if you'll cast all those cares on you, I'll take them. I'll lift your burden right now. And if you'll go home all this next week and go into the book of Psalms and pray, Holy Ghost, minister life to me now.

Speak to me through your word. He will lift every burden. You don't have to have it through sermons alone.

You get it now through the word of the Lord and that this word be your life. Couldn't live without it. Neither can you.

Heavenly Father, I pray for all of these that stand before me now. You know what's going on in their hearts. You know the struggle.

You know the battle. You know the pain. And Lord, you also know the innermost thoughts.

You know the innermost lust, the innermost desires. You know where the sin is. You know where that little black stone is that's embedded in the heart.

You're going to dig it out so that to be nothing into the flow of your blessing and the anointing of your spirit. I want you to pray this prayer right now. Just look up to him, Jesus.

Come on from your heart, Jesus. I want nothing in my heart. No disobedience.

No rebellion. I want your word. I want to know your word.

And I want to walk in your word. I want to love your word like David did. Oh, Jesus, forgive my sin.

Put your finger on it by the power of your spirit. And then give me power to make the confessions that I have to make. To make restitution.

To make changes. To do whatever you tell me to do. Let me walk in the light of your word.

Cleanse me, Jesus. And deliver me now from the attack of Satan. Now, I'm going to pray for you.

I'm going to pray for this family. And I want everybody in this building that loves the Lord. I want everybody that believes in the power of prayer.

My Baba says lift, I would demand everyone lift holy hands. That's the petition. That's petitioning.

That comes from the Old Testament thing where they used to raise a flag and wave it. These were our flags. We just stand before the Lord and we petition him now.

Father, folks, pray for this family first. I pray for this family in Washington. We stand right now, Lord, against the powers of Satan that are coming to destroy that home.

I pray you heal that daughter-in-law. Heal that daughter-in-law. Heal that 13-year-old girl, Lord.

Heal that son. Heal this family. God, chase the devil and all of his imps away from this home.

I pray, Lord, that you bring peace even today, even this moment while we're praying. The Spirit of the Lord will come upon this precious family. And that you will minister life.

Let them know that the Word of the Lord is life. That the Word of the Lord will sustain them. The Holy Ghost will comfort.

And God will see them through. And one day this shall all pass. This will pass.

And the light will shine. Lord, I pray for all those who have written to us from all over the world. Thousands and thousands of hurting people.

Oh, God, raise up a standard. Heal and save open doors that have been shut. Lord, heal marriages.

Heal families. Heal children. Oh, God, raise up a standard against the invasion of hell.

Against our families and our marriages, I pray. Oh, God, we lift our voice in petition to you in faith and confidence. You are not going to fail.

Lord, you are not going to fail. Lord, I give you praise. I give you honor.

Now let's just love him with our hearts. Lord, we love you this morning. Now you will receive our praise.

You will receive our love. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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