

Making of a Man of God

by David Wilkerson

The making of a man of God involves facing the cup of pain, the night of confusion, and the hour of isolation, but ultimately produces a man who is like Christ and has been through the fires of suffering.

Duration: 32:32

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:12, Job 1:10, Psalm 30:5, Psalm 139:1-3, Matthew 11:28-30, Hebrews 13:5, James 1:2-4

Topics: "Faith Formation", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by expressing a desire to draw closer to God and be broken before Him. He emphasizes that even in the midst of trials and confusion, God is at work and will raise up a standard against the enemy. The preacher encourages the congregation to trust in Jesus, who is merciful and kind, and will never leave or forsake them. He then shares a personal story of a young man who was struggling with his faith and feeling distant from God, but through a conversation with the preacher, he realizes that God is not angry with him and that his struggles are a test of his heart.

Transcript

The book of Job, that this man was very centered on his own righteousness. I want to talk to you tonight about David, the man who failed in his morals and still became a man of God. Can you imagine this man failing in one of the most blatant sins of all generations? A mighty king who grovels in the dust.

Can you imagine after he had sinned and become an immoral deprecate? Can you imagine this man still being called a man after God's own heart? I want to talk to you about Peter, the man who failed in his mission. Here is a man who had a vision and a call, a man to whom was entrusted the keys of the kingdom. Here is a man that Jesus said, Yet this man has to stand on a hillside rejecting and cursing the very Christ that he said he so loved.

But in spite of the fact that this man failed in his mission, he rose as a reconstructed man of God to stir a whole generation and lead them to Pentecost. And I want to talk about Jesus, the Son of God, who was touched by all of their infirmities and weaknesses, and he's touched by ours as well. Now what are the forces that go into the making of a man of God or a woman of God? What do all men of God have in common as far as inner battles and complexes? What are the forces and pressure that God uses to squeeze out the honey? What are those deep and hard and cold battles that a man who really wants the touch of God has to face? And don't you dare get on your knees and say, Jesus use me.

Don't you dare say, God put your hand on me, unless you're willing to face it. And when you read the life story of a missionary who's been used of God, don't expect to read him a story of romance and intrigue and beauty and love and honesty and happiness. Not at all.

You'll find Jacob sticking out all over the pages. You'll find heartache. You'll find sadness.

You'll find men who cry out, I'm a sinner. I'm hopeless. I don't know how God can use me.

You'll find the story of a man, not of adventure, but of tears, who goes to bed at night and cries himself to sleep. That's not a missionary book that I haven't read. I've read the lives of all the contemporary missionaries and all the way back in history.

And all through the pages, it is scarred by tears and torment and suffering and failure. But what are the forces that go into the making of a man or woman of God? Now listen to me. If you have been walking with Jesus for at least one year, and you have not as yet been on your knees begging God that all Christ be formed in you, if you have not been longing innately in your soul to become a real man of God of the spirit, if you as a sister in the Lord have not been obsessed with a desire to be a woman of God, then you've missed the mark entirely.

There should be from your hearts and your lips now a cry, Jesus, make me after your image. Let me be known as a man of God. I want you to know something, friends.

I've never believed that I've attained. Never, never, never. But there's one thing I want to be known more than anything in the world.

I want to be known as a man of God. I want my living and my dying to bring glory to Jesus. And I want my death to glorify him as much as my life.

And I want you to know if nothing else, my life is obsessed to be known as a man of God. That should be your desire. All right, what are these forces? Go to the garden.

Go to Jesus, the son of God, for he is our pattern. All the forces that were arrayed against Job are there in the garden arrayed against Christ. All of the battle that David fought on the rooftop, our Christ is there because he was touched by all the orbit of our feelings and our infirmities.

There is no trial that we face that he did not face. All the forces of torment that plagued the soul of Peter, they're there battling with our Savior in the garden. Go to Gethsemane.

There you see the forces at work in the making of a man of God. And I suggest tonight, first of all, that if you're to be a man or woman of God, you must be able to take your cup of pain. To every man and woman of God, there is a cup of pain.

Listen to him in the garden. Lord, if it be possible, let this cup depart from me. Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.

Now hear me. His whole ministry had been spent in doing the will of the Father. For three years, the entire ministry of Christ was designed toward Calvary.

His whole life headed for this very moment. And I seem to hear a little bit of pathos and pity when Jesus turns to his disciples and he says, Will you not watch with me? Will you not stick with me in my hour of

trial? Now to argue what was in that cup that we served our Christ is immaterial, and that's to miss the point altogether, because pain comes in a thousand different varieties. I'm not concerned in what kind of pain it was.

Suffice to say that whatever was in that cup forced Jesus to his face, to the ground, to cry out, Oh God, if it's at all possible, I can't take it. I'd rather get out. I wish you would relieve me.

It's too much for me. Job was being served his cup of pain, and he cried out, I am sorely pained. I cannot see my way.

He said, I've been cast into the depths of the mire. Job, in the middle of his cup of pain, cried out to God. He said, I have bathed my sores in tears.

He was being served his cup of pain. David said he made his couch a bed of tears. He said, my bones are consumed with pain.

My flesh is consumed with pain. I hear Jesus saying, Master, Father, if at all possible, let this cup depart from me. I don't know what your cup of pain may be, friends, but there are some people that have prayed for years for deliverance.

I believe in healing, and I believe in afflictions, and I believe in healing afflictions. David said if I had not been afflicted, I would not have taught the Lord. And don't for one minute think that just because you have pain that it's the devil attacking you, and that you're not living according to the Scripture, that there's sin in your life, and that you're being judged by God.

Because, David said, if I had not been afflicted, I would not have taught the Lord. And to say that the devil was doing it was to suggest the devil was driving him to the Father. And friends, there have been times that I've had to bear in my body a physical pain for three years.

And I have prayed and I have sought God, and yet through all that pain I can feel God at work in my life, driving me to Calvary and keeping me on my knees. And I can say after it passed from my system, it has been good for me. So you want to be a man of God? So you want the hand of God on you? My friend, you'll drink your cup of pain.

You'll drink your cup of pain. You'll bathe your bed in tears. You'll weep not so much at the feeling of physical pain, because there's a pain far worse than that.

That's the pain of being bruised by friends. That's the pain that parents feel when young children trample their hearts and break their covenants. It's the pain between a husband and wife when brick walls are built up between them, when that first love has disappeared.

All the tragic turmoil of difficulties in the home, the restless, sleepless nights, knowing that God is real, knowing that you're walking in the Spirit and yet being forced to drink a cup of pain. Don't believe for one minute that following Jesus is nothing but happy pills. Don't think for one minute that the Bible says count it all joy, but he's talking about counting it all joy in the midst of your cup of pain.

And I see Peter approach the Master at that hour. He's got a sword in his hand. And really, in essence, what Peter is saying, Master, I'll head him off just a little bit.

You go ahead and run. Get out while you can. You don't have to go through this.

We've got a lot of well-meaning ministers and Christian people, like Peter, running around with their little swords today, ready to cut off the ear of all opposition, trying to cut off the ear of the tempter, saying, run while you can. You don't have to put up with this. God's a good God.

You don't have to drink this at all. I believe God is good. I believe God is faithful.

But go for a minute. Try to run from your cup of pain. Jesus said, Peter, put up your sword.

He said, shall I not drink the cup which my Father hath given to me? He could drink it now because he saw the hand behind the cup. He saw who was serving it. But, friends, when you see the purpose behind your suffering, when you see that it's the hand of the Father, then drink it, my friends.

Don't run. Let it burn you. Let it tear you all the way down.

Let it scar you. Let it shake you. But drink it because the Master holds the cup.

Drink it, your cup of pain. Secondly, if you are to be a man of God, you must face your night of confusion, your night of confusion. Mark it down on a piece of paper and don't forget it.

Jesus said, my soul is exceedingly sorrowful and very heavy. My soul is very sorrowful and very heavy. Could you imagine the Son of God himself in a night of confusion? Can you see him in the garden and can you hear him? Did he not know that he was about to claim all victory over hell, death, and the grave? Did he not have an innate sense of guidance and direction? Didn't he know the Father was with him? After three years of ministering, he said, I must do the will of my Father.

I will not be with you long. He said to his disciples and he knew in his eye of prophetic vision that he would face this hour. The hardest part of faith, my friend, is the last half hour.

And the night of confusion always comes before the hour of victory. Just before the light dawns, just before the power of faith is broken, my friend, you'll face your night of confusion. It seemed that all sense of direction and guidance had been lost.

Job made it very clear. He said, I turn to the right and he's not there and I turn to the left and I see that he's not there. He's at work but I cannot perceive it.

David said, I am overwhelmed. He said, my eye is as black as his night of confusion had come. Peter, in his hour of confusion, cursed the Master.

Can you see David facing his night of confusion? And what he cried more than anything else was, why me? Job said the same thing. He said, I haven't trusted in my gold. He said, I have not hid my transgressions.

He said, I have been honest. My integrity has not left me. My steps have not fallen.

I have not slid. He said, I have not trusted in the arm of self. Why me? Why must I face this confusion? Something that I don't even understand.

There was a maneuver in heaven and his life was involved by a maneuver of spiritual forces. As if he were a little tetra being moved on the board of life. Why me? I've been honest.

I've had integrity. Why should I have to suffer? And there are a lot of Christians like that who are so full of self-righteousness. I've not cheated anybody.

I'm not running around with another man's wife. I don't have any dishonesty in me. Why should I have to face a night of confusion? Why should God have to seem to turn my guidance around so that I don't know where I'm at? David, in his night of confusion, can you imagine the mighty king of a mighty nation? Can you imagine him in his night of confusion when the prophet Nathan came to him? Can you imagine David searching his heart for the three beautiful psalms that were written during his hour or his night of confusion? When he could not understand, he said, It is too high for me.

My sins have overwhelmed me. My foolishness has deceived my heart. His foolishness.

David could not understand how after all these years of reaching out to God, he could have been so foolish and so stupid. Why me? There are lots of godly people today that face a moral issue in their life. In their nights of confusion, they say, Why God? Why me? My heart was searching after you and suddenly it overwhelmed me.

It plagued my soul. A night of confusion. I can testify tonight.

Hear me, please. I want you to listen. Don't think for one moment that a man who has been used by God in any measure has all the answers.

Don't think for one moment that he hears from God all the time. I've known what it is lately to face three solid months without hearing from God's voice. I've known what it is to walk three months in a state of total confusion.

No guidance, there's still small voices still. No friend with the word of advice that meets my heart. All my guidance patterns have gone astray and left totally confused, with nothing but darkness in front that I cannot see my way, making tragic mistake after mistake, as if to say, Oh God, I am confused.

I don't know which way to go. You say that's some confession to make? So you want to be a man of God? You will face that kind of confusion? You will face more night of confusion, my friend, before it's all over? Thirdly, you must face your hour of isolation. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And remember these words come from the lips of Jesus, the Son of God.

God, why have you forsaken me? Job said, he's become cruel to me. I rise in the day and I rise in the night, but he heareth me not. David said, hath God's mercy been clean forgotten? Hath he taken away his tender mercies from me? David also said, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why hast thou turned my counsel around? An hour of isolation, where there are no friends, there is no help, and it appears as though God has hidden his face.

Is it possible, is it at all possible that God actually hides his face from a man of God in the making? Is it possible there's a season that God actually lifts his hand and that God shuts his face and hides for a season? Of Hezekiah, 2 Chronicles 31, 31, and God hid from him that he may prove him and try him to find out all that was in his heart. And God hid from him. David said God hid from him.

Job said that God was hiding. Jesus said, why hast thou forsaken me? Friends, Jesus has never been more real to me. I've walked with him and I've loved him.

But friends, I have known the terror, and there's no terror like it in all the world. To get on your knees and find the heavens are brass. You cannot pray.

You cannot reach through. There is nothing but blackness. There is nothing but emptiness.

There is nothing but fear. And the heart cries out, oh God, where are you? Is that strange to you? Have you never faced that in your life? Then you've never been to Calvary. You've never been to Gethsemane.

But my friends, he said his tender mercies, he said in just a moment of wrath I hid myself. But he said I will turn to thee in tender loving mercies. He said the blessed Redeemer would extend tender loving mercies.

Job in his hour of isolation while he drank his cup of pain and faced his night of confusion, he says, the Lord knows the path that I take. And when he has tried me I shall come forth as gold because I trust in him. David in the midst of his hour of confusion and isolation drinking his cup of pain said, I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever.

I will raise my voice in praise. His face remained intact. Nothing could touch it.

Hallelujah. Now I can hear Peter on the day of Pentecost rising above his failure. He'd failed God in his vision.

And here he stood saying this is that which was promised by the prophet Joel, a vessel of God marked by the Lord. And we know that these were men of God. The scripture said that God blessed Job.

The scripture says to the prophet Samuel, this is he, anointed. God had handpicked David. We know that God's hand was on these men.

What does that have to do with you? What does that have to do with me? Let me make one practical application before I close tonight. Last night in San Francisco a young man from this church came into the prayer room. He's visiting, working in San Francisco.

I met him at these altars. I remember the night that he cried and prayed and walked out of the prayer room with joy in his heart. Last night I saw him in the prayer room in San Francisco at the Civic Auditorium and I've never seen such a sad looking young man in all my life.

He said, Mr. Wilkerson, I just don't know which way to turn. I have no joy. God seems to be so far away from me I'm being tempted.

He said, in fact, I feel like I'm going to backslide. I'm going to lose my touch of God. I feel like I'm going to slip back into the world.

I walked the streets fearing trembling. He said, I panicked. I panicked.

I bowed my head with him, put my hand on his shoulder, and I said, son, this is your hour of trial. God is testing you to see what is in your heart. And I went over this little message that I'm preaching tonight and suddenly tears began to stream down his cheeks.

He said, Brother Wilkerson, you mean God really isn't mad at me after all? I said, no, he's not mad at you. He said, is it because there's some terrible habit in my life? I said, well, you would answer that. He said, I don't think so.

And then suddenly he began to see the light. The Spirit of the Lord just began to follow me, raised his hands, began to praise the Lord. He said, take me through, Lord.

Take me through. When I left him, he was thanking the Lord for bringing him through. The Holy Spirit was beginning to shine forth because the light shined in darkness.

Weeping may endure for a day, but joy for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. And we sing a song, standing somewhere in the shadows, you'll find Jesus. Some man of God wrote that song, I believe.

I have a loving wife. I love her very dearly. The battle that I face in my ministry is not one in my home.

I have wonderful children, and my battle is not there. I have thousands of friends around the country who appreciate my ministry, and my battle is not there. I have never loved the Lord more than I love him now.

I have never desired God more in all my life. But I can tell you, friends, that the more I pray, the more I say, oh, God, use me, the more I pray for young people to be won through my ministry, the more I say, oh, God, put your hand on me, open my eyes, that I can see your glory and your power, the more I can feel these forces arrayed against me, the more I feel myself being crushed like Jesus did crying, oh, God, I can't take and get this cup of pain. And I tell you, friends, lately there have been times that I've wanted to get on a plane and run to South America and hide like David said, or that I had wings to fly to the wilderness.

I would freeze the tempest and the storm, not to run from the wife and the family and my obligation to a ministry, but because during this time of the making of a man of God, these forces are arrayed and a man has to stand there and drink it. And I've known what it is to pray in thousands of dollars and walk for a whole year and hear Jesus lead me every step of the way, a little still small voice behind me saying, David, this is the way. I know what it is to get a pad and a pencil out and ask God questions and have him answer them for me, not spirit lighting, but just have it marked down clear.

And I've stood before men in the government and I've stood before city officials and I've prophesied as the spirit came and I gave them the words that God had given to me and then I've turned right around to face nights of confusion where I didn't know which way to turn and I made multiplied mistakes that cast me down in despair and I've cried out, Oh God, where are you? And I've gone for three and four weeks to my closet and I've said, God, I've got to touch you tonight. I've got to be broken. I want you to crush me and I can feel nothing but death.

I can feel nothing but coldness and the heavy blast of heaven. But through it all, there is a sense of destiny, God is at work. Right at your storm, I can hear the spirit speaking, right at your storm, just hold steady.

Hold steady, because when the enemy comes in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him. Some of you are going to the flood tonight. You know what I'm talking about, brash heavens.

You know what I'm talking about, bathing your couch in tears. You know what I talk about when I say a cup of pain. You know what I talk about a night of confusion.

You know what that loneliness and isolation is when you're cut off from friends and everybody else. Nobody can touch that spot in your heart. And I've preached tonight without a single note, but I've preached from my heart because I know the spirit wanted me to preach this tonight.

And I feel from the very innermost being of my soul that the Holy Ghost is talking to people tonight. I had a woman come to me this morning when I preached this message. She said, Mr. Wilkerson, when I sat in church this morning, I walked in happy and carefree.

But she said, when you talked about the cup of pain and the hour of isolation, I began to weep because I found out I was just putting on a front. My husband left me and my home was in turmoil. And she said, I've just had to cover it off.

I've just used this as an excuse to hide. And she was broken before the Lord. She said, lay hands on me.

I want God to keep my faith strong. And I believe this, friends, that when a man or woman of God is in the making, these forces will come against you with all of its fury and terror. But if you'll stand up and say, though I be tried, though I be tested, though all these forces be laid against me, I know in whom I have believed and I know that He's able to keep that which I've committed on Him against that day.

And just take your stand. You don't have to laugh. You don't even have to have joy.

You may even have turmoil in your soul. And I want to say one thing just before I close. And I think I may have told this last time and this is my last closing thought.

I've got a chapter in my book called In Case of Floods. And this happened just a few months ago. I was sitting in the backyard.

I had a Sunday off. And I was reading my Bible and getting a message and an unction was just flowing through me. And I was just praising the Lord.

And I looked across the street. My wife was in the neighbor's yard talking to the neighbor. She'd been trying to enter to Christ, a wonderful Catholic friend.

And there were some other ladies. They were talking. And these ladies wanted Mrs. Wilkerson to get in the car with them and go around the block to look at a certain house that had just been plated or something.

And I saw Mrs. Wilkerson get in the car with these unconverted people. And suddenly, in a moment of a flash, I stood to my feet and a spirit came over me, a flood. She shouldn't do that.

The Bible said, Come out from among them and be a separate and clean. Why in the world is she doing that? And I went. I stalked into the house and I kicked the chair.

And I said, She ought to have better sense. And she was gone a half an hour. And the longer she was gone, the more I began to burn.

And when she came in the door, just as innocent as could be, I was ready for her. Mrs. Wilkerson, I'm a man of God and I'll not have you running around with ungodly friends in this neighborhood. And she was dumbfounded.

And my voice was raised louder and louder. And I'll tell you, I had a spirit that wasn't good. I listened to what was coming out of my mouth and I stopped in the middle of it.

I said, Honey, just a minute. I said, You know this is not me. I said, The flood has come.

The devil is just trying to swamp me. Now I wasn't doing anything wrong. In fact, I was praising the Lord.

But the spirit, I mean, this Bible said, When the enemy comes in, like a flood. Now, you know, there are fiery darts of the enemy. And all you have to do is put on the armor of God and you can withstand them.

Those are the little immature darts of the enemy against immature Christians. But those who want to be a man or a woman, if God has to face a flood, when suddenly, without any warning, you find yourself with everything hell has thrown at you, without thinking about it, without expecting it, all of a sudden, a spirit upon you that you cannot control. I said, Honey, please, give me a half an hour.

I've got to get into study right now. And I went into the garage and I got on my knees and I said, Oh, God! I was sitting in that backyard studying. I said, I don't know what has happened, but I'm being flooded.

I could feel the enemy just flood and sweep through my soul, trying to crush my spirit. I said, I plead the blood of Jesus. I began to praise the Lord and the devil can't stand the praise of God.

I started saying, Hallelujah! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Hallelujah! The wicked one cometh and toucheth me not. The spirit of fear, but of love and power and a sound mind.

And the more I praised, the madder the devil got. You say, Well, did the devil leave you? No, I felt more depressed than ever. I could feel that just depressing spirit.

But I knew, I knew that God was under, because the scripture says the king rioted. He rioted the king of the French. And the Lord seemed to speak to me, Just ride out your storm.

Just ride it out. There's nothing you can do. Just ride it out.

Don't get excited. Don't panic. Just ride it out.

I went in, I said, Honey, my spirit still hasn't settled and it'll probably be a half an hour or so, but forgive me in advance, please. I'm sorry. I went out in the yard and I took a little walk and the devil knew that he couldn't get me stirred, so he just left the flood and subsided.

And I started singing the praises of God and I'll tell you friends, it's a lot of fun making up. Yes. When the enemy comes in like a flood, do you know what the flood's all about? Come on.

Have you ever been in one? Truth of the matter is, somebody's in it right now. Somebody drinking of their cup of pain. I'm not trying to cut off the ear of the tempter tonight.

I'll not lay hands on you and say, God, deliver you from your cup of pain, but I will pray that your faith will not because Jesus prays that way. He said, I pray for you that your faith will not. And this is God's wish, strengthening our faith.

And friends, you know, I'm just coming through a great test in my own life, tested through all these forces, but through it all, I know God is preparing me for overseas evangelism and I'm going to face devils all over the world. If you can't face the little trial, how are you going to face the big test when it comes? See, there are tests and there are trials. The little test to prepare you for the big trial of life.

I want every head bowed, every eye closed, not a sound made, please. Jesus, tonight in this building, in the annex, there are people that face an hour of isolation and a night of confusion. Oh God, when we

move on just by a sheer faith, nothing else.

We move on because even though we're unworthy, we know that Jesus is merciful and kind and that He stands beside us. And standing in those shadows, Jesus stands with outstretched arms saying, come unto me. I'll never leave you.

I'll never forsake you. And Lord, if you do close your eyes for just a moment, if we cannot see you at work, if we cannot perceive you, it's only because you are proving us to see all that is in our hearts. And we thank you for that time of proving.

This concludes the message. For copies of this message or a list of other messages by Reverend David Wilkerson, contact World Challenge, P.O. Box 260, Glendale, Texas, 75771.

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