

Preserved for a Purpose

by David Wilkerson

God preserves us for a purpose, to bring us into the promised land, to accomplish something with our lives, and to give us a testimony.

Duration: 56:17

Scripture: Psalm 121:1

Topics: "Church Unity", "Faith And Witness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of unity and love among believers. He encourages the congregation to interact with one another and not just rush out after the service. The preacher reminds the audience that God is in control of their lives and has a purpose for everything they go through. He relates this to the current state of society, highlighting the fulfillment of Jesus' words about fear and confusion. The preacher urges the congregation to have faith and be prepared to be witnesses in these challenging times.

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, PO Box 260, Lindell, Texas 75771, or calling 903-963-8626.

You are welcome to make additional cassettes of this message for free distribution to friends. However, for all other forms of reproduction or electronic transmission, existing copyright laws apply. I want to speak to you tonight on the subject preserved for a purpose.

Preserved. Have you been preserved? Let me tell you what that means. Heavenly Father, thank you.

Lord, we've had your word come to us in a marvelous way today, throughout this day, this morning, this afternoon. And now we come to your word again. We love your word.

Your word is life to us, Father. And I come to you now acknowledging that I need a touch from you, I need quickened by the Holy Ghost. Lord, I know that I'm made righteous through the blood.

I am righteous in Christ. And I ask you that you cleanse my mind and my heart and let it flow out of the innermost. Lord, touch me.

Let the words bring life tonight. Bring the little that I have and multiply it to this people. And when they leave, they will know they have heard a word from the Lord.

Help us to understand what you're saying. Add words to what you've given me and let me preach to myself as I preach to this audience. Now cleanse me, sanctify me, and let every word bear fruit tonight, I pray in Jesus' name.

Preserved for a purpose. David prayed, preserve me, O God, for indeed do I put all my trust. When he said preserve me, that word in Hebrew is a very meaningful word.

It means, O Lord, put heads around me, heads of thorns. Guard me, watch over me, all my comings and all my goings. Every step that I take, watch me, guard me, and put a wall around me.

That's what it means to be preserved by God. Bible says everywhere David went, he was blessed, prospered, and preserved by the Lord. Turn to Psalm 121 and you get a better picture of it.

Psalm 121, David speaking again in this chapter. Psalm 121, let's read the whole chapter, all eight verses. I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help.

Where's it come from? The hill of God. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer or allow thy foot to be moved.

He that keep thee will not slumber. You know he's not asleep. Let the terrorists be where they are.

God knows where they're at and he's not asleep. He'll take care of you. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper. The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall what? Preserve thee from all evil. What's that word? It's the same Hebrew word. God says the Lord shall put a wall of thorns about you.

He'll guard you, protect you in your comings and your goings. That's on the bus. That's the subway.

The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out, thy coming in from this time forth even forevermore.

Now you understand that means he's going to preserve you. He's going to put a wall around you, a wall of thorns, going to guard you, going to keep his eye on you. As you go to church, as you go home tonight, and go to job tomorrow, and every day God says I'm going with you and you're coming, going.

When you get up and when you go to sleep, I'm going to guard you. I am going to preserve you. Glory be to God.

In all your ways, Lord preserve thy going out, thy coming in from this day forth and how long. Now that should cover your 70 years of promised life. Hallelujah.

I want you to know our God covers every base. When he says I'm going to preserve you, I'm going to keep you. What about those fears here in New York that are so rampant? The fear of anthrax, and smallpox, and germ warfare, and my how the press is really, they're making a fortune right now on this.

But you know it's created a fear, but that dare not come into the house of God and the heart of a believer. You should never fear. I don't have a gas mask and I don't intend to buy a gas mask.

I've got a better mask than anything that any man can produce. I want you to turn Psalm 140 here because the Lord even covers these secret attacks. Yes he does.

Psalm 140. I want you to, I'm going to go the first 13 verses if you don't mind. Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man.

I don't remember his name. All the terrorists. Preserve me.

There it is again. Preserve me. Put a wall around me.

Guard me. Keep me. My coming and going from the violent man.

They imagine mischief in their heart. Continue. They are gathered together for war.

They've sharpened their tongue like a serpent. Adder's poison is under their lips. See that's, that's the germ warfare.

Poison is under their lips. Keep me, O Lord, from the hand of the wicked. Preserve me from the violent man who have proposed to overthrow my goings.

The proud have hit a snare for me in cords and spread a net by the wayside. They've set jinns or traps for me. I said unto the Lord, thou art my God.

Hear the voice of my supplication, O Lord. O God, the Lord, the strength of my salvation, thou has covered my head in the day of battle. Now that's my gas mask.

Thou has covered my head. The one they have in New York covers your face. This covers the whole head and the whole body.

Hallelujah. Grant not, O Lord, the desires of the wicked. Further not their wicked desires, lest they exalt themselves, you know, dance around saying we have won.

As for the head of those that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them. Let burning coals fall upon them. Let them be cast into the fire, into deep pits, that they rise not again.

Let not an evil speaker be established in the earth. Evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him. I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted and the right of the poor.

Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name. The upright shall dwell in thy presence. Glory be to God.

That covers all secret warfare. That covers every act of violence that man can conceive. God says, I've covered every base.

I've covered every area, so rest in me. Hallelujah. In case you still don't get it, go to Psalm 37.

I don't get it. Well, if you don't get this, Psalm 37, start verse 23 with me, if you will, please. Verse 23, the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way.

Though he fall, this is Psalm 37, though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. I've been young. I was young, yes.

And now I'm 70. Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread? He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his seed is blessed. Depart from evil and do good, and dwell forevermore.

For the Lord loveth judgment, forsaketh not his saints. They are what? Preserved forever. But the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

Look at verse 33. The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he's judged. Wait on the Lord and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land.

When the wicked are cut off, thou shall see it. I've seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away.

That's what's going to happen to Ben Loddit. He's going to pass away. Lo, he was not.

I sought him. I couldn't find him. Looked all over Afghanistan and Pakistan and couldn't find him.

Mark the perfect man in the upright, for the end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together. The end of the wicked shall be cut off.

But the salvation of the righteous is the Lord. He is their strength in time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them and deliver them.

He shall deliver them from the wicked and save them, because they trust in him. Hallelujah. Did you get it? Job called God the preserver of man.

He called him a preserver. Now, none of us here are going to argue with that, because you have found him to be that. And in the seventh chapter, don't turn, but in Deuteronomy seventh chapter, Moses said, the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes.

The Lord commanded us to fear our God for our good always, that he might preserve us alive as it is this day, that he may preserve us. He said, God gave you all these commandments for one reason. He wants to put a guard around.

He wants to preserve you. But for what purpose? Why would God say that? I want to preserve you, but there has to be a purpose when God saves the people and preserves them. Why would God take them through the wilderness? They go through the Red Sea, a great trial.

Now, first of all, in Egypt, 10 plagues they lived through. Can you imagine what they're telling their grandkids of the 10 miraculous deliverances in the land of Egypt? And then they go into the wilderness, they cross the Red Sea, a mighty deliverance that we still preach and talk about. Amazing even today, with all of the inventions and all of the great achievements of man, to think of the Red Sea just opening and people walking over and then closing on an entire army and destroying it.

Amazing work of God. But why did God preserve them through the plagues and through the wilderness with locusts and snakes? And he provided water and he provided food. Why? So that when they grow old, they just have a testimony of how God kept me sheltered and blessed me.

And so they can die fat and happy? No, no, no, no. There has to be a reason for all of this. There has to be a reason God preserved Israel and preserved the people in the past.

Moses said he brought us out not to give you a testimony that God supplied all my needs so that you can sit around a campfire and tell your grandkids all these stories of the past miracles and how God delivered you from crisis after crisis, how God healed you, how you were sick bitten by snakes and you looked at a cross with a brazen serpent and you were healed. Those are wonderful stories. Those are wonderful miracles to tell your children and your grandchildren and God said tell them.

But that's not the limit. That's not why God delivered them. That's not why God preserved them.

Not just to sit around a fire and talk about how I was blessed. God has met all my needs. I lived through a depression.

I've heard people say, wonderful, my parents lived through depression. The last depression in the 1930s and what it was like hearing stories of going three and four days without food and someone knocking on the door and bringing food. Those are wonderful stories and yet God preserved three-year-old David and the rest of the kids and mom and dad for a purpose.

Not so we can stand here and tell stories about the past. God saved them and delivered them, preserved them, put a wall around them. He said God brought us out.

He brought us out that he might bring us in to give us the land which he swore to our fathers. God said I brought you out and I preserved you so I can take you someplace. So I can accomplish something with your lives.

So that all of these trials and all these tests and everything I took you through has a meaning to it. Some of you sit here maybe in your 60s and your 70s and you have gone through one incredible trip. I believe everyone that's a Christian here over 60 years of age could write a book.

Some of you over 30 could write a book. Some of you in your 20s could write a book. What you have been through in the way of loneliness and tests and trials.

How many times you've been at death's door. How many of your family have you buried or children. What incredible tests and trials have you endured.

We just released a book, my publishing company just released a book Triumph Through Tragedy. Testimonies after testimonies sent to us from all over the world. Christians who have been through things like a man looks out the door as his two daughters are crossing the road and sees a police car hit them and kill them.

And the whole book is, I'm going to try to sell that book, I don't get any money out of it, but the whole thing is testimony after testimony of people who've been through excruciating trials. Think of what you've been through. I look at some of you gray-haired folks, now I can say because I have gray hair, so I'm not mocking you.

I think gray hair is a glory. I have to clarify that. The Bible said gray hair is a glory to a righteous man.

My wife prefers color. That was stupid. What you've been through, but you look now over your life and you see all of those things, what does it mean? Why did he preserve you? Why, look at the choir here, why

aren't you, and they can say that to why aren't you in a mental institution right now? And why aren't you in a drug rehab program? The kind of kids I've worked with in people all my life.

Why aren't you out on the street like we see somebody here out of your senses and barely alive? Why are you sitting here tonight in this house, saved, peace with God, and looking back over your life? And you look back at what he's done. What's it all about? Just so that you can sit in this church now and say, God's been good to me. I have a testimony.

Wonderful. God brought you out. He delivered you.

That's a wonderful thing. But folks, there has to be some purpose to it. God said through Isaiah about the coming Christ.

In fact, go to Isaiah 49. I just want to show you something before we go any further. Isaiah 49, what Isaiah said of Christ.

You know that even Jesus had to be preserved by the father for a purpose. Isaiah 49. This is the Holy Spirit speaking through Isaiah.

Thus saith the Lord, verse eight. Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, in a day of salvation have I helped thee, and I'll preserve thee. That's the father talking to his son, Jesus.

I'll preserve thee and give thee for a covenant of the people to establish the earth to cause to inherit the desolate heritage. Now look at me, please. Here's the father saying to his own son, and Jesus is our example.

He said, you go, you take on manhood, you take on flesh. And he said, I'll be your help and I'll preserve you. I'll put a wall around you.

I'll guard you. I'll keep you in your coming and goings. He said he did nothing without hearing what his father had to say and do.

He was completely under the governance of the Spirit of Almighty God and under his father. Now why did God say I'm going to preserve you? For what purpose? What purpose? Verse nine. That thou mayest say to the prisoners, go forth.

To them that are in darkness, show yourself. They shall feed in the ways and their pastor shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the heat nor sun smite them.

You see, there's a purpose to God. The father says, I'm going to preserve you because I have a plan for you. I have a plan.

This was a plan that was instigated before the world was created. This was an eternal covenant between the father and his son. He said, if you go, I'll preserve you.

You're going to go as a man. You're going to live and think as a man. But I'm going to preserve you and I'm going to keep you.

You remember how they tried to kill him? They took him up to a hillside, tried to throw him over a cliff and God came on the scene and God delivered him. The father delivered him. Angels came, ministered to him.

They couldn't kill him. The Lord was keeping his promise, a covenant promise. I will keep you.

But why? That you may deliver the prisoners and set them free and show yourself. You will feed those who are hungry and those who are thirsty. You'll be a life.

You'll be a savior of mankind. There was a divine purpose in God's preserving his own son. Now in the Bible, Joseph is the most notable example of a man preserved for a purpose.

You remember how his brother sold him into slavery? This man had a dream. This man had a word from God that was going to be mightily used. And he winds up in irons, the scripture says.

And you, you know this story. He goes to Potiphar's house and he winds up in jail. This man is, for years he suffers and he is now, I want to talk to you about the time that his brothers came to Egypt and Joseph is now ruler of all the land.

And there's a famine and his brothers come and they stand before him. And this is the time that, that he reveals himself to his brothers, that he's Joseph. And the scripture says, he wept aloud and Joseph said unto his brethren, I'm Joseph.

Come near to me. I'm Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. He wept aloud.

He was revealing himself. And listen to these words. He said, now therefore, be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that you sold me hither.

For God did send me before you to preserve life. God was preparing me to save you. I was being prepared.

I had to go through this. Joseph at this time is now made peace with his past. He knows now he said, I can look over the whole journey and I know God was in it.

I know everything I suffered, every lonely moment, every pain, everything I went through. I can tell you now it was worth it. God was in it.

I stand here at 70 years of age and I look over the suffering and the pain and the terror. Our home plagued for years with cancer after cancer after cancer. And I know what it is to stand before multitudes and be the loneliest man in the building because of the enemy terrorizing my mind and soul.

And I look back over all the years of suffering and I look back now and as I wouldn't be here now preaching a salvation ministry to you because all these years I see God's hand in it. I can look back as Joseph did and said God was in it. God sent me.

The devil meant it for evil, but God turned it to good. God preserved a man to save a remnant. And this is how God works.

That's the point of my message tonight. God raises up a Joseph company. He takes them through years of trouble and trials and tribulations.

He tests them and proves them as no other people are proved. He delivers them from satanic snares, even from the attack of adultery and fornication of all kinds. Delivers them from drugs and from alcohol.

Many of them are facing doubts and fears and even tested by God's word. You see, Joseph when he was going through all this, he knew he was a righteous man and he had a heart for God. He knew where his heart was.

He knew who he was and the Lord is God. And he couldn't understand the sufferings. And some of you going through it now, you don't understand it because you say all I had was a heart for God.

All I want is to do his will. All I want to do is please the Lord. And you don't understand what you're going through.

And some of you are going through a literal hell. You can hide it from others and you're not trying to hide it, but nobody inquires about it. Nobody knows where you stand right now.

They don't know how you cry yourself to sleep. They don't know it at all. They don't know the loneliness and the pain and the hurt in you.

God does, but people don't. And even if you told them, they'll say, well, that's too bad, but they wouldn't feel it. They wouldn't understand it.

He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant, whose feet they hurt with fetters. He was laid in iron until the time his word came. The word of the Lord tried him.

That was his greatest test. Lord, this is against everything I read, everything I know of your word. This doesn't match because you know my heart.

And you remember when he was in prison and the butler's being restored and Joseph is interpreting his dreams and he says to the butler as the butler leaves the prison, he said, please remember me, show me some kindness, get me out of here, this prison. I've done nothing that should put me in this dungeon. And folks, if you've not known this cry of Joseph, you've never really understood the workings and the movings of God's spirit.

He's in a terrible condition now because the word of the Lord is trying him. It's not that he's in prison, it's not that he's in pain, it's not that he's rejected by his brothers. It's, Lord, I don't understand this because the word told me that I would be blessed, I would be honored, I would be useful, my life would count.

It's not counting now. I'm wasted. All my talents, everything is wasted.

I don't amount to anything here. And he cries out to this man, please remember me to Pharaoh. I didn't do anything to deserve this.

And that's the cry of many of us, Lord, I didn't deserve this. You know my heart, all I wanted was you. I've been fasting, I've been praying.

This is not according to your word. I thank God he has a Joseph company today in the land and in the face of the earth. Men and women touched by God, you know that you have a call of God.

There's something God's been burning in your heart. You say, I want God to use my life. I'm not seeking fame or fortune, but I have a burning in me.

And at this place that I am now in my life, I don't see anything happening. Because you see, until God sets the time, sometimes you're left in irons and you're in fetters. God preserved Joseph for a purpose.

Listen to it. God sent me before you, he said, to preserve you a posterity in the earth, to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God.

Do you understand that? God sent you on this journey. God's been with you through it all. God's allowed these things in your life because he's doing something.

He's preparing you for something. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God and he has made me a father to Pharaoh, Lord of all his house and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt. Now, what's the lesson for you and me? How does it relate to us? You see, God has preserved you right now.

You sit here, some of you may not be in the best of health, but you're alive and well, and you love Jesus. You're sitting here, hearing the word of the Lord. I'm asking you to look back from the day that Christ saved you.

Look back now and just for a moment, think of the journey you've been on. I really believe that if we had time, we had each of you here tonight, even in the annex, and you took just five minutes and told just the highlights of the suffering and the trials that you've been through. I don't think I could handle it.

I might be able to listen 25 or 30 of you, and then it collapsed me and most of us, we couldn't handle it. But God brought you out, he preserved you, and here you are. Doesn't mean that you won't face it again, but you can say with me right now, you can look back over everything you've been through and say, God has been utterly faithful.

God has been faithful to me. God has delivered me. I told the audience this morning, while I was praying, I said, terrorism facing terrorism.

Man, I've been fighting the devil himself. These are the children of the devil. These are the henchmen of the devil.

What can they do if we've been fighting the devil and getting victory? We've got victory over the devil himself. What can any terrorist do to us? Some of you know what it's like to do hand-to-hand combat with the devil, on your knees before the Lord, and God brought you faithfully through it all. But why did he keep you from falling? When you look around and see so many people you know that are fallen, they're gone, they're desperate, their families are broken, their lives are broken, they're hopeless, many of them are dead and gone, many of them died and went to hell.

And here you sit, delivered and free, your mind on the Lord. Why did he do it? He preserved you because he has a purpose for your life. You say, well, I'm in my later years, that can't apply to me.

Oh, yes, it does. It applies to every one of us in this building. Once you take an honest look at where we are in society right now, especially here in the United States, what do you see when you hear the reports and see what's happening in the land? You know what I see? I see the words of Jesus being fulfilled right before my eyes.

Men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after the things which are coming on the earth for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. That's what I see. I see upon the earth what Jesus said, distress of

nations with perplexity, confusion.

That's what I see. And Paul, for when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them. In other words, here are people living so secure, feeling secure, living in security, saying, we have peace, we have security.

Suddenly, the security is taken. A sudden destruction takes away the peace and the security. And he said, Jesus said, they shall not escape.

They shall not escape. And now we know what Paul's talking about. We know what Jesus was talking about because we've lived to see those days.

I never thought I'd live to see this day. You know, it's one thing to talk about the coming of the Lord and all the things, all the signs that are going to come in the last day. One thing to preach it.

And in your mind, you're thinking it's way out there somewhere. I'll be dead and gone when all this, you know, preach, but I'll be out of here. Oh, but it's awesome to live.

You hate to see it, but you know, there's something inside the heart that says he's coming. It's near because you see it and you feel it. When I was a boy, my dad would visit people way out in the country.

It was a country parish and people live 20, 30 miles out in the country. But near our town was a little town up on a hill that had lights. And we were kids and we would drive for miles and, but there was suddenly we'd come over and then you see those, the hills, the lights, and you felt like you were coming home.

You're almost home. And there was a feeling, our hearts would just leap in the kids. Dad said, they're the lights.

And we say, we're almost home. Well, I see the lights. I see Jesus is over the hill.

I see the light coming and there's something in my heart just leaps. All these things, he said, you see them happen, look up and rejoice because your redemption draws nigh. It's drawing very, very nigh.

But that brings me to this. If that's happening, then Lord, what is all of this suffering about? What are all these trials you brought me through? So that I alone can just stand before you and say, thank you, Jesus. And I will thank you, all these things that you brought me through.

But what impact does that have on the world around me? What impact does that have on the earth? Did I live just to be able to say I was self-preserved? Paul said that we're preserved in spirit, soul, and body. And then he goes on in second Thessalonians the first chapter, listen closely, he goes on to say that we may fulfill the work of faith with power. That we may fulfill the work of faith with power.

What he's saying, all this time God's prepared you for a crisis time. It's going to come on the earth. Men's hearts will be failing them for fear.

And Paul the apostle said, when they say peace and safety, then sudden destruction, that's all in Paul's mind. And now Paul says that he's preserved you for this time, that you may fulfill the work of faith with power. Not just faith to deliver you from sickness and family problems and poverty or any of these things.

He'll do all that. That's his nature. He's a father.

But he says that you might fulfill the work of faith with power. Not silent faith, not quiet faith, but a faith that proclaims. See Joseph had that.

Joseph could stand before them and say, I have gone through this to become a savior to you. I have what you need. I went through all this for a purpose and it's not going to be wasted.

God put his hand on me and he took me through all kinds of fire and through floods for a reason, because you would need me. To preserve you, God has preserved me. And now in this world that we're in, when everybody around us is going hell to skeleton, everybody's scared to death.

There's fear on all side. God brought you through a lifetime of scares. He brought you through a lifetime of demon powers.

And he did it for a reason that you would be able in this last day to have a faith with power, to stand up on the job and say, I have what you need. Now folks, we all know that the Lord says that we've been given power that we can become witnesses. I shouldn't have to stand here tonight and say that's what this is all about.

Go out and witness, go out and witness. Let me tell you something. I don't want to face my last days looking over my life and see what was that all about.

What was that about? All that I went through. I want to stand before Jesus with something to show for it. I want to be able to bring sheaves to him.

Now I hear from some people on our mailing list who write me letters and they keep saying God has me hidden and I'm being preserved for a great work. And most times they want to be revealed to the world as prophets and evangelists. And I hear so many people, God has called me to, to win the multitudes and win nations to the Lord and world leaders.

And they won't even talk to the neighbors. They won't talk to anybody on the job, but see God's preserving me. God is hiding me.

And one day he's going to release me to the world. God's not going to release you out of the house until you have the burden for those, your family and those around you. That's where it begins.

And they live frustrated lives waiting for this revelation, the revealing of their ministry. Boy, I'll tell you what, there's nobody's more frustrated than somebody that's not called to preach who thinks they are. Folks, when the nation is reeling and when there's sorrow on all sides, the Lord's not looking to raise up another evangelist to win the multitudes.

He's not looking for a TV star. He's not looking for any stars. He's looking for those hidden individuals, this Joseph company that he has been working on for years and years and years for times just like this.

That one by one can go to neighbors and go to family. God's not looking for some big thing. He's looking for every one of us just to obey the urgings of the Holy Spirit and what he would call us to do.

Now, folks, I've labored at this and I'm going to close in just a minute. I labored at how I could come to you and tell you what your purpose is. In other words, you're preserved.

Now, I think it pretty well covered the fact that we know we're preserved, but how do I convey to you that you have a purpose? What is that purpose? I've told you that we're to have a faith with power to it and with stamina and with the zeal of God and with great faith with power. But I want to tell you something from my heart. You know what the Holy Spirit settled on for me? All ministry of any kind, one-on-one or two-by-two if he expands it, all ministry has to come out of communion with the Lord.

All. If you are not praying about what God would have you do, if you're not praying about saying, God, I want you to use my life in some way, I don't want to stand before the throne without knowing that I have been used in some way. Now, God may tell you, you may be a woman who knows how to bake.

I'm not being facetious. You know how to bake pies. I asked the Lord if you shouldn't bake one for your mailman.

I mean, why are we looking at some great things when we won't even do the little things before God? Gwen's sitting here and my goodness, the path that she's been through. She saw somebody being willed into an operating room recently. We were there and said, oh, does that bring back memories? Terrible memories.

I get sick in my stomach just thinking of all the times of those weeding back and forth and with daughters into the thing. But what she's been through is incredible. And she came to the place where she said, and I don't feel like I'm being used.

And see, the clue for me is look back at what you've been through. The clue to what God may want you to do is the battles he brought you through. Look at your struggles.

What did you struggle with? What did God give you victory over? That's the clue. God will use you in the area that you were battling. So she got the idea from the Holy Ghost.

So she's praying to all these women that have cancer. Just write them a little note of love and encouragement. And she writes many, many letters.

She sits down and all these women that have cancer all over the country and on the world write to her. And then we get these incredible letters back. You put faith in my heart.

And she's not known nobody. You wouldn't have known unless I told you. Not going to write a book about it.

She just quietly in her own way does that. But you see, she went all through that so that she can now minister to others. She was preserved for a ministry, for a purpose.

Some of you God has used and you don't know why. And he wants to use everyone in this house in some way. But that won't come unless you get on your face before God.

And folks, I remember this. With this, I close. I was in Pennsylvania, a little town.

You know this story. Many of you read it in the cross, in Switzerland perhaps. But I remember getting so hungry.

I said, God, I want you. I wasn't praying for a ministry. I just got hungry for God.

And I spent a whole year just praying. I pastored a little church in Pennsylvania. But I have a Bible you could never buy from me for any money.

Marked from cover to cover. Because in that year, I got hungry for the word. I began to read it voraciously.

And I would weep before the Lord, just love him, seek his face. And one day I said, well, what's this all about? I'd sit up on a hill and look out. I said, Lord, there's a whole world over those hills.

God, why are you drawing me to you like this? I became a changed man. The spirit of God would come upon me because I was shut in with the Lord. And out of that year, one day, sitting, well, the day before that, or prior to that, a week prior to that, trying to get up in church.

I just collapsed and wept and cried and wailed before God. And I didn't know what it was about. Rolling under the seats.

We had pews. Rolling under a pew and just, God, what is it about? Go home and don't know anything. Never been to New York.

Never. Wouldn't even want to be in New York. Last place in the world I'd want to be.

Our town had 1,800 people. I went home that week and said, Lord, I don't understand what this is about. And then I go into my little study in Open Life Magazine.

There's a face of seven boys indicted for murder and said, this is what it's about. Go to New York and witness to those boys. That's all I had.

One step. And you know where it ended. Right here.

Very few going to be called to a worldwide ministry, but he's calling you. I don't care how old or young you are. He's calling you.

There ought to be something in your heart tonight that says, God, I want all of these things that you took me through to benefit somebody. I want to be used. If you seek his face, he'll tell you.

He'll put a name. He'll give you direction. I can't do it.

There's not one cure-all that covers everybody. God works differently with all of us, but God has something for you. I want you to stand.

No clapping, please. Between the services, between the three o'clock and this service, I was in the pastor's room praying and Holy Spirit spoke to my heart. And here's the invitation I give to the annex upstairs and downstairs.

Here's what the Lord spoke to my heart. There would be people here tonight and I listened closely because this is from the Holy Spirit. There'd be people here tonight feel like you just don't, you feel just a wasted feeling.

And some of you are living in sin now, and you have, you knew the Lord, but you have wasted days, hours, and years. And Lord wants to restore those wasted years. And I want to tell you there's some of you here feel totally inadequate, totally unfit to be used of God.

You know that God's had his hand. And I want to tell you, there's some people here that are drifting from the Lord. Some of you have backslidden, some of you don't even know the Lord, yet you know God's hands on you.

You know that God's been keeping you. You should have been dead. You should have been out somewhere, gone, completely skipped out of your mind by now.

But God, for some reason, brought you here. And here you stand tonight in your right mind, and here's God speaking directly to you tonight. We don't beg anybody to come to Jesus or anything else like that.

But in the annex, you can just go into room 206 and just get on your knees and cry out to God right now, so Lord, I want my life to count. Lord, all these things I've been through, I don't want my life wasted. Some of you young people here tonight, this is the time.

Don't waste your life. Say, God, I want you to use me. You start seeking God, and he'll open doors for you, incredible doors, doors that you couldn't even believe possible.

I just want these people that are coming through, you can come even while I'm talking. No one will beg you, no one will plead. I'm going to ask you to stand.

So many are going to be coming. Would you stand, please, to make room? There are going to be a whole lot of people coming. Up in the balcony, just go to the stairs on either side.

And in the annex, you get room to 206 and just get on your knees there, and the Lord will meet you there. You that are coming right now, come determined right now. Lord Jesus, I'm going to pray now that you put it in my heart to seek you as I've never sought you before.

If there's sin in your life, come and lay it down, if you will, please. Some of you just say, Brother David, I've wasted too much time now. I want God to touch me.

I need God to use me. I don't want to waste any more time. I don't want to waste my life.

Upstairs, downstairs, wherever you may be. Now, folks, please don't leave the auditorium yet. Respect what God's doing here.

Holy Spirit, come and minister to them right now. And I want everybody that came forward just to cry out from your heart, from deep inside, say, Jesus, touch me tonight. Lord, touch them.

I see your hand. You're working and moving upon them, and I pray, Holy Spirit, that this not be lost, that this moment take hold of the heart. Don't let it be lost when they walk out the door.

Lord, put it in our hearts. I pray for those, Lord, 60 and over, and some 65, 70, and even in their 80s, Lord, who feel, well, I've put in my time. I just want peace, and I just want to be left alone.

God, help us to realize that those who've had this experience with you, young people need to hear from them. Somebody needs to hear. Somebody needs to learn from the lessons that they have learned.

Let them cry out in their heart, God, is there still a place for me? Is there something I can do? Lord, if they'll seek your face, you'll direct them, you'll tell them. Lord, there are things they can do without even leaving the house. They can turn off the television, and they can go to a room and pray for somebody, for

sons and daughters and grandchildren.

Lord, there are works and ministries that have to be accomplished on the experience. It has to be a result of work that you've done in our hearts over the years. God, don't let all of this valuable ministry be lost to this generation.

Lord, there are not many mothers and fathers of Zion left. God, raise up tonight mothers and fathers who will say, I will cry out to God. I will ask him to use me in some little way, that my life not be wasted.

God, for those that are here that have been feeling waste, Lord Jesus, let them know tonight your loving grace and forgiveness. How willing you are right now, Lord, to touch their life and lead them in a new direction. Lord, I pray that you send the lonely to the lonely.

You send the hurting to those who are hurting. My God, what you're doing, you have a purpose, you have a reason, so that we can say, yes, Jesus, you're going to see me through this, and I'm not going to fight it. I'm going to rest in you, Lord, because you are doing a work in me for a purpose.

Thank you, Jesus. Confess your sin, open up your heart to him right now, and let him meet you. God, do that now.

I want everybody to take just two minutes, three minutes right now in the presence of the Lord. I want you to talk to him. I want you to talk to him right now.

Lord, I want a total purpose in my life. I want to know the purpose that you have for me. Whatever small way it is, Lord, I want my life to count.

Father, we lift a whole audience to you now in the annex and the balcony and here in the main auditorium, in this first floor, and I pray, Holy Spirit, that you speak clearly now. Oh, God, don't let us miss any of the word that we've heard this morning, this afternoon, or this evening. God, take the word and produce life.

Lay hold of our hearts. Would you lift your hands and say, touch me, Jesus, tonight. Just touch me, Lord.

Touch me. Give me a new heart for you. Give me a new longing.

Give me a touch, Lord. Oh, everyone, Lord, touch everyone in this house. Don't let anybody leave tonight without sensing your love, your arms around them saying, I need you.

I want you. I can use you, Lord Jesus. Hallelujah.

Not some great thing, Lord, some little thing that we can do for your honor and your glory. Thank you, Jesus, for your preserving, keeping power. Thank you, Lord, for your faithfulness to us.

Touch us now before we leave this auditorium tonight. Touch us, Lord Jesus. Touch us in a very special way.

Oh, how I love Jesus. Thank you, Father. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for your faithfulness and your minister to us in our time of need.

Now, before we dismiss the service, God's put something in my heart that I'd like you to do, if you will, please, with people. How many are here tonight for the first time? Would you raise your hand, please? And in the annex even? Yes, a lot of people, upstairs, downstairs. I would like, you see, you can be from

New York and you can be from Manhattan and not nobody from Brooklyn or Bronx.

You know, some of you people have been coming to church a long time and you don't know very many people. Come on now, because you sit in the same place, same seat, and boy, let any usher try to get you out of that and everything breaks loose and you lose your sanctification. I had a couple visiting from the Midwest that were here this morning, and she said, I feel like I've been in heaven to see all of the colors and the people and the nationalities.

She said, I feel like this is what heaven's going to be like. I was so blessed with that. I was totally blessed with that.

Now, here's what I'd like you to do. This church is a testimony to this city. It's not that any of our pastors can preach to the whole city and get on television and preach to the whole city.

That wouldn't be the testimony. The testimony is that from all different nationalities, we are one in Christ, but that love has to be genuine. And more and more, as we see this city divided, I think this last political mayor's race is going to help divide this city in a terrible way.

Many things that are coming, this church has to be a testimony and other churches like it has to be a testimony to the love of God and how he brings people together through his grace and his love. I want, please don't just zip out of here tonight. I want you to stay five minutes and I want you to honestly, you know, it's not a joke where you say, would you shake hands for 10 or 12 people? I want you to mix.

If you're from out of city, would you just say where you're from or ask somebody, where are you from? This is the conclusion of the message.

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