

Seeing Christ In His Fullness

by David Wilkerson

This sermon emphasizes the importance of seeing Jesus in His fullness, not just as a miracle worker or teacher, but as the head of His body, the church. It highlights the need to discern the body of Christ, minister to one another, and prioritize the well-being of the entire body over individual struggles. The speaker shares personal experiences and challenges the audience to focus on loving and ministering to those around them, seeing Christ in every member of His body.

Scripture: Ephesians 1:22, 1 Corinthians 12:26, Matthew 25:40, Romans 12:5, Colossians 1:18, Hebrews 10:24

Topics: "Unity in the Body of Christ", "Ministering to One Another"

Description

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Transcript

Honestly, we are so proud and honored to have had you come here, and we trust that you have been moved, and your heart has been touched and changed. We really don't have a reading of what's happened here. We don't know.

We can't judge it by the noise, the worship, or the praise, or anything else, because we don't know the deep work of the Spirit. As you notice, there have been no offerings. We're not charging anything for this.

We believed God ahead of time to raise the funds that God provided, and the Lord was good to us. Frankly, when I went to some meetings, I just got so tired of hearing about money and offerings, I said, if we ever do this, let's believe God ahead of time, and then let's just worship the Lord and have a good time in Him, and we thank God for providing for us. But one way you can give us an offering, one way you can help us, is when you get home, write us a letter.

Let us know what the impact is, so that if God needs us to do this again, we'll know that it's worthwhile, and please write to us and let us know. Times Square Church will be open tomorrow for tours, those who want to see that, and some of you may want to go to Ground Zero if you're here part of the time tomorrow, and I think you've been given directions for that. I want to speak tonight about seeing Jesus, seeing Christ

in His fullness, seeing Christ in His fullness, hallelujah.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the word that's gone forth from this pulpit, and we pray tonight that you'd speak once again the last night of this gathering. We thank you, Lord, for those who've taken time out of their busy schedule to come here, because we ask only those to come who wanted to renew their passion for Christ, and we pray, Heavenly Father, that that's been accomplished, that our pursuit of your heart has grown warmer and hotter and more intense, and that as they get on their vehicles to go home, and airplanes and trains or cars, whatever it may be, that that warmth of the Holy Spirit that we've experienced here will go with them, and as they meditate and begin to seek you as never before, we pray, Lord, there's been motivation from the Holy Ghost to drive us all closer to your heart and to exercise faith that you will hear and answer us. Now, Lord, I come humbly to your throne, and I ask you to speak through my lips, Lord, a very short message, but something I believe you want us to hear.

Lord, I preach to my own heart. This has been something you've been trying to speak to me about, and I've heard you, and now, Lord, as I give it out, I pray that others will hear it. With open hearts, from the heart of Jesus, I pray, I give you honor, and I give you glory.

Help me, Jesus. Amen. There are three ways to see Jesus.

There's the natural eye, and there's the partial eye, and there's a spiritual eye. The spiritual eye sees Jesus Christ in His fullness, in His completeness. Very few Christians, very few that have a knowledge of Christ or say that they really know Him have ever seen Him in His fullness and His completeness.

Paul constantly talked about the fullness of Jesus Christ. God hath put all things under His feet and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. We talk about fullness, but we don't understand it, and we hope tonight, I hope that God will just open a little insight so that you can go home and meditate on it, and God may take you much further than He's taken me in this, and you'll see it, but I just want to put a spark in your heart that you can take home with you in the last part of this service.

You see, the followers of Jesus, those who came to hear His teaching and be a part of His miracle ministry saw Him with the natural eye. The Scripture made it clear they called Him the miracle worker. They said He's a compassionate man, friend of the people, friend of lepers and downcast, teacher of amazing truth, a man with a mission.

They said no man ever spake like this. They marveled. We have never seen such things.

That's the natural eye that sees Jesus as the great miracle worker, and He is the teacher, the man, Christ Jesus, who went about doing good. That's the natural eye, and that's where most Christians are. That's where most of the world is that have even a passing knowledge of who Jesus Christ is.

Then you have the disciples and those in the inner circle, and they have the partial vision and the partial eye of Him. Not only do they believe He's a miracle, they believe He's divine, that He's God in the flesh. This was a revelation that was given to Peter who confessed, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

This came by revelation of the heavenly Father, but not one of Christ's 12 apostles, 12 disciples ever saw Jesus in His fullness until after Pentecost. They never saw it when they were with Him. They never saw it until after the resurrection.

They never understood. They never saw with these eyes, the spiritual eyes, who Christ really was. In Matthew 14, if you want to turn there with me, in Matthew 14, I want to show you where I'm going with this message tonight, a very short message, but I want this to be conveyed to you by the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 14, verse 22. They did all ... 22. Straightway, Jesus constrained His disciples to get into a ship and go before Him onto the other side while He sent the multitudes away.

I'll show you how Jesus was trying to show His disciples the fullness of what and who He was. He knew they only saw with a partial eye. Many of us sitting here tonight, with all of our preaching about Jesus, with all of our walk with Him, and I want to tell you honestly, I've only seen His fullness in just recent years.

I've just begun to see it, really, in the past few months with a clearer vision after 70 years and 50 of them preaching Christ. I've known His divinity. I've known His miracle working power.

I've known Him in those ways. I've known Him in the natural eye, I've known Him in partial eye, but I've never seen Him in the spiritual eye, who Christ really is. The Scripture says, straightway, Jesus constrained His disciples to get into a ship.

Here's how I feel that this can be seen and explained in a very simple manner. I told Times Square Church, we often skip over the gospel so we can get the deeper stuff from Paul. But Christ said that these things are hidden.

These are hidden truths that you have to dig for, you have to seek God, because every one of these things said that these are covenant words that were written as mysteries from the very foundation of the world, they're covenant, and they open our eyes to who Jesus really is. And they had just fed 5,000. I look at that story, they feed 5,000, they take up 12 baskets, I don't see them marvel at it, I don't see them stomping, there's not a word about, hey, wait a minute, we had five loaves and two fishes and we've got 12 baskets here.

They were so busy doing it, they were not understanding who He was. In fact, when they got on the boat, later the Scripture says that their hearts were hardened because they didn't recognize Him. Their hearts were hardened.

Can you imagine seeing these miracles? Because you can see them in the natural eye and really not know Him, you can still have a hardness of heart and not see who Jesus is. So they get in this boat, and the word constrained here in Greek is compelled and to herd. He herded the men.

He said, quickly, gentlemen, get in the boat and get out of the water and move on, and He gave them a destination. This was a planned trip. This was not something accidental.

This was a divine appointment. Scripture says a wind came and the waves began to toss the boat, and in the darkness an ever-increasing light came toward them. It was Jesus Christ walking on the water.

He was walking toward them. Now one disciple's heart leaped with joy, knowing and sensing in the Spirit that Christ was drawing nigh. There was none of this that we read in Song of Solomon.

My beloved is drawing nigh. He's at the door. My beloved put His hand at the handle of the door, and my bowels were moved for Him.

You see, the Shulamite knew that her lover was at the door. He was outside. He didn't see Him, but he knew.

There was a sense. There was a knowledge, an inner knowledge, the inner man, the inner eye saw something of Christ, something of the beloved, because he's the type of Christ. But there's none of that in this boat.

He draws closer and closer, and they see it's the Spirit. They were afraid, and they were overtaken with fear, the Bible says. It was Jesus.

They couldn't see Christ in their crisis. What they were going through, the storm, I don't know what your storm is. I don't know what you're going through, but have you seen Christ in it yet? They didn't see Christ in it.

He was a ghost. God has permitted a troubling tempest, but you see, they're in divine order. They're in the will of God.

They've been sent here by God. Now, the Lord may have allowed the enemy to stir it up, but He's God of the flood. The Scripture said He's King of the flood, but you see, God was after something in these men.

He's digging in. He's trying to find something, because He knew there was something that could destroy them eventually and either drive them away from Him until they become destitute and become agnostics. And if you don't deal with what I'm seeing tonight, and I say it in love, you can become an agnostic.

You can turn your back against God. You can get angry because of the confusion and disappointment in your heart, because you're not seeing Christ in your crisis. God was dealing with fear, terrible, debilitating fear in these disciples, and He permits this because He's digging at something.

He's reaching for something, because you see, you can get hard and bitter. You either see Christ in the crisis and you listen to His wonderful promise, be of good cheer. It's me.

I'm here in your storm. I'm with you. I know what this is all about.

I have brought it to pass. I'm after something in you, because what I see in you could destroy you. There are people going through storms right now, and they're getting bitter, they're getting hard, and they're a little angry at God.

But in your crisis, I'm telling you, Jesus is always coming at you. He's always coming towards you, and He's always there if your heart would just recognize Him. About eight years ago, I went through this storm of my life, Gwen and I. I thought the ship was going to sink.

At Times Square Church, there was an uprising against me, and pardon me for using a personal illustration, but I don't know how best to illustrate what I'm preaching. Friends turned against me, friends that I thought were my dear friends, and they turned on me and were calling me a phony. Over 400 people walked out of Times Square Church.

Of course, the next Sunday, 600 walked in. No, no clapping, please. It's horrible, lies, distortions, things I couldn't understand.

I went through this storm like I'd never seen in six months. I have a journal I don't even look at anymore. I can't stand the pain of reading it because every page says, oh God, when does this nightmare end? How do people ... You see, I couldn't see Christ in that crisis at all.

I went through six months. I would sit in a chair and cry because people were calling me a phony. I'd go to church in the backstage, young people would come and say, are you a phony like they say? I said, what? Are you a dictator like they tell us? Because people were calling them on the phone, and every time I went to preach, I'd meet backstage, it'd be 15, 20 young people and say, we're leaving.

We lost half our group, lost numbers from the choir, I lost associates, and all I could see were ghosts. Every time the phone rang, there was a ghost call. It would be gossip.

Who's on the phone? All I could see were ghosts. I couldn't see God in it anyway. I couldn't see Christ in my crisis.

Why would God allow a thing? I love him. I saw ghosts of past failures. Am I paying for past failures? Am I everything that they say I am? What is going on, Lord? I've given my life for drugs and alcoholism and teen challenge, and then I come here.

You told me to come establish a church, and then all of hell breaks out on me, and people I love call me a liar. I remember one time going halfway to church. I turned around.

My wife was there and said, honey, I can't go anymore. I can't handle this anymore. I can't stand before the people.

I couldn't see Christ in my crisis at all. She said, honey, you're going. Somehow I got through that.

I never mentioned it from the pulpit. I took it to God. But one day, I remember how that crisis ended, and the hardest part was to have those you thought you were dearest friends turn on you, and not only turn on you, but gossip about you.

I see young preachers occasionally come to me and say, well, Brother Wilkerson, you know, you talk about prayer and sacrifice and all these things, and don't worry whether you have a big crowd, but you've got the big church, and you've been a success, you know. It's my time, my turn, in so many words. But they don't know about the nightmares.

It was a living hell. I hate to even talk about it. But I remember the day the Holy Spirit came to me, and I began to see.

Lord said, David, if you do what I tell you, I'm going to give you some orders, and if you do what I tell you, this is going to end. The storm's going to end, and I'm going to use you as you've never been used in your life. I'm going to have all your enemies at your feet, and I want you when they come to your feet to bless every one of them.

Love and bless them. God said, I'm going to give you names, because you see, David, you don't see how many people you have wounded. You don't know how many people you have dealt with so bluntly, people that you have fired from your ministry, because this one person, you didn't do it biblically, you didn't have two witnesses.

The one witness, you quickly fired them, you believed the report. He said, if you will repent before them, you've repented before me, but that's not enough. There has to be a spirit of forgiveness in you.

You have to stand in your pulpit where there's not one person that the Holy Ghost can remind you of that you have wounded, you've spoken something, you've repeated something about them, you've done something to wound or hurt them, and when you do this, you repent, you weep, you weep before them if you have to, but you honestly don't say, if I hurt you, say I have wounded you, and call those who have been speaking against you, make it right with them, just tell them I'm sorry. There was something I did and spoke, and there were some that I really was angry with, some people I was angry with, and I spoke angrily and tried to expose them for standing against me. God gave me a list to start with 12, others were added later.

This one I thought was all over, there would be another one pop up from the Holy Ghost. God said, I want you to be able to stand with a clean heart and look everybody in the face of the earth in the eye and say I love you, and not one single grudge in your heart against anybody because I can't bless you. You are focused on your hurt now David, now I want you to focus on the hurts of others because I have a body.

I'm not just the head, I'm a body, and you've wounded my body. He said it in love. I'll tell you, I got on the phone immediately dealing with that list of 12, and one of those men that I called, the first man, he wept and cried, he said, I've been waiting for a call like this, you don't know how you hurt me Brother Dave.

I know you didn't mean it, but it hurt me and it's wounded me and I've had a hard time praying and seeking God, and we wept together and God brought it, and one after another, every one I called, one man says, now I know God's doing something in your heart. And I went down the list, and we wept and we prayed, and I got it out of my heart, poured it all out before the Lord, and there was one couple that I didn't know where they were, I said, God, how do I do it? He said, if your heart is right, I'll bring them to you. I said, well, I don't even know where they live, they've been in the United States, and that was the last couple, the last ones that I had to reach, and I was in California for a meeting, and after service, here they come, walking up to the stage.

And I grabbed them and put my arms, I said, I've been looking for you. I said, I fired you 20 years ago from Team Challenge on one person's witness that they saw you doing something. I never even looked for another witness, and I accused you, and I fired you on the spot, and I gave you enough to live on for a few weeks, but I just threw you out.

And I said, I am so sorry, God has dealt with me. I'm telling you, they weep, and the man looked at me and said, you've just saved my life. You've saved my life.

He said, I've been so grieved and hurting for 20 years. Then he opened my spiritual eyes to see who Christ really is in fullness. You see, I was seeing Christ as a head.

I wanted intimacy with the head. I wanted fellowship with the head, but he says, I'm not detached from my body. The only way you see me spiritually is that you see that I have a body, and if you wound my body, you wound me.

And you don't see Christ in his fullness until you see Christ with a body. You see, my storm was allowed to expose what was in my heart, my temper. I still remember one of my staff saying, boy, you cross the chief and you pick yourself off the ceiling.

And I went home to my wife, I said, you know what they said about me? And I told her, and I said, can you believe that? She said, yes. My quickness to judge harshly, to pass on gossip that I'd heard. But you see, they were all members of his body.

They were members with me, being fed by the head, and all supposed to be ministering one to another. Listen to this now. And Peter, Jesus spoke.

He came on the scene and said, be of good cheer. It is I. Don't be afraid. He said, I'm in your crisis.

I'm the one who has ordained this. I'm getting at something. Be of good cheer.

Just settle down. Don't get panicky. I'm with you.

And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. Now this act of Peter, of getting out of the boat, is the heart of my message. Here's an example of a godly man who's not yet seen Christ through spiritual eyes.

He has not seen Christ in his fullness. He's seeing the head without the body. Peter's going to act in the most proud, prideful, selfish manner a man can walk in.

There was no noble thing he did in getting out of the boat. Because you see, the body is in the boat. That represents the body of Christ.

All hurting, all in the storm, and all troubled, a boatload of struggling men. And Peter gives no thought to the needs of the body whatsoever. His thought is, let me just get to Jesus.

My faith is being tested. I've got a problem. I've got a struggle.

If I can just get to Jesus and get this, my ministry will be restored. I'll be okay. There's no thought to the body.

Gentlemen, you get along the best you can. I'm going to see Jesus. I'm going to walk with Jesus, and I'm going to settle my problem.

My struggle is going to be ended. The whole body in that boat were crying out with fear. All of them were troubled.

God help us when we are so focused on our own discouragement, our own battles, that we become a distraction to the body. You see, he jumps out of the boat, and he goes to Christ. Now, if I were in that boat, I'd say, hey, pastor, Peter, you're not the only one hurting.

What about us? We're all hurting. We all want to get to Jesus. But now you see the focus is on Peter.

Is he going to make it? And he goes down, and everybody's, is he going to sink? Is he going to swim? Is he going to come out of this crisis in his life? Everybody's looking at Peter. You see, when we focus on our own hurt, we focus on our own problems, and our own discouragement, we become a distraction to our family because they hear the murmuring, they hear the complaining, they hear us talk about our problem, and they can sense even if we don't talk about it, something's wrong. And the focus now is not on Jesus, it's on Peter.

And what is it when Peter cries out, bid me come, let me walk on the water, not us, me. And when Peter does sink, what's the cry? Lord, save me. Then on the boat, everybody in the boat is saying, save us too.

You understand what's happening here? Peter has delayed the deliverance of the body because he's so focused on his own problem. Because you see, as soon as Jesus gets in the boat, the storm ends. And he has delayed the deliverance.

These men go through probably hours of pain, and they say, Peter, yes, you're going after, you're trying to solve your own heart problem and your own struggle, but we're still tossed, we're still turning. We want Jesus in the boat, now Jesus is preoccupied in saving this man. And while he's getting out of his struggle, these men are still in their terror.

That's what happens in our churches when we ask the people to focus and pray just for us. We're in this struggle, we're in this battle, and we're delaying the deliverance of the people we're hurting, perhaps twice as much as we are. Look around you.

Within ten feet of you, there are people who have problems far worse than yours. Deep struggles and deep hurt. When our granddaughter Tiffany had a brain tumor, we wept, we cried, and we requested prayer.

And there's nothing wrong with that. God wants us to request prayer. He wants the body.

Paul said that we would have equal concern for all. Equal concern. Concern for all the body.

And we've got the word of her brain tumor. I remember all the letters coming. One letter in particular, a mother and father, such a sympathetic letter saying, We hurt for you.

We pray with you. God bless you. And I was telling them, Well, listen to this husband and wife, the wonderful words of encouragement.

And then toward the end of the letter said, And we hurt with you. Because, you see, we just, our teenage daughter was kidnapped with another girl, and she was taken out into the woods. And one girl escaped, her girlfriend escaped, but our daughter was found mutilated and cut to pieces.

And I'm here thinking of my granddaughter who's still alive and doing well, praying, God, I hope she doesn't come back. And here are these people comforting us, and they're carrying a hurt that I don't know anything about. I was talking to a dear pastor friend of mine, how God opened his spiritual eyes to see Christ in greater fullness.

There was a young lady in his congregation who was evidently born with some disfigurement in her face. But all through her teenage years, she dreamed of finding a husband who would overlook her handicap and love her, and she wanted to get married. And her one real dream was to have a child.

Carried that for years, and I guess she was in her, I don't know the age, but probably in her 20s or so. She brought the pastor a bar of soap and a baby rattle. Said, Here, I don't need these anymore.

The bar of soap represented the memory she had of her father asking her when she was a little child to, Honey, bring soap to me, bring me some soap. And it was the man in the house father calling her, and she felt useful. And the baby rattle represented the child she hoped and dreamed that she would have one day because of a man who loved her in spite of her handicap.

But now she knew that things would not change, and circumstances would not change. Said, Pastor, I don't need these anymore. Because she traded her dream.

You see, the bar of soap reminded her, kept in her mind the day that she might have a husband, and he would call for a bar of soap, and she would, You know, it's a man in the house, and she's a help. Here's the soap, here's the baby rattle, because I've traded my dreams. I've given it all to Jesus.

And in so many words, Christ becomes her husband. And she's filled with joy. And she gives herself to other people.

And he told me, she's one of the most loving people. There's a kind of beauty to this woman. She's very loved by the people, especially by children.

And God has given her children, all right. And God has given her a true husband, and she has joy in her heart. But he began to think of that, the pain that was there all the time.

And he thought of his own battles and struggles, and they seemed so small in comparison. Paul had spiritual eyes. Oh, by the way, do you ever stop to think of, well, I'll get to Jonah later.

I don't want to bring him in right now. I want to talk about Paul. Paul had spiritual eyes to see Jesus Christ and his body on earth.

Here's a godly man who was under, by his own admission, under great tribulation. And he suffered as few men have suffered. We all know that.

We've studied his suffering. But how different the take he has on suffering than I have, and many of us, in the body of Christ. Paul writes to the Ephesians in the midst of his hardest, most cruel time, wherefore I desire that you faint not at my tribulation for you, which is going to be your glory.

He said, don't focus on my pain. Don't focus on my struggle, because I know that I see Christ in this, and God's getting at something means accomplish something, and you're going to get glory out of this. It's going to be to your glory, because he's going to bring me out a better pastor, a better teacher.

I'm going to know more about his grace, his works, and his ways. And he said, don't focus on my tribulation, because it will be to your glory. He's saying, saints, don't worry about my trials.

Don't let it be your focus. What I'm going through has to do with God's eternal purposes from the foundation of the world. I glory my tribulation, because it's going to bring glory.

This is for your glory. My victory is going to produce victory in you. He said, I'm going to get such comfort and consolation in my turmoil.

I'm going to be so strengthened through it. You're going to profit from it. I'm going to take this joyfully, because I see Jesus in it.

He's opening my eyes, revealing himself to me. And Paul could tell you I've prayed three times about a certain matter, and I've got a messenger straight out of hell buffeting me. And I'm so weak at times.

Friends turn against me. I'm cursed. I'm misunderstood.

I once even, in the spirit of life, shipwrecked, beaten, jailed. But don't worry about me. Don't get over-concerned about your pastor, Paul.

And this man, facing the greatest tribulation of his ministry, begins to preach encouragement. He proclaims, we are all one body in Christ. When one hurts, we all hurt.

All the members should have the same care concerning one another. And remember, this is not about me. It's about the body of Christ.

He's the head, and we are the members of his body. And we all hurt together. We all minister to one another.

You cannot take Christ from his body. You cannot have Christ without his body. Seeing Christ in his fullness with the body changes the way I look at sin.

If I believe what I preach, I've got to believe that God's going to chasten me if I continue in my sin. If I indulge in adulterous flirtation or pornography or any kind of lust, I know he's got to deal with me because he doesn't want to lose me. He's got to judge me and correct me and chasten me as a loving father, lest I be given over to my sin.

And if I see Jesus in his fullness, I've got to see how it impacts the body, not just the head. It's got to be more than just, Lord, I know I've grieved you. It's the body that's being impacted by my sin.

Because if I have sin, I'm going to stand in the pulpit, and I'm going to give the congregation a false tenderness. I'm going to perceive Christ to them. I'm going to present Christ as one who is so easy on sin because I don't want to be a hypocrite because I know I have a problem in my own life.

Because, you see, I'm affecting the body. I'm not just grieving Christ. I am jeopardizing the whole body of Jesus Christ.

The false tenderness. Well, people are going on the brink of hell, and some even going to hell. That's where I think of Jonah running from God.

You see, when you run from God, you run from his conviction. Chaos comes. Everything goes in disorder.

Divine order is gone. Remember them running around the ship, unladen the ship, and everything's out of control. Everything is in chaos.

It's what happens when you run from God and continue in sin. He disgraces his Lord, and he ends up in this living hell in the belly of a whale. And while he struggles, and while God is taking time to deal with his sin, have you ever thought of this? Here's a man of God who represents a pastor, perhaps, a prophet of God, and there's a city about to be judged, and their sins are piling to the heavens.

And while this man focuses on his own struggle, and God is taking time to deal with him and bring him back to his senses, to wake him up, how many died in that time? It could have been weeks. It could have been months. The Bible puts it in this little time period, but it could have been months.

The time he made his decision, walks all the way to Joplin and the boat trip, and I don't know how many weeks they were in the water before it happened. I don't know the time element, but how many died without repentance because Jonah didn't arrive on God's schedule? And God has to bring this man out of

his problem. Meanwhile, people are dying.

I wonder how many, when a pastor struggles, I wonder how many, you know, struggling with a sin problem or struggling with thinking of quitting, even, in this sense. People know it. They feel it.

I wonder how many say, if pastor can't make it, what chance do I have? That's what happened when some famous evangelist took a fall. The cry here in New York was so many, and I heard it over and over again. Well, if Brother so-and-so, with all of his knowledge and his anointing, can't make it, how can I make it? How many in my family have struggled, or your family or your circle, looking at me and my discouragement, cast down, looking for an escape in their own struggles, in their own pain, ready to give up because you have not spoken the word of encouragement? Now, today's our 50th anniversary.

Married 50 years to this beautiful woman. And I want to tell you something. My marriage has been to hell and back.

You look at us and look so sweet. And it is sweet. And we are in love.

And we are friends. And it's a good marriage. It's solid.

It's stood this test of time. But we went through temptations. We went through trials.

And there were numbers of times, there were numbers of times I've been so easy to give up. Got so bad one time, I walked out for a week. Said, never go back.

After a week, God said, if you don't get back, you're finished, boy. You're dead. Boy, I raced home.

I've never taken a step out since. But on Monday, this past Monday, all our children and grandchildren had a party for us. They had a banquet.

My grandma and grandpa and dad and mom and some friends. They had on one of the properties there an old stone barn, beautiful inside, all fixed up with flowers. And they had a harpist playing a harp and white tablecloths and a beautiful mill.

And then all the kids got up to say something about dad and mom. And the grandkids got up and sang these wonderful things about dad and mom. And it was, dad, mom, thank you.

We know the storms you went through. Mom, we know the pain and the suffering and all those operations and cancer. Times you were swollen, but you were always there when we needed you.

And we knew that you always loved dad, and dad, we knew you loved mom. And that was, we'll never forget that night, that I remember sitting at that table shuddering inside, shaking. Oh, God.

If I had walked out, if she had walked out, every one of my children that are married and in the ministry would have been divorced by now. Every one of them, by their own admission. I wouldn't have one, all my grandchildren have a heart for Jesus.

Everyone in the family. All the generations, a heart for Jesus. And I said, if I had not allowed the Holy Ghost to keep me by covenant, if I had just taken that one step and said, we're going to fight this thing, we'll take power over the devil, we're not going to give in to the enemy, we're not going to let God or the devil destroy this family.

I said, oh God, I would be dead now. I would be, if I were alive, I'd be the most miserable man on the face of the earth, and not because my kids would be divorced, not because my grandkids would be on drugs and alcohol and all messed up, but because I had hurt the body of Christ. I would cry out to God with everything in me, oh God, kill me, take me.

I've disgraced your name. You see, it's the body. It wasn't Jesus I hurt.

I hurt his whole body because I can't have him detached from his body. You see, it makes me look differently at sin. When I see Christ in his fullness, it even changes my relationship to him now.

The Lord asked me in prayer recently, why are you seeking me so diligently, and why are you fasting? What's this all about? What do you want out of this? And I said, Lord, I want more intimacy with you. And the Holy Spirit made it clear. He said, you haven't been seeing it yet.

You can't have intimacy without having intimacy with my body because that's me. Until you want to be intimate with your brothers and sisters and all your pastors, friends, and the body of Christ, you can't cut off the head. You're not discerning the body.

Discerning the body is seeing the body. Who the body is, it's Christ with his body. It's this church that is his washed in the blood.

Why are you fasting? Why are you praying? Well, Jesus, I want to see more of you. I want a greater revelation. He says, you can't see me without seeing my body.

You can't walk with me unless you walk with the body. If you tell me you're willing to lay down your life for me, you're going to be willing to lay down your life for my body. You tell me you want to be more like me, more like Jesus, then you're going to take on the concerns that I have as the head for every hurt and pain in the body.

And when you hurt and when you're discouraged and when you're down, you do as the apostle Paul, and you start looking at the hurts in the body, and as you minister to them, God will deal with yours in love. He'll bring you out of it because you're loving and helping others. And that's why in Matthew 25, when it says, I was in prison and I was hungry, they put body.

My body was hungry. My body was in prison. My body was naked.

My body needed clothing. And as you've done it unto me, you've done it unto my body. The least of these, this is my body, and whatever you do for my body, you've done it for me.

That's why God keeps pushing me to never forget a hands-on ministry as a pastor, not just to get my pleasure from preaching to you or to a congregation, but I have my eyes on Jesus and His body, for we are members of His body, and He is the head of the body, the church. When you leave this conference, you say, I'm going to go home, and I'm going to, oh, folks, I've preached so long and so much about intimacy that had nothing to do with the body, it was just the head, not anymore, because now He's allowing me to see just a glimpse through spiritual eyes until you look around you to all the people that are in pain around you and all the suffering in the body, and you say, that's what I want to be intimate with. I want to be available to the body of Christ.

I'm praying He opens your eyes tonight, and I'll tell you how we're going to do it. I was praying this afternoon, I said, Lord, how do we close this conference? I'm finished now, by the way. I told you all I was going to give you was a spark.

You go home, and God will show it to you, but every time you come in His presence, don't look at a head dismembered from its body. Lord said, no, you can't have me without my body. Now, we're going to minister to one another, and we've been ministering to you in all of these services, and we've come to the end of this conference.

Now, usually we had to get out at 9.30, 10 minutes, but we have until 10.30 tonight. We've got time. You said you came here to renew your passion for Christ.

If you heard what I'm saying, you're renewing your passion for the body of Christ. Do you understand that there are people next to you that are hurting? There's a young couple, there's a pastor's wife pastoring about 40 people from Texas. They're just starting a church, and I know when I talk to them, I just met them on the street, about 40 people, and they're here.

Their church took offering and sent them here, and I know everything must be tight, and I know I can sense them. They're in the will of God, but they're going through trying times, terribly trying times, and they're sitting next to somebody here. There are pastors and wives that are going through the struggle of their life, and the Bible said we're all members of one body, and I'm going to have you in a moment stand, and we're going to get little circles, four, five, six people, and the Bible said every member, every joint ministers to the other joints and the other members.

We minister. We minister that. You've been ministered to.

Now you're to minister to somebody around you. I don't want anybody prophesying over somebody. I'm going to get in and condemn you and say, hey, I know why you're going through that.

We don't do that here. We're all members of a body. We're all one, and if one hurts, what? You say, how can I hurt for the whole body? You hurt for the one that you reach out to.

That's the body. He's not asking you to hurt for the whole body. He said that you hurt.

Everywhere you go, you find that hurt, and may God make you a healer, and may he get you off focus from anything that you're going through now. I want everybody in this building to forget your problem, forget what you're going through, forget your discouragement. You say, well, I've been here all this time, and I'm still at it.

I'm still being pounded by the enemy, and I'm still at this point of discouragement. Would you forget that? Would you minister? For the next 15 minutes, I want you to minister to everybody in your circle. I want you to pray as you've never prayed before, and I'm telling you the glory of the Lord will come upon.

Every group will come on this house, and God will be honored because you are seeing. I'm hoping the Lord is showing me through spiritual eyes. I'm seeing Christ now in his fullness.

He has a full body. Will you stand? Now, folks, I want everybody to pray. There's no altar call.

This is body ministry, and you're going to minister to those around you, and you don't need to know what the problem is. Pastor Carter had a word of knowledge the other night about someone who's thinking of

ending it all, and the man was here, and God touched him, and somebody here is probably going to be praying for him. I don't know what's going to be in your circle, but I want you to discern the body.

Discern the body tonight. See the body. I've been so blind to it, and I've asked God to forgive me.

I want to be part of the body. I want you to get in circles right now, four, five, six at the most. Turn around.

I'm behind you. If you have to walk across the aisle, whatever it is, and I want everybody to pray in concert, everybody praying at one time. God has, he's better than any computer.

He can compute it. He can compute our prayers. You might get in not too large of a circle.

Lower the circles down to maybe six people or something like that if there's more fine, but I want everybody up in the balconies and here in the main floor. I want you to minister in love, and I want you to pray for your brothers and sisters right now. Everybody in this house, pray and lift up your voice to God and minister to those in your circle.

Everybody pray. Lord, come now. Show us your body.

Give us eyes to see. Lord Jesus, now give us eyes to see. God, give us a ministry of compassion.

Let us feel the hurts of those in our circle. Lift up your hands. Lift up your hearts, brother.

Come on, lift up your heart. God, everyone in this circle. Everyone in this circle, God, touch them and heal them.

God, give me a vision. Open my eyes. Somebody's hurting in this circle.

Someone is grieving. Someone is discouraged. Someone needs a miracle.

Hallelujah, hallelujah.

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