

# Standing Steadfast in Christ - Part 1

by David Wilkerson

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*David Wilkerson's sermon calls believers to remain steadfast in their faith and warns against the dangers of neglecting their spiritual lives.*

**Duration:** 39:28

**Scripture:** Hebrews 2:1

**Topics:** "Spiritual Warfare", "Faithfulness"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of not neglecting the great salvation we have received through Christ, warning against drifting away from faith and becoming apathetic. It highlights the need to feed and care for God's sheep, focusing on meeting human needs and not just personal struggles. The message urges believers to stay vigilant, not to neglect prayer and spiritual warfare, and to actively engage in serving others to guard against drifting away from the fullness of Christ.

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## Transcript

Second chapter of Hebrews, first few verses, one through three. Now folks, I can't take this out of my Bible. It's in your Bible, and we face it lovingly.

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we've heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression, disobedience received just recompense or reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which at first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard it? God also bearing them witnesses both with signs and wonders, with diverse miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit, Holy Ghost, according to his own will. In verse three, I want to focus on how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? These words came directly from Christ.

Heavenly Father, I pray for mercy and wisdom, for unction, for strength, for anointing. Lord, this is a message you spoke to me personally, that this had to be something that I see, something that I lay on my desk and read from the rest of my life, that I will turn to this and remind myself and remember the loving warnings of the Holy Spirit. Lord, we rejoice in your promises, we rejoice in the security of our salvation, we rejoice in these things, but we also accept through grace, we accept the loving reminders and warnings of the Holy Spirit.

Lord, how faithful, what a wonderful act of mercy and grace that you would come to us and just show us out of your grace and out of your love and mercy. You would just say, look at this, remember this, here's what I have to say to you because I love you. Lord, speak through love this morning, we pray, but Lord, let us not bypass the tremendous things that God wants to reveal to us by his Word and by his Spirit.

We pray in Christ's name, Amen. Now, as you know, the last four or five years I've traveled all over the world and I observe and I watch and I listen and in the past four years especially I've seen a spiritual evil tsunami, so to speak. I've seen waves of apathy come to sweep over the Church of Jesus Christ.

I saw it in Sweden, I prophesied about it, I've seen it in Australia, I've seen it in New Zealand, I've seen it in the United States. We see entire denominations drifting away from the truth of their founding fathers. The church that I grew up in, the denomination that I grew up in, the Pentecostal denomination, such great prayer warriors who are always thinking about the coming of the Lord, preaching about the coming of Christ.

And there wasn't much money, there wasn't a lot of prosperity, but there was such a hunger and such a thirst. And even as a child I would go to these meetings and be stricken by the Holy Spirit and such power. I was called to preach at the age of eight in one of those meetings where the Spirit of God would so fill the house.

Folks, we have that here at Times Square Church and we thank God for it. There are other churches all over the United States that have what we enjoy here. We are not the only one enjoying this week's presence of Christ and the moving of the Holy Spirit.

But folks, there's something happening all over the world. There is a spirit of apathy, there's a drifting away from Christ, from the desire for this kind of glory, the desire for the nearness of Jesus. A few times that I have not been in this pulpit and have traveled and had a Sunday off and I go and I'm hungry.

I've done out in three or four occasions in the last two years and I go so hungry and I said I want to see, I want to hear something from the Lord. And I've watched them coming in to the meetings with such sloth with their Cokes in hand and their Danish and all through the preaching drinking their Cokes and eating their Danish and such irreverence. And then I watch and listen to a 15-20 minute little lecture about how to prosper on your job, how to raise your children, which is fine and we need all these principles and thank God for it.

But then at 12 sharp we watch them run to their cars and it's a race to get out of the parking lot. And folks, we have warnings all through the Bible that it's possible for those who are at present near to the Lord, those who yearn and hunger for him, that it's possible to drift, it's possible to neglect this great salvation. You'll find these Bible warnings to devoted people.

This passage I just read to you was not written to sinners. It was written to devoted men and women of God, to the true church of Jesus Christ, from the heart of Christ himself. How should we escape if we, we God's people, if you David Wilkerson who testifies that it was through prayer and devotion to the Lord that you received a call at an early age, you who fast and pray and seek God, you who have been used of God in a measure, how will you escape if you neglect this great work that God has done, if you drift away from what God has laid on your heart and the obligations and the personal responsibilities to maintain the fire of the Holy Spirit in the soul? These are powerful warnings from the Scripture, awake thou that sleepest.

These are in the Word. The Scripture says it's high time to wake out of sleep, for now our salvation has come nearer than when we first believed. Paul the Apostle warns, and this was right after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, some have become wanton against Christ, some are already turned aside after Satan.

But this morning my concern is not the drifting in the church of Jesus Christ, or the, or the backseat in church. I'm not focused on the apathy that I've seen and heard by pastors who come to me, like the one pastor said, I, in fact, I could read that he said in the last few years I've never seen the level of trouble, discouragement, relationship problems, financial stress. The more I prayed and sought God about these problems in the church, the more they increased.

I came to a place of just quitting the ministry. I'll never leave Christ, but things are so difficult now. We get by emails, we get them by letters from all over the world, the same thing, there's, there's a, there's a tremendous falling away from, I know missionaries who spent years on the mission field, marvelously used.

I remember one missionary couple had communion every day, husband and wife, a powerful testimony, and in their latter day he died, she came home, and I watched and heard that one woman who was one of the spiritual missionary heroes of mine just sit in front of a television and waste her spiritual life, and become absolutely dead, until her grandson knelt by her chair and said, I'm, you were my hero, I was going to serve Christ, but if this is how you end up, if this is how the fire dies, I want nothing with your Jesus, I want nothing to do with it, and he back slid and went to college. You see, none of us, if you sit here this morning thinking, I could never drift, I could never neglect this great salvation, scripture says, take heed when you think you stand, lest you fall, doesn't mean from your salvation, but it means, I'm not saying that isn't possible, but I'm saying the fall away from steadfastness is what Paul is speaking on. He himself had a concern, now you can interpret this any way you want, but Paul said, I bring my body under, lest under any encounter in some way, after having preached to others, I myself to become a cast away.

He's not talking about losing his salvation, Paul's never had a thought of that, but he is saying, there's some, it's, he's entertaining in his mind a possibility that he could lose this fire, this vision, that in the end, he would just peter out, he would just inflame out, not going to hell, but not having, not being useful in the service of God, not being fruitful. Paul's life was all about bearing fruit, it was about having the life of Christ pouring into other lives, and he dreaded the very thought, the very thought that, I'm going to keep my body under, I'm going to lay hold of the promises of God and trust the Holy Spirit, the one who's called me will keep me by his grace. Now I'm secure in my salvation, but I take heed to these godly men.

There's a law of the, there's a law of nature that interprets the law of the Spirit. I'll say that one more time, there's a law of nature that interprets the law of the Spirit. Jesus, the scripture says, I think the Romans first chapter, speaking about those who claim they haven't heard about God, and in that chapter he's talking about homosexuality, and he said that which could be known of God was clearly manifested to them through the things that are seen or created.

And if you remember all through the scripture, what did Jesus say, remember the ravens, consider the birds, can, all of these considerations that Jesus mentions, the scripture, Paul's talking about remember the oxen that treaded out the corn, and he said go to the ant thou sluggard in the Old Testament. In other words, look at nature, you see how nature illustrates spiritual lessons. Let me give you an example how the law of nature interprets the law of the Holy Spirit.

I was reading a Christian biologist in the last few weeks, written probably 150 years ago, and he was talking about a fish that's in the Mammoth Cays in Kentucky. There's a great underground lake in that, it's it's pitch dark down there of course, except that the electricity where they take shines for take the tour groups through it, but there's a fish that is living in that, that has evolved over the years. At first it was a multicolored fish, and had good eyes, but over time, preferring darkness rather than the light, something happened, the fish turned blached white, and a biologist took one of those fish out of Mammoth Cave Lake and dissected the eyes.

In this white head there are two black eyes, looked like perfect eyes, but when they're dissected, they proved to be fake. The optic nerve died, and all of the sight was taken from it. Nature accommodated for a lack of exercise, because there was no need because of the preference for darkness rather than light.

This fish lost its vision, and goes about the lake freely, bumping into objects, and the total nerve system did. There's just a thin piece of thread left that once was light, which was alive. That explains something of the Holy Spirit, of the Spirit of the Living God, and how the Holy Spirit is, there's a law.

What you don't use, you'll lose. What you don't lose, you're going to use. And the Bible makes it clear, neglect causes deterioration.

Neglect the gift of God. Neglect prayer. I know that can happen to me, it can happen to anyone who comes to church and has only auditorium religion.

We have masses who have just auditorium religion, come to church and want to suck the life out of those meetings, and get enough to see them through. You have to have a personal experience, your own prayer life, your own walk with God in this world. You have to have it, you can't get it just in the auditorium.

You have to be exercising the faculties of faith, you have to be exercising your spiritual arms and your legs. Psalms, I'll just read it to you, Psalm 55. You see, there are a lot of people that drift away from Christ because they're simply weary of the struggle, weary of the battle of life.

And it's not that they're giving up on Christ, but they're giving up on the struggle. They can't handle it anymore. Some people are just plain tired.

They are tired of the trouble, tired of the financial stress, they are weary, they are worn out, and they want to escape. They don't want to be so intense for Christ. I hear it from, I just read it to you, from a pastor who said, the more I prayed, the more trouble I saw.

Yes, we can't promise you from the Word anything other than that. Nor could Paul the Apostle, nor could Christ himself. He said, we're going to suffer just as he suffered.

But it's in that struggle we meet Christ. It's in that struggle we become strong. Christ meets you in the fiery furnace, He meets you in the lion's den, He meets you in the sinking boat, He meets you in the storm, He meets you in the hard places.

That's where the revelation of Christ is. But you see, we get tired of the struggle. We say, who needs it? I don't need this.

Look around, all those around me, they don't struggle. They seem to be able to just flow through their Christian life and their Christian walk. Everything seems to be fine.

Their bills are paid, they're happy, and everybody's smiling. Well, I'm not going to knock that. I'm not going to try to explain it.

But I'll tell you, if you're going to seek the face of God, and you're going to be avid in this Word, you're going to be tested. You're going to be tried, and it's going to be that way. So settle in, and know that you may not see this strength, but you are growing.

You are growing wings to fly over, and the Lord's going to come skipping over the mountains, the Bible said. From mountain to mountain, come skipping. David was that way.

You remember what he said, my heart is sore pained in me, the terrors of death are fallen upon me, fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, horror has overwhelmed me. And I said, oh that I had wings like a dove, for then I'd fly away and be at rest, lo I'd wander far off, and I'd stay in the wilderness. I would hasten my escape from this storm.

You know, I want to get away, make an easier way. I can't handle it anymore. Who needs it? You see the Bible, let me put it, the church is in a perfect storm.

This is the perfect storm. Never in history has there been such, when they call perfect storm, where everything is affected in our life. Every single thing.

Let me tell you the danger of wanting to escape and take the easy path. Folks, that's a very dangerous place to be, where you may not say it, but the thoughts are in your, planted in your heart, in your mind. Why be so intense? Because I, I go from one trouble to another, and there's some of you here, are in it over your head.

You are, you have never been so tested. You, it's beyond your comprehension, and you're just staggered. You are absolutely staggered.

Say, what's going on? And deep in your heart, you love Christ. But you say, why go on like this? I don't get an answer. I am struggling like I've never struggled before.

You see, even in your struggle, you have to, you have to go for the resources. You have, there has to be fertilizer, so to speak. Let me, let me just put it from my heart.

In this time of testing, we have a tendency to hide from the Lord. We have a tendency to leave our prayer closet. We have, we have a tendency to just, to just go in, inward, look inward and say, this is enough.

Maybe just sit in front of a television set, and just go numb. Just just go numb. And so we have a tendency, and then it goes day after day, and week after week, and living in this discouragement, not really resting and trusting in the work of God, that he is going to bring you through.

Beloved, if that were not true, this is all in vain. We might well shut the doors of this church and turn it into a bar. God has promised that there'll be a time that you come out of this.

God said that he's going to be with you, and you've got to hold steady, and you've got to fight. The struggle's there, but you've got to fight by faith. You can't let up on the fight of faith.

It's easy for me to just stand here in the flesh and say, hold on, hold on, but I've been there. And I can say after over 54 years of preaching now, and I can say I, the Lord has shown me many troubles and many

sorrows and heartaches, but he's brought me through. And that's what God will do for you.

There are still struggles, and there's still pain, but I know that I'm gaining strength, and I know something's happening in my life every time I struggle through by faith, and rest in his promises. I don't know who I'm speaking to. In Proverbs, the 24th chapter, it's a word by Solomon.

He said, I went out to the field of the slothful. He's talking about a man who's given up. He doesn't want, he's just neglecting his vineyard.

I went out in the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding. And lo, all was grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall was broken down. Then I saw it, and I considered it well.

I looked upon it, and I received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep, so shall your poverty come as one that travelleth, and I want as an armed man. Solomon said, I saw in nature something that taught me in my spirit.

Nature illustrates the law of the spirit, the law of nature. And the law of nature is, if you don't water your garden, you go to any suburb around here, and look at the, they'll be lawn after lawn, well manicured, watered, trees, plants, green grass. And on weekends, you see both husband and wife out there trimming, and planting, and fertilizing.

There's a reason why it's green. That's the reason why life is flowing. Because it's being ministered to, it's being cared for.

It's not being robbed of the resources that are needed. But then you come to one that's all overgrown, and the lawns are dry, and brown, and everything is dying. And it screams at you, sloth.

Screams at you, somebody's in there lazy, somebody's not really keeping up life. And it's what Solomon said. He said, I saw that, and I considered it well, and I looked upon it, and I received instruction.

I told you about a little tree I planted last year. I preached about it from the pulpit. Little stump that looked dead.

No fruit, nothing. I planted it. I don't know why, just felt sorry for it.

Planted it. And I knelt by it, and I prayed, Lord, let there be life. Now, if I just planted it, and just left it there, and said, well, the sun, all the nutrients are in the sun, it also needs water.

But it not only needs water, it needs fertilizer. So I began to go out there every day with a sprinkling can, full, about a five-gallon can of water. And I watched the leaves begin to grow on it, and I watched life come.

But then after, if I would ignore it for two days, I'd go out and the leaves were drooping. So I would go get my sprinkling can, but this time I added a spoonful of Miracle-Gro. Every time I went out, Miracle-Gro, Miracle-Gro.

Folks, I'm telling you, this is the biggest Miracle-Gro on the face of the earth. This is Miracle-Gro. How do we expect to maintain the fire? How do we expect if we don't give diligence? Let me give you another illustration from the law of nature.

It shows the ruinous consequences. How should we escape, the Bible said. He's talking about the consequences of neglect.

If we neglect spiritual warfare, if we just say, hey, I'm going to find a nice, easy place where there are no people. Most of our problems are people problems. You say, minor money problems.

Well, it's still, this is what I, I think many of us say, if I could just get away someplace quiet. You know, there's one preacher in this pulpit who preached, wherever you go, there you are. But here's an illustration from the law of nature, the ruinous consequences of quitting and drifting, lack of faith.

This biologist did a study on the life of a crab. The crab, a crustacean, and the crab life is a very different, please excuse us, but when I read this, I said that, that's, there's a sermon in that. If the law of nature illustrates the law of the spirit, I want to learn from this.

And I learned, and I'll never forget it. And maybe this one way you won't forget what I'm saying. But the crab lives a terrible life.

It's bounced over the jagged rocks, and the bottom of the sea, the wind, the waves just toss them about. They live a very jagged, rugged life. And for many, many years, that's how they develop this strong shell, and these five pair of legs grew meaty and strong to resist the tide.

And they learned to hide under rock formations from their predators. Nature can't explain it. The biologist said that the species, a certain number of those species, decided to take the easy route.

They were tired of the struggle, and so they took to making a home in abandoned shells of mollusks and other animals that left their shells. I saw one, in fact they call it the hermit crab, and I saw one crab in Florida that was in a shell that was eight to ten inches big, great big horn shell. They call it the hermit crab.

Now the hermit crab, somehow, a number of that species decided to quit the battle. And they go in with their measure of health, their meaty legs and their shell. It's like an armored shell.

And they go into this second-hand house, and they settle in. And there's a little, the biologist said, a little tube-like item that sucks to the wall so it is safe. In other words, it's because it didn't want to struggle, it gave up the struggle for safety.

Like many of us want to give up the struggle and find a safe house, a borrowed house if necessary. It's like a daughter plant, D-O-D-D-E-R, that comes and springs up and it has a measure of life and gets so high that it's got a limb that goes over to the next healthy plant, put a suction cup and sucks the life out of that, and begins to, loses its life and crawls around the ground until it dies. But this hermit crab goes in, and there's a high price for going after safety and losing the struggle, and wanting only to get to heaven.

You don't want to battle, don't want to fight anymore, no spiritual warfare, just give up, and just hang on. I'm just going to love Jesus, I'm not going to hurt anybody, I just want to be by myself, I want to get rid of this struggle. And so that terrible price, they begin, the legs begin to wither, the back begins to come paper-thin, and after a season, the legs begin to fall off, one after another, until there's nothing but a shale.

And that little hermit crab becomes a weak, useless little creature, until it finally dies in its safe place. Folks, while the other crabs are out swimming, and in the free air, and yes there are predators, we fight against principalities and powers of darkness, we have predators. And the winds and the waves toss us,

and there are jagged rocks, but there's only one rock, there's only one safe place.

I want to be one of those who fights, I want to be one who's swimming free, I want to be one of those, I'm not going to call you a hermit crab if you are drifting, and I'm not trying to be fictitious, but folks, get the thought in your mind, just like Solomon said, I saw it and I perceived and I learned from it. Now let me get to the heart of this. When I prayed, Lord, how do I keep from drifting, how do I keep from neglecting this great salvation? I've never once doubted my salvation, but I know what can happen because I've seen the shipwreck all around it, so is Paul when he writes about it.

But when I asked the Holy Spirit, how do I guard against neglect and drifting? And he led me to the life of Peter. You know well the story of Peter, and what I'm going to tell you now, it's not enough to just fast and pray and read your Bible. The Lord takes that for granted that Peter, who's now repentant, nobody drifted further among the disciples.

Judas, of course, betrayed him, but among the other eleven, Peter really drifted from Christ. He said, I don't even know the man, and he cursed. The Bible says he went out and repented.

It was pride, it was self-boasting, and he even said out loud these thoughts he gave voice to. Others may leave you, but there's no possibility that I could drift. Somebody may be thinking, Pastor Dave, why would you preach about the possibility of somebody drifting away from the vision and fullness of Christ? I believe that this is the attitude of Peter, that I can't fall.

Others may fall, but I have reached a place in Christ in my faith that I don't have to be warned. It was this pride. And so Peter, I want you to notice this now, he's in a boat because he said, I'm going fishing.

What he means, I'm going back to my career. I don't want this struggle. I don't have it in me.

And you take a look at that man in the boat, and you look at that man and pulling in the haul of fishes. Here's a man who is repentant. Here's a man who is prayed.

Here's a man who's been restored. Here's a man who's been breathed upon by the Holy Spirit, because between his failure and between that moment in the boat, he had met Jesus in that closed room when he came through the wall. And Jesus had embraced this man and had breathed on him, touched him, and the Holy Spirit was in him, the Scripture says.

The Holy Spirit was breathed into him. But you see, there's another issue with Christ. It was not enough that Peter now was restored safe.

It's not enough that they give themselves in the upper room. He sees what was given to Paul. It's not going to be enough for that upper room experience.

It's not going to be enough that they wait on the Lord and minister and are given avidly to the Word of God. He said there's another issue. There's another matter, this matter of neglect.

And Jesus looks at Peter and says, Jesus said, come and dine in their dining with Jesus. And he looks at Peter, remember? And he said, Peter, do you love me? Peter said, yes. He said, do you love me more than these? Now it can't be the disciples you're talking about, because if he says, yeah, I love you more than you, then he's back to the old Peter.

He's back to the old pride. It had to be. Do I mean more to you than anything else in life, your career, everything else? Am I really all in all to you? If that's so.

And he didn't tell him, go fast and pray. He took it for granted. He took it as to say, well, he has my heart now and I have his heart.

He's going to pray. He's going to fast. He's going to do these things, because that's what a devoted Christian does.

That's where he knows his life comes from. But there's another issue. It's a matter, Scripture says, how do we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? He says, feed my sheep.

Peter, I want you to forget your failure. I want you to forget that you denied me. I want you to forget that you had drifted away from me.

You have come back to me now. You have my heart and I have your heart and I'm saying it again, feed my sheep. Don't focus on yourself.

Don't focus on your past. Don't focus on your failure. Don't focus on that now.

Get your eyes off of your own problems and now look at my sheep. Look at the needs around you. Look at the suffering around you.

This is the issue today. I can shut myself in my secret closet. I can become a man who prays eight hours a day.

I can read the rest of another eight hours in the Bible. I could fast for days, 21, 40 days, whatever it is. I could fast and still neglect this great salvation if I am shut off from human need.

If I don't see the hurts and the pains of the body of Christ and I do nothing about it. I'm a hermit crab. And Jesus says, feed my sheep.

And Peter got the message like Solomon. I saw it and I saw the consequences and I learned from it and Peter learned three times, feed my sheep. You see, Peter goes up later with John to the temple to pray and he passes a man who is a cripple asking for alms.

Now folks, I surmise, and I believe this to be true, that Peter had seen that man many times. They went up to the temple. They were there when Jesus drove out the money changers.

Remember Paul later goes up to the temple. They went up to the temple to pray and to witness. And they went through the gate beautiful and they'd seen this man before but Peter never really saw him.

He saw him but he didn't see him. He didn't see him in the light of this feed my sheep, this neglecting of human need. But this time he comes upon the man and the Bible said he fastened his eyes on him.

You see, when you have your eyes on your own problem, when you're thinking only of your own financial needs, your own pain, you lose your vision. You see but you don't see. It's like that fish that have eyes that can't see.

Having eyes they can't see. But you see, the need is always there. It's always in our pathway.

It's always there but we can't see it. You don't have to go to China. You don't have to go to India.

All around us are human needs and we're blind to them because we're focused on our own problems. We're focused on our own pain. I speak from experience.

I'm preaching to my own heart. Listen body of Jesus Christ. The first thing that suffers when you you think nothing about your own problem and you're not casting it upon the Lord and moving on in your pain.

I think I've done more for God's glory in my pain than I did without my pain. It's true of everyone in this house. But now Paul fastens his eyes on that man.

He's not letting go and the Bible said he took him by the hand and raised him up. He's feeding the sheep. He's not neglecting at this time.

No, I have to do something about it. Folks, the moment you get that mindset of the Holy Spirit, you begin to pray, oh God open my eyes. Lord take my eyes off of my own problem.

I don't want to neglect the salvation of Christ to those around me, my family and those that are in pain. Show me the need. And folks, when you begin to pray that and believe the Holy Spirit for it, what a wonderful thing happens.

He begins to show you things right at your doorstep. He begins to show your needs all around you and then the Lord starts bringing them into your attention. He gives you back your discernment.

He opens your eyes and you become, you begin become strong in the Lord and I make you a promise. You begin to get your eyes off of your own problem. Commit those things.

The Lord rests in them and say, Lord now help me to be a feeder of the sheep. Open my eyes to the needs around me and give me the words and give me the faith. That kind of Christian is never going to drift.

Never. That's the guard. That's the wall.

That's the protection. Giving out to others. Just giving yourself.

These are the most giving pastors and elders I have ever met anywhere in the world. Giving. They're not hirelings.

They're here to give and that's why you hear the word that you hear, the blessing you see on their lives because they're feeding the sheep, meeting human need. We stand. Honestly, many of you probably didn't need this message.

Maybe the majority of you didn't need this message. I needed it but I hopefully have preached it in love and mercy. Not suggesting that this church drifts.

This church is not drifting. This church is focused. It's got the focus of the Holy Spirit.

This church is meeting human need but oh God help us as individuals. Not only as a body but as individuals to say, Jesus use me. Got three days of fasting and prayer.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/KpsuKBCiVgw.mp4>

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