

The Devil Is Out to Destroy Your Faith

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson warns that Satan is determined to destroy the faith of God's elect and that the stronger one's faith is, the more severe their test will be.

Duration: 1:00:36

Scripture: Psalm 16:10, Psalm 27:5, Psalm 112:4-10, Psalm 121:7-8, Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 12:5

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "End Times"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher describes a dream he had where he walked through the streets of New York and saw a scene of darkness and ugliness. He came across young people lying in the gutters, seemingly dead but still alive and stoned. The preacher emphasizes the need for people to have a hearing heart and open spiritual eyes and ears to receive the message of Jesus. He warns that the current week will mark the end of the prosperity message and the beginning of the last days of the American lifestyle. The preacher expresses concern for the impact of these events on young people and calls for surrendering doubts and fears to God.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Pulpit Series. It was recorded in the Sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tips are available by writing to World Challenge PO Box 260, Lindell, Texas 75771 or calling 214-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to your friends. With the nation's economy shaking right now, you know what is most important in the hearts of a majority of American men tonight? Super Bowl, the baseball World Series. A majority of people not even, they don't even believe anything can happen so they're parked watching sports today.

Boy, what a jolt's coming. What a shaking is going to come. Satan is out to destroy your faith, is my message.

Let's pray. Holy Spirit, I ask of you now that you would come and touch my lips with poles of fire from the altar of God. Lord, I know you've burned a message in my soul.

I know that you're asking me tonight to preach prophetically. And I want, Lord, to move in the Spirit so that no flesh comes forth. But, oh Jesus, we're going to have to have a peep with ears to hear tonight.

Lord, it's time to listen. If we've never listened before, it's time to listen now. Oh God, how you've tried to get the attention of the church.

How you've tried, you have sent prophets and watchmen. You have been warning and thundering with books and tapes and messages. You have been coming and calling and crying aloud.

And so many people, Lord, are just getting used to it and they're not hearing. God, give us a hearing heart. Open our spiritual ears and our spiritual eyes.

Lord Jesus, we've never tried to preach that it'd be sensational. We've tried to preach, Lord, that it would produce Jesus in hearts. That Christ would be formed in us.

Oh Holy Spirit, take over this message now. Take it deep into our hearts. Lord, our faith is going to be tried as it's never been tried.

We're about to enter the furnace. Lord, the door is open. We've been cast into the furnace.

Lord, this week is going to go down in history. It's going to go down as the beginning of the last days of the American lifestyle. This day is going to go down in history.

Lord, this very week is going to be the end of the prosperity message. It'll be discounted all over the world because it will not work here in America. All the changes that are coming.

We live now, Lord, in such an accelerated moment when everything is accelerating and moving so fast. Oh God, keep us on the rock. Keep us solid on the rock.

Keep us focused on you, Jesus. We're not focused on prophecy. We're focused on Jesus.

But you said you'd not do anything until you warned your servants, the prophets and watchmen. Lord, we're one of your watchmen tonight to stand and warn. So speak clear, Lord.

Anoint us. Speak your word, we hear it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Beloved, you and I are in a war. We're in a life and death battle for our faith now. Satan's determined to shipwreck and destroy the faith of God's elect.

And the stronger your faith is, the more severe your test is going to be. Unshakable faith in the Lord Jesus is the rage of hell. Nothing causes the devil to tremble more than one Christian who is unshakable in his faith.

Because that Christian's untouchable. If you've got that unshakable faith, you have all power against every force that comes out of hell. In fact, if you read through Hebrews, you find that this Christian who has unshakable faith is probably the number one enemy of the devil.

His name is known all over hell, his name or her name. And that Christian who's untouchable in faith, full of the uncompromising faith in Jesus Christ, and that faith releases the power. And boy, when you read Hebrews, the reason the devil doesn't want you to stand in faith is because by faith his kingdom is subdued.

Righteousness is born, the scripture said. The promises of God are obtained. The mouth of lions are stopped.

Satanic fire is quenched. You escape the edge of the sword. Out of weakness you remain strong.

The weak become brave in battle. They turn the devil's army to flight. The Bible said they can wake up the dead.

They don't even flinch when they're tortured. They gladly endure mockings and beatings and stonings. You lock them up in jail and they sing.

You cut them to pieces and they still won't give in. Because faith sustains them, those who possess it. Faith sustains them in any hour.

Now, when faith is lost, or it's shattered, or it's shipwrecked, the believer becomes very weak and vulnerable and turns to idolatry and wickedness. It's been that way from the very beginning of the history of the people of God. Paul warned that in the last days some would put away or cast aside their faith.

He charged Timothy, fight a good fight of faith. Hold on to your faith. And a good conscience, which some, having put away concerning faith, have been shipwrecked.

He said there are people allowing the devil to shipwreck their faith. They started right. They once had something would keep them in the dark hour.

But they had been shipwrecked. Their faith is absolutely ruined. He also warned Timothy, in the latter days, some said depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.

He said they're just going to swerve. And for one moment they should be strongest. When all the darkness is pressing in on our sides, when faith should rise them into the light of God, he said they better turn aside and be seduced by doctrines of demons and devils.

He warned Timothy and the church that Satan's going to attempt to overthrow the faith of some of you. He said the devil's going to come. He's going to try to overthrow your confidence in the Lord.

He'll do it by the dark conditions that are coming. He'll try to overthrow, destroy, shipwreck, cause you to cast away your faith. Peter had such a faith he made the devil in our house tremble so much so that the devil came to Christ and asked permission to sift him, test him, to see if his faith was good.

And Jesus, knowing that, came up to Peter. The Lord said to Simon, Simon, Peter, Simon, Behold, Satan has desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I pray for you that your faith fail not.

I'm praying for you. Beloved, we have an intercessor right now, the same Christ, who says to this church and all who will hear it, the devil's come to sift you as he did Peter. He's desired to have you because you've taken a stand.

You have been filled with his faith. But you're going to be tested. You're going into the sieve.

But I'm praying for you that your faith fail not. Moses, just before he died, stood before Israel. He lamented the tendency in God's people to backslide in their faith just in the darkest hour, just when judgment's about to fall.

It's been the history of the church. It's been the history of God's people when they're tested to drop their faith, to cast it away, and especially in times of prosperity. Prosperity's been the greatest curse against

true faith.

It has made it through poverty. It's made it through furnaces and lions' dens. It's not made it through prosperity.

Very seldom has prosperity, has there been a church that's been able to endure prosperous times and still maintain their faith. In Moses' final sorrow to the children of Israel, he said this. He said, Israel, the Lord does want you to walk.

You were his person and his inheritance. He found you in a howling waste desert. He led and instructed you.

He kept you as the apple of his eye. Like an eagle, he spread his great wings beneath you. The Lord alone did need you because there was no strange God among you.

And consequently, you ate the increase of the fields. You sucked honey out of the rock. You had an abundance of oil.

You had an abundance of butter, milk, sheep, cows, goats, rams, and you drank the pure fruit of the vine. But then you got proud when you were blessed. You grew hard and complacent.

You took all his goodness for granted. You forsook your faith. And the Lord saw it, and he abhorred his will because they provoked him.

And he said, I'm going to hide my face from you. For you have become very proud. You have become children in whom there is no faith.

I blessed you when you believed me. When you trusted me, you walked with me like little children. I was your leader.

I was your guide. I provided everything for you. But then when I gave it all to you, you abused it.

You got a hard heart. You went your own way. You thought your own hands did it.

And he said, now you have lost your faith. I blessed you, and you lost your faith as a result. When Israel lost its faith, it cast it aside and said, I'm going to go my own way.

Everything started spinning out of control. Everything went wrong in Israel. Judgment fell on the land.

And listen to what God said, because this is what's happening to America this very week. He said, I will now heap mischief or trouble upon you. I will spend my errors upon you.

God said, I'm going to shoot my errors of trouble. I'm going to start heaping mischief, trouble upon trouble upon trouble. I'm going to heap it upon you.

And this is exactly what we're having in America right now. This is Sunday, October 15, 1989. This is where we are.

And hear me, hear it clear. Hear it in the Spirit, because I have the Holy Spirit breathing through my physical body right now. I believe taking control of what I'm saying.

And I want you to hear it loud and clear. I believe God has committed himself to the judgment of America already, and it can't be stopped. He has committed himself to the chastisement and the bringing of this nation to its knees.

There is nothing that's going to stop what God has already begun. Now, Friday, October 19, two years ago, a week ago, two years ago a week, I stood in this pulpit and said, if you want to see history meet me in the stock market Monday. I was down there when the force came down.

God couldn't make it. We were down there and watched what was happening. And that's what we told you.

That was the wooden yoke. And the message went out within two years probably, the iron yoke would come, and it could not be broken. But you watch what is going to happen.

You see, this generation, this generation began at Woodstock. This generation is being judged right now at Wall Street. It was the same generation just 25 years ago at Woodstock that dropped out of materialism.

It dropped out of society, so to speak, because it didn't satisfy. And so they went to Woodstock, 450,000, in California and all over, thousands upon thousands, all generations gathered and stoned on drugs, stoned on their music, and they dropped out, looking for peace, looking for something to satisfy their inner longing, and it failed. That stoned generation wound up half dead.

They buried half that generation, and those who remained saw what was happening, and so they went to the other extreme. They turned toward Wall Street. They turned back to the greed, and now that has run its full course, and now it's coming back to drugs.

There is probably as much or more drugs in the Wall Street culture today than there is on the streets. There's a big program right now called that oven that you push, microwave crack. Microwave crack is a big program.

This week, we're talking about it all week here in New York. Five seconds, and those rocks explode. Those crack rocks in five seconds, and these are the wealthy in our suburbs.

Now listen to me clearly. I've been seeking the face of God, and the Lord made it clear to me. I was going to go down again tomorrow to Wall Street.

The Lord made it clear not to go down until Wednesday. I'm going down there Wednesday. I'll be there probably all day until the stock market closes.

I don't know what's going to happen, but I see this. I've seen for five years the President of the United States sitting so stunned. He's looking into space.

He's in the Oval Office, and all of his advisors are running. There's not a sound in the Oval Office. Not a sound.

They're all stunned, and they're saying, What happened? It's out of control. And the President of the United States is looking into space, and he can't stop it. And he turns and says, Can nothing be done? And every head says no, and he's stunned.

The whole government is stunned. They can't do anything about it. It is already spread out of control in this nation I've had for five years.

And it could be that this is the very President. It could be this very time. I don't know.

I do believe that on Monday and Tuesday, this next week, they already have cell orders. They may track it. I see like a man laying on a table, and a patient.

Open heart surgery. And you see all these surgeons, they're clipping. Here's a bleeding vessel.

They clip it, and stop it. Over here, they clip it. Another surgeon clips it over here.

There's one, and they clip it. And just when they're about to wash their hands and say, I believe we've got it, then they are reversed. There is a hemorrhage.

And folks, I believe that we're going to see the beginning of a hemorrhage. I don't know how it's coming or what it is. They may, in the next few days, try to patch things up.

But there is coming to our economy the very thing that we've been crying out, and warning, and warning, and warning, until people don't want to hear it anymore. The party is over. The party.

No clapping, please. The party is over. The American life style, as we've known it, is going to change forever.

Do you know that yesterday here in this city, there was a jail riot? You know what they were rioting over? A cold supper, because they were remodeling the kitchen. And they threw it out the window and started burning things, because the supper was cold. What's going to happen? What's going to happen when our colleges begin to close, and our young people don't have the money for the sport cars, and the clothes, and the tape recorders, and all of the things that they're so used to, because they've never been deprived? And if in our prisons they're going to riot over a cold supper? What's coming? That was the dream I had.

And I tell you, I've not had a dream like this in my lifetime. I've been praying the Lord would speak to me first through His Word, through prophetic movements of the Spirit, and through dreams. Not anything else other than I can have a clearer vision of what He's saying to my heart.

I'm not a prophet, but I do know I'm a watchman, one of His many, many watchmen. And I just dreamed that I was walking here in the streets of New York. I presumed it was New York, because the tall buildings, and it was gray, it was dark, it was this scene of ugliness, just pale, everything was gray.

And I was walking on the sidewalk, and suddenly I came upon the gutters filled with young people. Look, college-age students. They were laying in the gutter.

Those in the bottom had their heads laying half in the sunken filth that was coming down. I thought they're drowning in that filth. And there were four or five bodies just draped over others.

And I got to think they're all dead, but they were moving just a little bit. A finger would move here, and a thumb would move there. They were alive.

They were all stoned. They were all drugged. Occasionally, someone on top of the heap would open a book.

And I thought those were students, because the books were laying on top of these. Suddenly, one would just get up a little bit, open the book, and lazily look at it, and then close it, and then lay down. And suddenly the books were all closing.

And I began to weep. I said, oh God, look at them. They're laying up and down in the gutters.

What's happened to them? They're dying. Nobody's studying. Nobody's eating.

Nobody's working. They're dying. Brother, sister, the thing that's happening this week is going to affect our young people more than any other segment of our society.

It's going to affect our colleagues and our high school kids. They have never suffered. They have never known any kind of suffering.

They've had everything they've ever wanted. We're going to have riots among our young people, colleges, burnings. Now listen, folks.

This might get so heavy for some of you, but if you just hold steady, you're going to see God unfold some wonderful promises before we're finished here tonight. Brother, I don't know if the stock market's going. I don't know if this is the final crash.

I believe what the scripture says is clear. That something has begun. God has begun judgment.

It has begun. Whether it just goes right. God didn't say He's going to drop it out of the sun.

He said, I'm going to heap trouble on you. As I see it, it's going to start accelerating minute by minute by minute, one bad report here, one here, one here. It comes down suddenly like a flood from all sides.

It may be a year before it affects many of you. It won't affect the average person on a job as much as it affects the wealthy in this nation. Those of you that have always bemoaned the fact that you had just an ordinary job, you're going to come to a place you're thankful.

You're going to thank God for that ordinary job. Because many white-collar people are going to be doing the suffering. You're going to be awful, awful glad that you're not among those being cut.

But you see, what is happening to America, because we lost our faith. There was a time that our nation had faith in God. We had His name on our coins even.

We saluted Him when we pledged allegiance to our flag. It was one nation under God. We prayed to Him on our schools.

We prayed to Him in our courts. We prayed to Him in Congress. We were a nation under God.

Now we've kicked Him out. And we've invited the sorcerer in. No wonder the sorcerer's got the very thing that he's noted for, drugs.

He's trying to sedate this nation, getting it ready for the Antichrist forces. Without a doubt. But you see, when we said no to God, then we opened ourselves to judgment.

And the same thing is happening there in many individual lives. The Bible says without faith it's impossible to please God. Without faith it's impossible to please Him.

And they that come to Him must believe that He is. And that He's a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Hallelujah.

The disciples were in a storm-tossed boat. And it looked like they were going to sink. And Jesus was in the hinder part of the boat fast asleep.

Now see what happens. And this is something you must hear. Don't be guilty of what the disciples were guilty of.

And that's when you lose your faith. In fact, Jesus was so incredulous. He could not believe what had happened to these disciples.

After all the time He'd spent with them. The storm is coming. And you know what they get? They get sarcastic with the Lord.

And when God is not acting the way we think He should act. He's not moving into our situation as fast as we think He should. We've been praying about something and it doesn't happen.

And the storm is all around us. And we feel like we're sinking. And we say, Lord, You know I love You.

I'm Your servant. I've forsaken all to follow You. Where are You? And when that boat was sinking.

They said, Lord, don't You care that we're going down? Do you hear the sarcasm? And I tell you, I have listened to some people recently. From all of the United States. Who get in touch with us.

About how their faith is being shaken. And I've had them absolutely confess. That Lucas and I, I know what I'm going through.

It's severe. But I have a tendency to get sarcastic toward the Lord. Lord, where are You? Why aren't You acting? Don't You care? That some of you are unemployed.

Some of you are being tested right now like you've never been tested in your life. And it's going to get worse probably. The time will come when you'll be tempted to say like the disciples, Lord.

Everything is shaking. The boat looks like it's going down. Don't You care? Look at what's happening to me.

Look at my rent due. Look at this. I don't have any prospect for the future.

What am I going to do? And Jesus stood in that bank. And He calmly settled the sea. Everything was suddenly calm.

And Jesus looked at the face of His disciples and He said, Why are you so fearful? How has it come about that you have no faith? How did this happen? How did it come about that you have no faith and trust in Me? I'm here in the boat. I'm here with you. And beloved, no matter what happens, the Lord's in our boat.

He's here with us. No wonder Jesus spoke these awesome words. Shall not God protect His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will speedily avenge them.

Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? Do you hear what Jesus is saying? I've given you an absolute promise. It is as sure as the name I am. It is as secure as the heavens and the earth I've created.

I told you that if you call upon Me, I'll protect you because you're my elect. You cry night and day. I may bear long with you.

It may look like I'm not there on time, but I'm there always right on time. And God says, Jesus said, even though I've given you this ironclad promise, even though you have all of these promises, when I return, am I going to find any faith on the earth? And I got to thinking, Lord, how can that be with all the charismatic renewal? How can that be with so many hundreds of thousands in prayer sessions now and going through all the motions of religion? How could you say, when I come back, will I find faith on the earth? And folks, we're going to see how that could happen because things are going to get so bad. Things are going to be so shaken.

The Bible says men's hearts are going to fervent with fear watching those things coming on the earth. It's just the beginning. We're living in an incredible hour.

There's going to be such a testing. There's going to be so many signs of everything shaking all around. Many are going to, out of absolute fear, despair, are going to give up on the Lord.

They're going to give up, saying it's no use, it's hopeless. Jesus said, shall we find faith on the earth? Now, I want to expose to my strategy of the devil to try to shake your faith. The first strategy is that he's trying to pervert the righteous judgments of the Lord on his own church.

He's trying to pervert the righteous judgments of the Lord. Now, follow me closely. The devil is trying to take credit for God's exposure of sin in the church to make it appear that wickedness is out of control.

I've got to get this out of my heart. We're just burning this in my soul. Peter's warning has come to pass.

We are living in the fulfillment of the prophecy that Peter gave to the church. He said, for the time will come that judgment must begin in the house of God. And if it first begin in us, what shall the end be for them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous first will be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? The exposure of evangelists and preachers and sin in the church in the past two years has not been the work of the devil.

The devil wanted to keep it under the covers. He wanted to keep it there as a base of wickedness. He wanted a foundation to be eaten with worms.

He would not expose sin. He's not in the business of exposing sin. I've heard some evangelists say, Pray for us, the devil did it, the devil did it.

No, God did it. God claimed to set God on the church. The Holy Ghost said, it's enough.

And God said, judgment. And the moment he spoke, the Holy Ghost began to blaze. He sent an army of angels.

And they began to open the books. They began to open the books. And suddenly, the media was stirred.

The media that laid calm for years. Suddenly, they're like detectives. Something's burning.

The fire's burning. Something's pushing. Go after him.

Go after him. Go after her. What was it? It's the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Spirit and the Lord saying, I'm big enough. The church is going to survive it all. Let it grow.

I want to get rid of it. I'm going to clean it up because the hour is late. And the Holy Ghost came and began to clean up his church.

Judgment has begun in the house of God. Now, I'll tell you something. If you see all these media people that expose these preachers.

Did you see CBS just get exposed itself? For faking news programs? Huh? It's just the beginning. God said, if you see it in my church, what's it going to be like when I strike there? What's it going to be like when I hit Wall Street? What's it going to be like when I hit the media itself? When the wicked are hit? What's it going to be like? If you think this is something, you haven't seen anything yet. Now comes the devil with his perverted lie.

You know, I had a brother say the other day, he said, who's next, Brother Wilkinson? Who's next? Everyone I've trusted, every evangelist I've trusted, he's failed me. Who do you trust now? Now that's the question he asked. So, who do you trust? Because everyone, who's next? And you know what the devil, you know the trick of the devil? Here's his strategy right now to shake your bed because many of you have your face shaking.

When Jimmy Swaggart had that media problem, I was going into the theater and I had people stopping, they were crying. One man said, I had mortgaged my home to help that ministry now and his faith was shattered. People's faith was shattered.

How can the devil bring men down like that? The devil doesn't bring anybody down. Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. And I love every one of these murders.

I love them all. But you see, the devil comes along and he whispers to the heart, you see, nobody gets the victory. If all my preachers can't get victory, how can you? Everybody, here's what the devil, everybody's doing something evil and wicked secretly.

Everybody has a thing that he's indulging in. Before long, it's all going to come out that every preacher has something dishonest in him. Because sin is so strong, nobody can break the power of lust.

You have to live with it. Sin is spreading. It's getting stronger.

There's no freedom. That's the lie of the devil, to shake your faith. He's first of all trying to shake your faith in the ministry.

So do you want to even believe a pastor, a prophet, or a watchman? You won't want to believe anybody. Now, I know that we get our eyes on Jesus. But Paul lived such a life, he said, look at me and follow me.

And I'm telling you, God has those kind of men and women on the earth today. He's got a holy ministry. And it's coming up stronger than ever.

Hallelujah. This is the end of side one. You may now turn the tape over to side two.

People, young pastors, and young evangelists, and young prophets, following the Holy Ghost, never been tainted by these things. Glory to God. You see, the devil's trying to get credit, he's trying to take credit for the Lord's house cleaning.

He's trying to make sin look so uncontrollable. He's trying to convince Christians that besetting sin will never end. Everybody's doing something wrong.

Everybody's living a lie. Everybody's going to fall. I heard that intimated by somebody recently.

It won't be long until everybody falls. No, everybody is not falling. Love it? God has given us a powerful weapon to use against this lie of the devil.

And here it is. Now, put it in your mind, in your computer, in your head, and you spit it out after the devil every time he flies at you. Don't get your eyes on those who are falling around us in this generation.

Get your eyes set on the great cloud of witnesses the Bible talks about. Listen to it. Hebrews 12, 1, Wherefore, seeing we also are surrounded about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

You know what this is? Oh, it's beautiful. It's a picture of all the saints of God of all ages. They're sitting in the heavenly bleachers.

They're sitting on the clouds of heaven. They're lined up all around. He said, we're surrounded by a cloud of witnesses.

There it is. A cloud of witnesses. There's Noah.

And you say, Noah, everybody in your generation fell. He said, but eight of us made it. 120 years they laughed at me.

120 years they mocked me. 120 years I stayed true to the Lord and I kept my faith. Even though there was violence.

Even though my society was cursed. I stayed true. I was a righteous man.

I made it. It's worth it. And the Bible said these are witnesses.

Look at that cloud of witnesses. Thousands upon thousands. Millions upon millions.

They came through fire. They came through water. They were tortured.

They were stoned. Of all ages. And there they are dressed in palms.

They've got palms in their hand. They're dressed in white. And the devil comes and says, everybody's falling.

You look up at the cloud of witnesses and say, well, devil, where did these come from? How did they make it? How did they make it? If everybody's falling, where did this cloud of witnesses come from? And the Bible says this cloud of witnesses is saying, strengthen your feeble knees. Get back into the race and fight a good fight of faith. Because it pays.

It pays. It pays. Alright, so a few preachers fail.

Alright, so a few thousand preachers fail. What does that have to do with anything right now when you've got this cloud of witnesses from all generations? You can say to the devil, devil, if you're telling me everybody's falling, everybody's got a sin in their life, and everybody's got something wrong. How come they're all dressed in white? How come they have crowns of righteousness on their head? Where did this cloud come from? They came from the overpowering power of Jesus Christ.

Hallelujah. They made it. Their generations collapsed.

Their generations, their societies fell. They were tortured and beheaded. Their babies were thrown into rivers right in front of their eyes.

They were cut and sawn in sunder. They had to hide in caves. Some of them had nothing but skins on their back.

They were hungry. They were naked. They were destitute.

But they never bent. They kept the faith. And there are a cloud of witnesses.

Don't get your eyes on some evangelist. Don't get your eyes on the people around you that are falling. Look up to that cloud of witnesses.

Hallelujah. Glory be to God. If only you and Jesus made it, you'd still have a cloud of witnesses from all generations.

Hallelujah. Satan misrepresents the Lord's refining process. Listen to it now.

The devil misrepresents the refining process. All the prophets were told of God taking his people in the last days into the fire to refine them. Zechariah 13.9 said, I will bring a third of you through the fire.

And I'll refine you as silver is refined. And I will refine them as gold is tried. Malachi 3.2 and 3. For he shall sit like a refiner.

He is like a refiner's fire. And like full of soap. And he shall sit.

This is the Lord Jesus. He shall sit as refiner and purifier of silver. And he shall purify the sons of Levi.

And purge them as gold and silver that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. God said to Jeremiah. I'm going to ask you a question.

Where is this fire coming from? What is the fire? It's not persecution. It's not the economy. The fire that's going to test us is the word of God.

Listen to what Jeremiah said. It's not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord. Jeremiah said, this word is in my heart as a burning fire.

Shut up in my bones. You know what God's doing? And some of you don't even realize why God's brought you to this church yet. You still don't understand the prophetic significance of it.

I do. He brought you here not because we're some great preachers. But I do know one thing.

He put a fiery message in this pulpit. There's been holy fire go out. Like white hot lava that's burned out.

The Bible says the day shall come. For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven. This church has been an oven.

The Lord has turned up the fire. His word has come forth. Sometimes so strong it was like bolts of lightning out of heaven.

And the Lord put us in a pot. We're right here. This church is a refiner's pot.

And he has put us in that pot. And he's brought us to this church and he's brought a fire under us. He's doing it right now.

The fire of the Holy Ghost. The fire of his word. And he turns up the heat.

And you know what happens when you turn up the heat? What happens? All the dirt comes to the surface. All the dross. All the alloy comes up.

All of the lesser metals. All the little specks. And here's the trick of the devil.

The devil comes to you and says, Alright, you go to Times Square Church. You're sitting under that red hot preaching. What do you see now? Look at the pot.

All you see is dirt. All you see is your weakness. All you see.

Every time they preach, something else is coming out. Right? And the devil says, You're never going to make it. You've been there two years and all you've got is dirt.

All you do is look in the pot. What do you see? Weakness, weakness, weakness. All you see is that junk coming out.

You know what you need to tell the devil? You see that one sitting beside me? It's my master. And he's fanning the flame. He put me in this fire.

He put me here. I'm nothing but a coal. I'm nothing but a coal.

I'm burning his fire out of the Holy Oil. I'm just a coal of fire and I'm burning. And what he's doing? He's putting the coal of fire under me.

He's turning up the heat. And all you have to say, Devil, that's only surface deep. Your whole pot's full of gold.

It's just surface deep. The pot is gold. He's getting us ready.

He's doing something. You see that thing in his hand? That's a strainer. And when he's ready, he's going to come and skim it off the top.

He's going to keep skimming and he's going to keep skimming and one day, he's going to look in there and he's going to smile. He's going to see his face. Reflected right there in me.

Hallelujah. Don't you dare let the devil lie to you that you're not making progress. Don't you dare let him say, you don't need to hear that kind of preaching anymore.

No, it's bringing all the stuff out. God's been after that junk. God's been after that.

He's getting it. He's getting it. Hallelujah.

Glory to God. I just can't be quiet tonight. He's getting it out, folks.

It's all coming out. I'll tell you, it's a dirty job. It looks ugly.

It looks filthy. Sometimes you look in that pot and say, I'll never make it. Forget that surface.

He's taking... It's his time. He's going to skim it all off. Glory to God.

You just stay in the fire. Here's another trick. Satan's trying to shipwreck your faith by distorting the loving chastening of the Lord.

He'll come to you when you're being chastened by the Lord and say, God's mad at you. Because if you really loved the Lord, you wouldn't be going through this. If God was with you, you wouldn't be suffering like you're suffering.

I want you to go to Hebrews, please. I want you quickly. I won't preach much longer, but I want you to hear this.

I want you to go to Hebrews, the 12th chapter. Hebrews 12. Oh, hallelujah for your word, Jesus.

Hebrews 12, verse 5. Some of you need this. How many of you are going through a trial? Raise your hand. You're going through a trial.

You're being tested. All right. Put this in your heart.

Hebrews 12, beginning with verse 5. I'm going to go down all the way to the 13th verse. You've forgotten the agitation which speaketh unto you as unto children. My son despised not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you were rebuked of him.

For whom the Lord loveth, is that in your Bible? Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and he scourgeth every son whom he requires. You know what scourging means? Spanks. I spank you.

I reprove you. For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and he scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If you endure chastening, God deedeth with you as with sons.

For what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof ye are partakers, then ye are bastards and not sons. Furthermore, we have fathers in our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence. Shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father's spirits and live? For they barely for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure.

But he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now, no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous. Is that what yours is? You've not been shouting over your temptation to have your trial.

It's been grievous, not joyous. But afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to whom? To them that are exercised, are learned by it, those who are willing to learn from it. Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down in the feeble knees, make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be

turned out of the way.

Let it be healed. Find a peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see God. Hallelujah.

All right. Look at the next verse. 15.

Looking diligently, lest any man fail in the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled. All right. Look at me, please.

I will focus on that one last verse. Lest there be a root of bitterness. You're under chastisement.

That chastisement can be a loss of a job sometimes. It can be a child that rebels. It can be sickness.

It can be suffering. It can be litigation. It can be almost anything.

It can be a physical affliction that hangs on and hangs on. And it's a chasing of the Lord. David said, If I had been chastened, I wouldn't have served the Lord.

I would not have followed the Lord. Paul said, I prayed and prayed for this thorn to be removed. But you see, God said that His grace is sufficient.

I don't know what you're going through, but I know one thing. God will not lift His hand because He loves us. He'll not lift His hand until the Holy Ghost's timing is right.

Not according to you or to me. Because the one thing you think is the one thing you need above all else. You're saying, God, you have to do it this way.

If God did it that way, it could destroy you. And He's the only one who knows that. So He's going to wait until you lay it down and say, Not my way, but yours.

He's going to just keep it on. His hand will just lay there. He will not act until you come to that place where you say, Lord, I surrender.

You know what is best for me. If you want to take this, if you want to take that, if you're going to change my direction, if I have to take a lesser job, if I have to do this, Lord, if you want it all, it's yours. And then you get focused on Him.

Sometimes many, many have been healed who later turned their back on God. When they suffered, they sought the Lord. And then when God healed them, they got hard.

Oh, racing through my memory right now, I see faces of preachers and people over the years that asked me to pray for them. They said, Oh, I've got to be delivered. And God did it.

They were on fire for the Lord. They loved Him. And now they're backslidden.

They're cold. They're hard. God's not going to let that happen to some of us.

He loves you too much to let you... Listen, I would rather suffer a little physical pain than to lose my soul. If that... I have lived for years with the terrible stabbing pain in my back. But it keeps reminding me that I don't live for this world.

It keeps reminding me how frail my flesh is. It keeps my eyes on the new body that He has prepared for me. And I'll let... I want you to know if Jesus loves you, He's not going to let you get very comfortable down here so you backslide and mess up.

If you find some special pressure on you it's because the Lord loves you in a special way. He's loving you. And the devil comes along and says, Aha! Just like Job's friends, the righteous do not suffer.

If you have all those promises staring at you in the face, why don't those promises work for you? And that's exactly when that sarcasm comes in against the Lord. We are chastened to the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world. 1 Corinthians 11.32 My son despised not the chastening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction.

For whom the Lord loves, He corrects, even as a father to the son in whom He delighteth. Oh, God delights in many who are going through much suffering right now. But Satan will speak to you and say, If you're going to claim to be a Christian, if you're going to be able to go through these hard times the preacher talks about, why aren't you seeing it in your life right now? Why isn't there some sign from God that He's bringing you through this? You're going down.

The devil's going to tell you that you're going to fall. You're going down. You know what the Lord showed me? The hardest part of faith is the last half hour.

Just when He's ready, we always quit. We give up. We're staggered in our faith.

And the Lord's already answered. Then when it comes, we stand a red face before the Lord and embarrassed. And we say, Why didn't I hold on? If I had just held on a little longer, my faith wouldn't have been shattered.

Oh, hallelujah. The Bible says, Don't faint. God has everything under control.

Finally, the Lord's desiring a people who are going to hold to their faith even if they suffer the loss of all things. Now, this is going to get a little heavy before I close. Go to Hebrews 10.

And then we're going to close in just a bit. Hebrews 10. Beloved, it's one thing when you're surrounded by a host of Christians here to say, Bless God! I'm going to hold on! Just like Peter.

Lord, if everyone else's faith goes, mine won't. Nothing's going to shake my faith. Well, that's all right when you've got everything paid.

It's all right when you've got the money coming in. It's okay when there's no problem around you. What about when the Lord comes knocking on the door with some lovely correction? What about when we're in the boat and the folks, I'll tell you what, the righteous and the wicked suffer together.

We're all in this boat. When God shakes everything, I don't care what preacher tells you. Otherwise, we're going to be shaken.

It would be the worst thing I could do to just stand in this boat and say, Bless God! Everything's going to be all right. It is not going to be all right. We're going to suffer.

Folks, I'm telling you here, we are going to suffer. It's not going to be. Now, we're going to have food on our tables.

But you and I are going to have to hold one another up. Lord showed me that I'm going to be tested in my faith. All the pastors of the church are going to be tested.

You don't understand what I'm saying right now. You don't understand it. But you will.

And this is going to come back. Maybe even play this tape. I'll have to play it.

We are going to be tested in our faith. We're going to be tested. Are you hearing me? We're going into fires, folks.

But I'm so glad I'm with you and you're with me. I'm so glad there's a body of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah! Because I know if I get hungry and you've got food, you'll feed me.

If I've got it, I'll feed you. You know that this body of Christ is not going to go hoarding stuff and make you starve. God's people are not going to starve.

David said, I'm old and gray-headed, but I have not yet to see God's people beg for bread. Hallelujah! This past Friday, prayer meeting, I met a pastor from Texas. He'd just come from Texas.

He had lunch a few days before with a wealthy Texan. He'd been a multimillionaire. One of the more successful businessmen in Texas.

He lost everything. Beloved, if you live in Texas, this talk about economy and everything, that's an old story. People have lost everything.

This minister has some homes down there we can't sell for 25 cents on the dollar. Been sitting there. Recently, a ministry was able to take over some of our property, but there's just been hardly any activity, economic.

This man lost everything. He used to have a private plane and multimillion dollar operation and lost it all. In the last two years, he's been struggling to put food on his table.

But you know, God is teaching him that he's his sole provider now. He used to be. He was so self-sufficient.

I mean, snap his finger and everything happened. Now he's got to trust God. He's trusting God and God's proving himself faithful.

God is proving himself faithful. Hallelujah. And he's going to do that.

Hebrews 10, 32. Did I ever get to that yet? But call to remembrance the former days in which after you were illuminated. After you were what? After you saw the light.

After you came into the fullness of Jesus. What happened? You endured a great fight of affliction. Partly, while you were made a gazing stock brought by reproaches and afflictions.

And partly, you became a companion to them that were so used. For ye had compassion of me and my bonds and you took joyfully the spoiling of your goods. You lost everything.

Knowing that in yourself that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Glory to God. Folks, everything we've got is junk.

It's all going to burn. The only real thing you and I have is this enduring substance which is Christ the Lord. Nobody, nobody can touch that enduring substance in us.

That's where our faith is anchored. Our faith is anchored in that enduring substance. He said, you lost it all but you took joyfully the spoiling of your goods.

Can you sit here this evening and say, oh wait a minute, but you're going to say, I've got to anticipate joyfully being stripped? You don't have the joy now, but when you need it, it'll be there. Everything we need is going to be there, folks. Hallelujah.

That's when we're going to find how rich we are. We're rich in the anointing of the Lord to see us through. It's going to be marvelous.

Folks, these are exciting days because the church is coming alive. We're going to live by miracles. We're going to see, we're going to see the dead raised.

There's no question about that. We're going to see God do the supernatural. We won't be looking for the supernatural.

It'll just be an everyday thing. No one will be talking about it. No one will be lining up to see an evangelist who's doing supernatural works because everybody that's walking in the Spirit will be doing supernatural works.

We're going to have testimony meetings where people testify how supernaturally God put food on their tables. How supernaturally He provided work, jobs. He provided, provided, provided.

Hallelujah. Glory to God. Paul, and this is my last point.

Paul kept the faith through hard times and good times. He said, I fought a good fight. I finished my race and I kept the faith.

Boy, listen to Paul. He said, The devil sent messengers to fight me in Jerusalem, Damascus, and Asia, and Ephesus. He fought me in Antioch and Corinth, but I kept the faith.

He said, The devil tried to sink me in the storm Toss Mediterranean. Three times he shipwrecked me. A night and a day I was bobbing in the sea, but I kept the faith.

Five times the Jews beat me with 39 stripes. I've been cast into so many prisons. Three times I was beaten with wads.

I've been stoned. I've been robbed. Even my own countrymen robbed me, but I kept the faith.

I've been in peril in the country. I was in peril in the city. I was in peril in the wilderness.

I was in peril in the sea. I was in trouble by false brethren and peril by them, but I kept the faith. I've been weary at times.

I've been so full of pain. I've had sleepless nights. I was hungry.

I've been thirsty. I've been cold and naked. I've been loaded down with cares of all kinds, but I kept the faith.

I've been troubled on all sides. I've been perplexed everywhere. I've been distressed and persecuted.

I've been cast down, but I've never been destroyed, and I kept the faith. Henceforth was laid up for me a crown of righteousness, and for all of those who trust in Him. Glory to God.

Now, can I give you some promises to see you through? I'll tell you what. This tape that's going out next week, you can get it free of charge. If you don't have any money, just get it, and it'll be there, so you don't have to write them down.

Let me just real quickly, before I close. Psalms 112.4 And this next week, claim 112. Go from 4 to 10, but especially verse 7. He shall not be afraid of evil times, evil tidings, because his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.

That's Psalms 112.4 to 10, but verse 7. All right. Psalms 121, all eight verses, but the key verse 7 and 8. The Lord shall preserve you from all evil. He shall preserve your soul.

The Lord shall preserve your going out. He will preserve your coming in from this day forth and forever. We've got a preserving God.

Psalms 27.5 In the time of trouble, he will hide you in his pavilion, in the secret of his tabernacle, so he hides you. He sets you upon a rock. Psalms 50, verse 15.

Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me. Glory to God. Hallelujah.

Let's stand. Brother, sister, God's putting steel in your backbone. I've got to tell you what God told me last time down the stock market, October 19, two years ago.

The Holy Spirit spoke to my heart. There was fear coming to my heart when I saw what was happening. Just a tang of fear.

The Lord spoke to my heart. The Holy Spirit said, I'm the God of highs, and I'm the God of lows. It doesn't matter to me.

Stock market doesn't matter to the Lord. Hallelujah. He just sends an arrow, pulls the string, strikes.

But oh, hallelujah. We've got the arrows of joy, peace in the Holy Ghost. Lord, I've delivered my soul to this people.

And I believe I can stand before you on that day. Be able to say, Lord, what you told me to say, I said it. Now, Lord, you're building a fire under us, and I'm asking you to purge me.

I want to be more like you. I want to be able to stand in this pulpit, and every pastor in this church wants to be able to stand in this pulpit with a word that gets clearer and sharper. Lord, to speak the very words of the Lord Himself, that God would come forth, that you would bring forth a people that are going to stand strong in these days.

When they see Christians all around them shaking and trembling, when they see the world shaking and trembling, they'll have a walk upon which they stand. They'll be firm. They'll be able to say, We were warned.

We're not afraid. The Lord is with us. God is my keeper.

He's hiding me in His pavilion. Hallelujah! Lord, you're going to provide for your children. There may be no fear in the house of God tonight for your faithful, loving Father.

Hallelujah! I pray for those that are being chastened. Lord, help them to know it's not your wrath, it's your love. It's because they started to seek you, Lord.

It's because they begin to call on you that they're suffering. It's because you say, I have more for you. It's because you're trying to bring out the gold and you're trying to produce a faith that's more precious than gold.

Lord, you're producing that. Help us to resign and say, Lord, have your way. Have your way, Lord.

I'll not tell you what to do, Lord. You do everything your way, Lord. I'll just say, Amen.

Amen to your will, Lord. Amen to your will, Lord. Hallelujah! Lead your people in the days ahead.

Keep us steady. Keep us on the rock. If you're standing here tonight and you have drifted from the Lord, you're backslidden, or you're not ready to meet Him, there's something in your heart that's not right, why don't you come and let me pray for you right now.

Just up in the balcony, come down the stairs or here on the main floor. Come. This service right now, this time in the service is for you that the Lord would resurrect in your heart a love for Him.

Some of you may not even know what I'm talking about, but your heart is not set. You're not ready for what is coming. You're not ready for any more difficulties.

You don't have that faith. If your faith has been shattered, your faith has been weak, you want to come and say, Lord, renew my faith. Help my unbelief.

If you need to confess to the Lord that you've had unbelief, and doubt, and fear, bring that doubt and fear to the Lord. Just come up in the balcony, go down any exit, come down any aisle, here at the main floor. Come.

Right now, even while I'm talking, say, Lord, I give you my unbelief. I give you my doubt. I give you all my fears.

I surrender to you right here now. Come. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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