

# The Ever Increasing Love of Jesus

by David Wilkerson

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*The love of Jesus is expansive and ever-increasing, covering every sin and reaching anyone, no matter how far gone.*

**Duration:** 1:01:50

**Scripture:** Psalm 139:7-10, Matthew 7:13-14, Matthew 18:12-14, Luke 15:4-7, John 10:27-28, Romans 8:38-39, Ephesians 3:18-19

**Topics:** "Gods Love", "Forgiveness"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a story about a 93-year-old woman who is consumed by revenge against her grandsons. He emphasizes that without Jesus, human love becomes sour and bitter, leading to selfishness and self-love. The preacher then shares the testimony of a woman named Jackie who experienced the ever-expanding love of Jesus over the course of 15 years. He concludes by illustrating the love of Jesus as a shepherd who tirelessly searches for a lost lamb, rejoicing when it is found. The sermon emphasizes the transformative power of Jesus' love and the need for forgiveness and cleansing through faith in Him.

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## 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 tapes are available by writing to World Challenge P.O. Box 260, Lindale, 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. Human love cannot be compared to the precious love of Jesus Christ. Human love is always constricting, the circle getting smaller and smaller until it's only six feet in circumference and has nothing to do with anybody but self.

The love of Jesus is like throwing a pebble in a stream or in a still small lake, and those circles expand and expand and expand. I don't think I can tell you any greater thing about the love of Jesus than that it's ever-increasing, ever-expanding. Hallelujah.

But human love, human love is always contracting, always sucking into self, and the circle gets smaller and smaller and smaller. That's why one out of every two and a half marriages in America now end in divorce. It's amazing, thousands of couples march down the aisles pledging eternal faithfulness, and every

bride is saying to herself, I know all my friends are getting divorced, and I know people are falling apart, and marriages aren't making it, but this is different.

Mine was made in heaven. I'm going to make it. I've got something.

Our love is special. Some of them don't even make it through the honeymoon. One young lady said, My marriage was over the first night when my husband said, I didn't realize you were so fat.

Now that's not a joke. It crushed her, and the marriage never did make it. Another young bride told us, I thought I had the perfect marriage.

He was a minister, called to preach. We were so much in love, I thought, but after the first week, even on our honeymoon, he took me aside, and he told me he'd made a terrible mistake. He said he'd missed the mind of God, and he'd ruined his ministry.

How would you like to start your marriage like that? You see, this is human love. It's always contracting, always pulling in on itself. One minister divorced his wife after six years of a secret affair with the girl of his dreams.

In fact, I talked to him one time when he was in the midst of his affair, and he said, My first marriage was a total mistake, but I tell you, I found the girl of my dreams, and he said, in so many words, if it costs my ministry, I've got to have her. He divorced his wife. They got divorced, and he was free now to chase after the woman of his dreams.

It lasted two months, turned to poison, and they split. He lost everything. That's human love.

Her wife stood in the court of divorce court in a southern city, and she was absolutely stunned. After fifteen, I'm sorry, eighteen years, I believe it was, of marriage, he just notified, came in from work one day, and said, I'm getting a divorce. I'm filing tomorrow.

She stands later at divorce court, and she's in the corridor, stunned, doesn't know what happened because she thought she'd had a good marriage. She thought they were much in love. And she sees him coming.

He'd been gone from the house for a week, and sees him coming in his divorce lawyer, and she runs up to him. They're about to go into divorce court, and she said, Honey, please, tell me what I did wrong. Explain to me.

Give me another chance. You haven't even told me why you've left. What about the children? She said, wasn't I enough for you? And she was convinced there was no other woman.

Why did you leave? There's no explanation. He just called me, looked at me and said, Look, it's all over. I just don't love you anymore.

I've got to go out and do my own thing. What kind of a love is this? This thing that we sing about. The whole world sings about the human love.

There's a well-known singer here in the United States. He's worth millions of dollars, and he has an 85-year-old grandmother that is wasting away, right now tonight, in Detroit, wasting away in a welfare nursing home, and even though he has \$150 million, he says, I'm not abdicating. That grandma who loved

him and cuddled him, now she's dying.

She lays in a fetal position in a hospital, in a welfare hospital, and he turns his back and says, I'm not responsible. Human love. In Minnesota, I don't know if you read about it or not, in the New York Times, last week, a 93-year-old grandmother had a news conference.

She's 93, and she's a well-known business lady in the northwest, central north, north central section of Minnesota, and she founded a huge furniture business, multi-million dollar furniture business, and in the height of her blessings, she invited her two grandsons, that she loved very dearly, to come into the business. Well, they came into the business already and got greedy and took it over. And grandma, they called now, see now old lady, and pushed her out.

Well, she went across the street from her headquarters and built another big furniture mart. She's 93 years old, and she gets around now on one of those little golf carts, and she told newsmen this past week, God give me two more years and I'll run them out of business. But folks, you're clapping at the wrong thing.

Seriously. Can you imagine a woman facing death? She's 93 and can't even walk, and the only thing she has in her life, in her heart, is revenge against two grandsons she loves so dearly? And her human love has collapsed, contracted. Now she loves only her little image of self.

She has no time for grandsons. They won't talk to her. And she has maybe two years to live, and the only thing she lives for now is to put her two grandsons out of business.

Human love becomes sour and bitter as the years go by. If you don't have Jesus, your love will go sour. It becomes so small, so selfish, it ends up in self-love.

This morning, after the service, I met a precious young couple from Texas. And they flew in, especially they're on our newsletters, get my monthly newsletter, and they said the Lord sent them up. He was on drugs up to six years ago.

He would steal from his father, he was a run-down businessman, very wealthy. And he would steal from his dad's checking account. He forged checks.

He stole, he robbed. He was a filthy drug addict that depended on his father. And his father loved him during this time and cuddled him, man.

Took care of all of his problems. There was plenty of money. He just wanted his boy dependent upon him.

The boy got saved. Got married. Called to preach.

And his dad said, now what's in the business? He said, now I want to go out. He said, no, you're a bum. Just because he had no set income.

His father bought him a little house in Texas, right outside of Dallas. And you know, they've been on the road for about a year and a half, and they drove home last week, and their father sold the house out from London without telling them. They have no place to go.

They have a car, and just the car's on their back. And they said, we're not complaining, but we only have a dollar to buy a Coke when we're thirsty. There's not a dollar to buy a hot dog.

And we just live day by day, and we don't complain. But said, my father, when we stood in front of the house, thing is sold. We have no place to go.

He's there. He said, well, I've prayed about it, too, boy. And that tells me that your God is not going to supply your need.

You're a bum. My God's not going to supply your need. I'll supply your need.

Now, you quit this business of running around talking about Jesus and judgment on America, and I'll pay all your bills. I'll get your house. I'll get everything you need.

You're not dependent on God. You're dependent on me. And that boy, with a tear in his eye and a smile on his face, he said, brother Dave, God has helped me stretch my love for that man.

I love my father. The boy is penniless. We were able to give them our sum of money this morning just to see them on their way.

But you see, that human love collapsed. And that father would prefer, he told me, he said, my father prefers I go back to drugs. Well, I've heard that many times.

I've had a drug addict wife. Lord, she came to us and said, I've got to see this boy saved. He's stealing our baby's money for drugs and everything else.

And when the boy got saved, she comes home two months later and lays two bags of heroin on the table and said, shoot it up. I liked you the way you were when you were on drugs. I don't like the Jesus man.

Why did the wealthy socialite up in Upper East Side this past year leave her multi-million dollar estate to the care of her cats? Her three children didn't get a dime. And she told the press sometime during the last year, she said, they're bums. They're no good.

They're not going to get a dime. They didn't even go to a funeral. This is mother and daughters and sons.

That's human love that collapses on itself. All around us today we see the failure and the collapse of human love. We've seen the prophecy of Jesus being fulfilled right before our eyes.

Brother will turn on brother and hate them. Fathers will hate their children. Children will rise up and betray their parents.

Do you know why Michael Jackson has had so many operations on his face? He's had one facelift after another. He's had a chin job, a nose job, a cheek job, a chin job. He's spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on his face.

You know what he told a reporter this past week? He told a reporter this. I want to look in the mirror and not see a single feature of my father. I can no longer stand to look in the mirror and see a trace of him.

He's a fortune. He said, look in the mirror and not see a trace of his father. Human love is a group of devil-worshipping teenagers in high school in southern Los Angeles and they have a club they formed.

It's a devil club and they're out to destroy their parents. They get around their dad's business and report any income tax cheating that caused trouble in the house to get their parents to get divorced. Out to destroy their parents.

The very thing that Jesus is talking about here contrasts this that I've been talking about of human love. Contrasts this to the ever-increasing love of Jesus. I want you to go to Ephesians, the third chapter.

Ephesians, the third chapter. I want to talk now about the other kind of love. Some of you sit here now divorced.

Remember the time that husband looked in your eye and said for better, for worse? For richer, for poorer? Till death? Till death? Well, you haven't died and you're still here alone. That love collapsed. That love didn't make it.

I meet so many, many. They say, well, look, I know people who don't know Jesus and they've been in love for years and years. It's very, very rare.

It's not ever-increasing. It's always contracting. We're going to talk about the ever-expanding love of Jesus.

Ephesians 3, verse 17. Beginning to read. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that you may be filled with all the furnish of God.

Now unto him that's able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think according to the power that worketh in us. Unto him be glory in the church that Christ Jesus throughout all ages world without end. Amen.

Now look at me, please. I have looked at that verse for years. I started preaching when I was a teenager.

And I've been looking at that verse and praying for years. Oh, Lord, reveal to me something of the length and the breadth and the depth and the height of your love. What does it mean? That you may have an understanding and you may comprehend this great love.

How deep is it? How wide is it? How high is your love? Lord, show me. And I've never been able to see it. This past week the Lord made it clear to me the reason you don't see it is that you're looking for some mystical complicated answer.

It's very simple. That as far as the length is concerned there's no place you can run from Him. And let me get into it, for example.

His love, He said, is wide enough that you may know the breadth or the width of the love of Jesus Christ. Listen to me, please. The love of Jesus is wide enough to cover every sin known to man.

Every variety. In other words, there's no sin that you can commit that cannot be forgiven. The sailor who testified that he'd traveled to every port from Singapore, from China to South America, and he'd committed adultery, he'd shot drugs, he'd laid with prostitutes, he had wasted his life all over the world stealing, mugging, whenever he needed a fix.

He'd always get on a boat and try to get sober. And he said he'd sinned all over the world. He went to Amsterdam and laid in the city square stoned.

He'd been chased out of country. He's been wanted by the law everywhere. This young man told somebody, he said, there's no way that God could be interested in me.

You don't know what I've done, where I've been. He said, I've sinned all over the world. I've done everything a man can do but murder.

And he said, I've had a lot of that in my heart. But the love of Jesus Christ is wide enough to cover every sin the sailor ever committed. Hallelujah.

Every sin. His love is wide enough. I don't know who you are tonight, why you came to the service tonight.

Someone may have invited you. But you're sitting here now in the spirit thinking of all the things that you've done. There are many people who don't want to come to Jesus.

They say, yep, you just don't know what I did. You don't know what I'm like. I've had literally hundreds over the years say on the street corners when we're preaching and street running, it's all for you to come and preach Jesus but you don't know what I have done.

You don't know what's in my heart. You don't know how wicked and evil I am. I've had those full of legions of demons that if you only knew how many devils I had in me.

It doesn't matter how many devils you have in you. It doesn't matter what you've done. His love is wide enough to cover every sin.

The wider you get, the wider you get in your experiences, the more you go out and experiment, the wider the love of Jesus expands over you to cover every sin. So that all you have to do is reach out and say, Jesus, I'm calling to you. The Spirit of the Lord will come quickly.

There's no place that you can get outside, outside of the love of Jesus, the ever-expanding love of Jesus. His love is long enough to find you to your furthest point. He said that you may know the length of His love.

There's no place. Let me talk about the runners. Those who are running from Jesus.

Listen to what this is talking about. The length. If you can only understand the length of the love.

And the whole thing Jesus is trying to say is that there is no width that can be measured. You can't fathom the depth. You can't measure the height.

It's amazing. You can't box my love in. Oh, that's the problem with the Church of Jesus Christ.

We try to box Jesus in. And there have been many times I've been on the street preaching and I've said, Lord, I've seen, for 25 years I've seen you save and heal and change lives. But this one? Look at her.

Mad and out of her mind. Drunk. Prostitute.

Look at this character over here, Lord. He's got no teeth. He sleeps on the street.

He doesn't even know his name. Oh, Lord said there's no place you can run. There's no length that you can run to.

There's no place you can go that my love wouldn't find you. There's a friend of mine here in New York City. He's been running.

He's in show business. He's been running so hard for so long. When he was a teenager, the Lord called him.

The Lord really laid His hand on him. He wept. He felt the Spirit of the Lord.

And now he's chasing. He's running, brethren. The Holy Spirit is the hound of heaven.

Oh, it's incredible to have the hound of heaven after you. But the hound of heaven doesn't come to bite you. It comes to love you.

If anything, it's just tugging on you. If you're going to see it in its fullest picture, it's the love of the Father going out to find you, to draw you back magnetically to the Lord Jesus. I've had lunch with him on occasion.

He didn't want to talk about it, but all of a sudden it'll come out, and you can see the remorse. It's almost... Well, that's been 15 years ago. So many... In fact, he said, there's so much water over the dam.

That was his expression. There's never too much water over the dam. Did you hear me? There's never too much water over the dam.

I don't care how many years ago the Lord touched you. I don't care how long ago he touched you. I tell you now in authority and the word of God, the power of the Holy Spirit, my precious Jesus has a love that will restore that care.

He can change you. Even though this man's in show business, God can take that out of his heart, break him down, fill him with the Holy Spirit, and turn him back into the ministry. Hallelujah.

He's in the restoring business. A somebody of God, a pastor friend of mine, and I went to Bible school with this dear brother, and I've talked to him a number of times on the phone. In fact, I was on the telephone with him one time when he had cancer, and his great burden was for his brother.

His brother dropped out of a somebody of God ministry. He was a somebody of God pastor. He got disillusioned, bitter, primarily because he was a homosexual.

And he left the ministry. He couldn't be a homosexual, practicing homosexuality, and keep his credentials of the Assemblies of God. He went to San Francisco and started a church, and founded the Metropolitan Community Churches of America.

The homosexual denomination was started by a back-student Pentecostal preacher. And this brother, his brother, also a somebody of God pastor, said many times, David, is it possible that God can reach him? You think God can change him? We've prayed for him many times. I don't care what he's done.

Even now, after all these years, the love of Jesus can reach him. That's what he's talking about. The length of the love of Jesus.

How far he can reach out. No one's too far gone. No one's too far out in sin.

I'm telling you, the length of the love of Jesus is long enough to reach any one of your unsaved loved ones. I never forget meeting Tex Watson in a prison. I was holding a crusade in a prison in Northern California.

And I had heard that Tex was going to be in my meeting. Tex Watson, you remember, was in the Charlie Manson gang. He was there the night Sam Tate was murdered.

He had blood on his hands. He was a murderer. He attended all the demon seances with Charlie Mason.

He believed that Charlie Manson was God. Actually God in the flesh. He practiced every possible evil.

They were murderers, full of corruption. But in prison, Tex Watson got saved. Not only got saved, but called to preach the gospel.

I knew he was going to be in the meeting. I didn't know he was going to be directing the meeting. He was the associate tapper to the chaplain.

I came in and he hugged me and said, Praise the Lord, Brother Dave. And that boy was so full of the love of Jesus. Incredibly full.

I've never met a young man so full of the love of Jesus. From Sam Tate's murder to the cross of Jesus Christ. God found Tex Watson.

Tex Watson now is preaching the gospel. And that prison ran fire for God after all these years. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Now his love is high enough to reach into any demonic high place. We fight that against flesh and blood, but principalities and powers of darkness in high places.

Spiritual wickedness in high places. I want you to know that there's no demonic stronghold that the love of Jesus can't pierce. Shoot right through it and get a hold of a seeking heart.

A few weeks ago, we had sitting right in this church one of the leaders, one of the directors of one of the largest devil churches in the Northeast. He didn't think he was going to be recognized. He may be here tonight again.

He's been slipping in here, someone told me. But a young lady who recognized him from her past said, Do you know who was here? And gave his name. She watched him, ran over to him after the service.

And he's the pastor of a devil church. And he sat here, and he wasn't amused. He was listening intently.

And his words were very interesting, he said. Very interesting. What is very interesting? It's the Holy Spirit saying the love of Christ can get through to the pastor of a devil church here in the Northeast, save him, sanctify him, and call him to preach the true gospel of Jesus.

My dear brother, if you're here tonight, the Lord can open your eyes and give you the joy of Christ and take away that darkness from your eyes. There's a pastor of a church here in Brooklyn. I won't name the church.

But he's into the occult. And it's a Protestant, evangelical denomination. But he's into polardists.

In fact, we have a couple here tonight, and I'll try to keep the details veiled enough so that nobody would know who I'm talking about. They happen to attend that church occasionally. They'll be coming here now.

I don't think they'll be attending there much longer. They're trying to stay until they can convince the pastor and the church that this character of Hubert, or whatever his name is, the ghost, the polardist, who opens doors and flips pages and causes wind to blow through the church and all these things. And the pastor talks about the friendly polardist from the parapet, names him in his messages.

And he's the friendly polardist of the church right across the river here, the Brooklyn Bridge. You say, well, what about that man? Should we rebuke him in the name of Jesus? I'll tell you what. The love of Jesus can reach out and embrace that pastor and open his eyes just like that.

And thank God there are some people who have gone to him with love. They're not rebuking him. They're trying to show him from the Scripture where he's wrong, and they're praying for the brother.

Hallelujah. Glory be to God. You know, there are conventions now of warlocks all over the United States.

High school and college kids are getting into devil worship and into the occult. And there was a big convention up in New England recently with the witches and the warlocks from all of the United States. They had another one in Houston.

They had one in Atlanta. In fact, we had some people recently at the church on their way to Atlanta to witness for Jesus. But I want you to know that the Holy Ghost goes to every one of them.

He attends every one of them, and he hovers over that crowd. And the love of Jesus, he's trying to let that umbrella over the whole place. And the Lord's just looking for one or two here or one here.

And the moment he sees someone say, this is not right. The moment he says, the heart says, I'm getting out of here. This is not what I'm looking for.

The love of Jesus is there. Glory be to God. And I don't understand the love of Jesus, how it can go to a man, even though he's preaching about the devil and convict him while he's preaching.

There are many preaching the gospel now who were convicted while they were conducting a devil worship service. Convicted by the Holy Ghost. Oh, we can't understand the movings of the Holy Spirit.

The wind blows where he chooses. Hallelujah. But you know that or you'd have never been saved.

Remember Jeff Van Holt who played Jesus in Jesus Christ Superstar that played right here in this church, right on this stage, while I stand. Jeff was here, remember, to dedicate in our dedication service before the service of pastors and he just played with him back here in the pastor's room. Right back here, there's a room called the pastor's room.

And he looked around and he said, this was my room. This was my dressing room. He was in the devil's.

He was stoned the whole time he was here. In fact, when he came into the building, he looked around and he said, man, I was here for almost two years and I didn't see the building. It was beautiful.

He was so stoned he didn't even know where he was. He was worshiping the devil. He said, there's a window there now.

There was no window. And he said, one night I lit a hundred candles to the devil. And the door was closed.

No window, no draft. And he said, suddenly a wind came in and blew them all out. And he said, I was startled.

He said, I was shocked. I knew that the devil was trying to possess me. And he said, it shook me up.

Well, I want you to know, the Holy Ghost, he had a praying wife. She just prayed and the wonderful arms of the love of Jesus around him embraced him. Hallelujah.

Jeff Fenner is now preaching the gospel. You know that. Hallelujah.

No matter how high you go into the occult, no matter how high you go into the mystical, no matter how fast you go into the clouds, you can't get away from the love of Jesus. The ever increasing love of Jesus. Hallelujah.

Then, of course, he said his love is deep enough, deep enough to reach into hell itself. I want you to go to Psalm 139, please. Psalm 139.

Hallelujah. Psalm 139, beginning with verse 7. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.

We're talking now about the depth. The depth of sin. Sin has a depth to it.

Do you know the deeper you go into the sin, the more you're caught up in its centrifugal force, the more the magnetic pull begins? You know, that has to do with heaven too. The closer you get to heaven, the greater the pull. It's incredible.

My son-in-law, Roger Yonker, who works with us here in this church, his mother was dying a number of years ago of cancer. Just a very fine... She was just middle-aged. Had cancer.

I went to visit her in the hospital, and she was in the last stages of cancer, and everybody around her was weeping and crying and praying for healing. She knew I wasn't praying for healing. I was praying for something more than that, because I saw her in what I've always known to be that magnetic pull.

Sometimes the Lord has to pick the rose. Sometimes He said, Look, she's so much in love with me, and she's seen so much of me. If I let her go, she's tasted in the tree of knowledge and of life.

I've got to pluck this flower. And she was in this magnetic pull. She so wanted to go home and be with Jesus.

She said, You know that, don't you? And I said, Yes. She said, I wish they'd stop praying like that. I'm on my way.

She said, I'm being pulled. I've left everything. I'm already in heaven.

I've seen a taste of it. I had a vision. And she said, Oh, the lights.

The beauty of it. See, there was a magnetic pull. There's a sister who's been listening to the tapes.

Her name is Shirley. She's been listening to the tapes of this pulpit, Times Square pulpit tapes for this past year. And she's had cancer for about a year ago.

They operated on her for hysterectomy and found her full of cancer. And they took her home on Friday this past week. They took Shirley home, a wonderful woman of God in her early 60s, full of cancer.

And the doctor told the family she's probably got 30 days. But Friday, this past Friday, on the way home in the ambulance, her face lit up. And she said, It's beautiful.

It's beautiful. It's wonderful. And she was ecstatic and then passed out again.

And she'd come in and out and all she could say is, Is it beautiful? Well, she died Saturday. She died yesterday. And some of our folks, they're at the wake right now.

Couldn't be in the service tonight. But she said, It's beautiful. You see, she was in that magnetic pull.

You see, contrary wise to this, those that are in sin, the closer you get to hell, the more the pull is. That's why some people say, I can't help myself anymore. It's that pull.

It's beyond me. I try. I can't break it.

I'm caught. I'm falling. I'm being pulled down.

Some of you are here tonight. You're about to be plunged into hell. And Jesus pulled you out.

Literally. David said that his sin took him to the gates of hell and then the love of God redeemed him. He said, O Lord, Thou hast brought up my soul from the grave.

Thou hast kept me alive that I should not go down into the pit. Remember the story of Jesus who went out for the lost sheep? He said the 99 were safe. He went out after one.

He didn't act like some Christians do. He said, Well, let them go. They know where we're at.

I heard one preacher say, The door swings both ways, in and out. Help yourself. That should not be the attitude of the church.

The one lost sheep, Jesus went after him. Jesus went after this little lamb. Now, I'll tell you what.

There's a kind of love that has to do with being near the Master. The security of that love. It's a wonderful thing to be secure in the love of Jesus.

The 99 that are in the fold. It's a wonderful thing to grow in the love of God. But then, the little sheep, the lamb steals away and gets lost.

Maybe purposely. I doubt it. This little lamb is just so busy eating the grass and just wanders away.

And you know what the Master has to do? His love has to expand. The shepherd's love has to go out. He goes out maybe a mile.

And then, he doesn't find the lamb. His love has to expand another mile. And another hour.

Another day. And it's late at night, and he still hasn't found his sheep. And he has to look through the night.

And he's not saying, When I get a hold of that little thing, I'll tell you I'll whip the daylights out of it. No, you see, his love is expanding the whole time. His only concern now, is that he finds him before the lion finds him.

And he's thinking, if the lion gets him first, he'll tear him apart. Now, he's racing after him. He's calling his name, because the shepherd knows every sheep by name.

And he's calling his name saying, Come, where are you little lamb? And the love has to expand. It keeps expanding all night long, until finally, maybe in the wee morning hours, there's a little whimpering sound, and the little lamb is caught in the crag of a rock. And the shepherd pulls the rock apart.

And that little lamb collapses in the arms of the shepherd. And that love is so expansive, the shepherd comes back rejoicing. Not condemning, but rejoicing.

He's found his little lamb. Do you understand? That's what it's all about tonight. No matter how you slipped away from it, or how your back's slidden, you may be caught right now in the devil's craggy rocks, and you can't seem to get out, and yet tonight you hear the Master calling you, your name, by the Spirit he calls your very name.

And he says, I'm not here to spank you. I'm here to take you in my arms, and get you back to the flock. I want you to be a part of my body.

And he says, Come, I want to rejoice over you. You were lost and I found you. That's what it was when the prodigal son came home, filthy and bedraggled and tired, and disillusioned.

All hope gone. No shoes, just tired rags on his back, starving. The father didn't say, Clean up and then I'll hug you.

The father fell on his neck and kissed him, and said, Come home. He said, Father, I'm not worthy to go in your house. He said, No, no, no.

He said, Take off those rags, put new shoes, put new clothes on. Kill the fattest cat you can find. We're going to dance.

We're going to rejoice. Because my boy was lost, and now he's found. Oh, the expansive, expanding love of Jesus.

Hallelujah. Do you know the hardest, probably the furthest point of the expansive love of Jesus? Do you know how far he has to reach out? Not to the drug addict. That's not the furthest expanse of his love.

Do you know who the hardest people are to reach? Men like Peter. Those who've known the Lord, and they somehow failed him. There's been a failure of some kind in their life.

And they're afraid to look at Jesus now. They're afraid of that intimacy anymore. They were so intimate, so close, and now something's happened, and they feel a strange, they feel a strangeness there.

Something has caused a strangeness, because there's failure somewhere in the heart. He betrayed his master. He wanders over the hill weeping.

How could I have done it when I was so close to him? Do you know this is the hard, the love of Jesus has to reach further to reach this kind of man than the worst sinner on the face of the earth. Oh, it's not hard for the love of Jesus to reach out and find the alcoholic, the drug addict, the prostitute. But how far he has to reach, how deep and expansive, how wide, how glorious the love of Jesus must stretch out to reach those who have been his own children, who have walked with him and can't find forgiveness.

They're in despair and depression. They can't believe the Lord would still love them. They believe that he loves alcoholics.

They can even sit in church and rejoice when sinners that are wicked and vile come to Christ. But they themselves can't appropriate that love for themselves. They say, Oh, I know better.

I knew better. I've had so much gospel given to me. I've sat under so much and yet I failed the Lord.

All Jesus wanted to know was, Peter, do you still love me? Don't talk about what you did. Just, do you love me? And again, Peter, do you love me? Do you love me, Peter? That's how it counts. If you're sitting here tonight and I don't care what you've done, I don't care who you are, do you still love him? Can you sit here tonight and go, Oh, yes, I love him.

I love him. I can't deny that. I love him with all my heart.

He said, Feed my sheep. Welcome back. You're restored, Peter.

Hallelujah. Then on he was on his way to Pentecost. How deep does he go? How far down? Well, he went far down to get Jackie.

I have to tell you her story. My wife and I were talking about today. We just got happy, so happy I had to call her on the phone and talk to her.

And she sends her greetings to this congregation. Her name is Jackie Straudhoff. Don, wouldn't you call her story one of the greatest we've ever witnessed? Twelve years old, just twelve years old, Jackie started on drugs.

Twelve. At fifteen, she ran away from home. At sixteen, she was a heroin addict and a prostitute.

Sixteen years old, selling her body to support her habit. Jackie got so desperate for drugs and yet she got tired of walking the streets and she thought, if I could get a job in a drug store and I could get the key to class one drugs, I could have morphine, I could have Dilaudid, I could have all of these things and I'll just take a little time. I'll win their confidence.

She got a job in a drug store, won their confidence and somehow got the key to the class one drugs. She went in one day, got the key very nervously and loaded herself down with morphine, Dilaudid, with every kind of pill she could get her hands on and took off. She was living with a young man by the name of Michael.

Michael was a heroin addict also, used all kinds of drugs. They had a friend named Larry. Larry had a construction job, still working, but a drug addict.

He's working in a construction job way out of town. They were building some houses and he was, I think, operator of the bulldozer. And they had a party that night and they all took off on morphine.

Morphine was a new experience and they just got stoned and in the process, Michael overdosed. And he began to turn black and blue and they did everything. They tried to pour water on him, tried to walk him and he had passed out.

But he still had a heartbeat. They popped him up on a chair and went on mixing drugs to sell. Went on their way, think, well, he'll come out of it.

In fact, he didn't come out of it two hours later so they laid him in bed and covered him up and they went out to eat. She came home stoned later and crawled into that bed. In the middle of the night, she woke up freezing and realized that she was next to an ice-cold body.

He was dead. She called Larry in the middle of the night and he said, well, I'll come and get you. There's so many drugs here you can't call the police.

They'll find your stash. He took her out. For two days, they tried to figure out what to do with the body and in that time, the body began to swell.

He said, I'll tell you what we'll do. He said, in this construction job way out in the country, I'll get the bulldozer, we'll bury him. Jackie said, how do we get his body out? They took up the blue rug, the big blue rug, rolled his body up and started dragging him down the stairs.

People watching this thought they were moving a rug out to his pickup truck and Jackie couldn't pick up her side. A man came along and said, would you like some help? And he's picking up the body. He said, what are you having here, a dead body or something? There was a dead body there.

Went out to the construction site and buried him in the middle of the night. Jackie came home for the next three weeks and had nightmares. Heard him calling in the middle of the night.

Saw that blue rug buried down in the earth. She lost control of her life and wound up in a mental institution in Pittsburgh. She got out a year or so later and went right back to drugs.

Her brother, a teenage boy, had been to visit her three or four times. Came to visit her and he couldn't understand her addiction to especially cocaine now. She was on to cocaine and she said, well, how would you know? What does that affect? He said, let me try it.

He wanted to try it to see if he could relate to her problem. She fixes the cocaine, shoots it in his arm and the boy dies. Her own brother dies in her arms.

She can't wake him up. Takes him out to the balcony. She's screaming by this time.

And all she can remember is suddenly she had lost control. She absolutely lost her mind. All she remembers is that men in white coats were standing there putting in their straitjackets and they had to pry that brother out of her arms.

She lost absolute control of her life. Wound up in a governmental institution. I don't know how many months she was there, but one day, in total despair, she'd been a prostitute, alcoholic, drug addict.

She had gone down to the very depths. She'd been to hell. In fact, for her, hell was a relief.

She said, maybe I could get away from the memory of my brother and Michael. Now she's in prison. She got convicted.

The parents of Michael didn't even know he was dead. And she confessed it to the authorities. They were able to retrieve the body and the parents buried the boy.

But they didn't press charges on Jackie. And in total despair, ready to quit, there was nothing to live for, her father came to visit her and brought a friend of his who was a man of God. His name was Frank.

She hadn't seen anybody. And Frank, she looks up and here's this man standing and said, Jackie, Jesus sent me to you to tell you he loves you. He's going to change your life.

You're going to be a new woman. Jesus sent me to tell you how much he loves you. She said, Love me? There's nobody in the world.

I've killed my own brother. My mother won't talk to me. I have no family.

I have nothing. The only young man that I had any concern for at all, I buried him. But Jesus stretched out his love and touched her and saved her.

Marvelously saved Jackie. Hallelujah. She came out and went into Cookie Rodriguez program here in Pennsylvania.

Cookie's program for girls. New Life for Girls, I think they call it. She graduated from that and then came down to Texas to our Bible school.

There our Bible school that we had in Texas. And she graduated, met a young man, Bobby Startoff, and married a fine young former drug addict called to preach the gospel. He went to Central Bible School.

Jackie went to Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri and graduated with honors with a degree in social science. I talked to her an hour before the service tonight. I said, Jackie, I'm going to tell you a story tonight because it seems to fit in what I'm talking about, the ever-expanding love of Jesus.

She said, Brother David, it's been 15 years. I've got two lovely children. They're directors of Teen Challenge now in Boston.

And they have three centers now. And last week the Lord gave them a farm to take the kids and the girls out into the country. And she said, Brother Wilson, I want to tell you something.

Tell your people tonight something about the love of Jesus. Tell them it's not a band-aid. It's not a quick fix.

She said, It's been 15 years and I love him now more than I've ever loved him. It's more beautiful than it's ever been. Jackie's one of my wife and our favorite people.

She's so full of love of Jesus. Her husband's got a story of his own. But all over here tonight you have a story.

The Lord plucked you out of sin. Maybe you weren't a drug addict, but there was a time the Lord just plucked you out. Why is it? I'm going to say this in the Spirit, and I feel the Holy Spirit speaking directly through my heart.

Listen closely. Some of you who years ago experienced such great, magnanimous love of Jesus, if that hadn't been his love you wouldn't be here now. You'd be divorced.

You'd be drunk. You'd be dead. You would not be in this church tonight.

Not at all. You know that. And you appropriated that love.

You said yes. And here you are after all these months or years. And what are you thinking about his love right now? I'll tell you what I'm thinking.

We need it now more than we've ever needed it before. We need to appropriate it to our lives and remember that He's not mad at us. God's not mad at you.

If you've got a repentant heart and you're reaching out to Him, and His arms are here to embrace you tonight, He can reach you no matter what you've done, where you're at. He can absolutely transform your life tonight. We have a missionary couple, David and Karen, over in Israel.

They called someone in the church and just told me before the service. They said, we have a special burden. The Lord's put in our heart all week to pray for the Sunday night service.

That's tonight. We don't know why. I've had that burden all week.

Because I believe the Lord knew you would come. He knew you would be here. And He wants to change you.

He wants to set you free from this bondage that you're under. I feel His love flowing like a river, just like a river, just flowing here tonight. He wants to heal you and set you free.

Here's what I'm going to do. I'm not going to beg you, or plead with you, or anything else. I'm going to ask the Holy Spirit.

I slipped away, if you noticed, during the singing. I was right back here, having it out with the Lord. I said, oh Jesus, tonight send your Holy Spirit.

We're not looking for some kind of a mystical thing. We're just looking for your love. Jesus, stretch out your hand of love.

Will you stand with me, people, please? Will you stand with me? Lord Jesus, send the Holy Spirit tonight. Send your blessed Holy Spirit and manifest the love of Christ, that ever-increasing, ever-expanding love of Jesus. Lord, send it like a river tonight.

Convict in your precious way, like only you can convict, Holy Spirit. Oh God, there's some of your children here tonight that are just fretting, because they have kind of just slipped away, drifted away from the security of your love. Lord Jesus, they feel condemned.

They feel beaten down. Some confused. Lord, it's because they're not appropriating, they're not resting in that love.

Lord, come with your love tonight and speak to us. Don't let anybody walk out of here carrying their burden of sin or guilt. Let's bring it to Jesus tonight.

Wherever you're at, first of all, I'm going to talk to those that are in this church for the first time tonight. You've never been here before. The Holy Spirit is speaking to you.

Something I said tonight was meant for you. Up in the balcony, here on the main floor, there's no hype here. We don't have a countdown.

We're not going to do anything silly. The Holy Spirit has been speaking clearly all through the service tonight. He's here to change you, give you a new life and a new hope.

Absolutely break the chains of sin so those habits, those sins, that depression, it's all gone. The Lord can do that tonight in just a moment of time. When you get out of your seat, you'll feel a pull, you'll feel a tug at your heart.

That's the Holy Spirit saying, Come, come. There's a little tug, you'll feel a little pull. That's the Spirit of God.

He's calling you, saying, Tonight is your night. Tonight. As they sing, just get out of your seat and come and stand here and let me pray for you.

Right now, up in the balcony, go to any side, down the exits, and come down any aisle. You'll hear the main floor. This is a bold call for those who are here for the first time.

I want you to come. Your first time in this church. You've never been here before.

I want you to come and stand here right now and let me pray with you. If you feel the tug, and you say, Billy Wilkinson, I need Him. Maybe you're a backslider.

You've been running from the Lord. You've lost heart. The enemies chased you.

There's a burden on your heart. Get out of your seat and come and join us here right now. Oh, how He loves you.

Oh, how He loves you. Oh, how He loves you and me. He gave His life for us three.

Oh, how He loves you and me. While I'm talking, you can still come. I feel urged the Holy Spirit to say something further to this body.

Listen closely, please. I know it's God. Some of you who know the Lord dearly, you love Him.

You're His servant. You're His child. And yet there's a sense the enemy is trying to rob you of that rest in His love.

Brother, sister, if we don't have, if we can't rest in His love for us, there's nothing but torment. Fear has torment. But He said, I'm not giving you a spirit of fear, but love, a power, and a sound mind.

Will you right now ask the Holy Spirit to help you just come into that rest of His love right now? Oh, Father, I ask to remove from this body, I ask you by your Spirit to remove this lie from the devil, this lie from the enemy that we're estranged from your love. You do love us tonight. Help us to rest in that love.

Now, I'm going to expand the invitation now. For those, these are just for the first-timers in this church, but now I'm expanding the invitation for those, anyone. You may have been coming here more than once,

twice.

Maybe you've been coming here for a year or more, whatever it is. Please don't come if you've been coming here every service. You know, there are times that God will have you come, but usually He won't have you come all the time.

This is for those who have been bound by sin or have been cut off from the love of Jesus and have been harassed by the enemy. Wherever you're at, I believe there are some husbands and wives that need to walk down here hand in hand and say, dear, let's get this settled tonight. The Lord's talking to you.

He wants to restore your family. He wants to remove the devil's power out of your home. He wants to set you free tonight.

This is a wonderful night of deliverance. He's going to set free. He's going to break chains.

He's going to break chains. How many of you that are standing up here right now, look at me please. How many of you up here need to be set free from drugs or alcohol? Raise your hand please.

You need to be set free from drugs or alcohol. Drugs? Alcohol? Alcohol? Drugs too? Alcohol? Who else? Drugs? Alcohol? Are you out of your teens? Okay. How long have you been hooked? A few years? You know what Jesus did for Jackie? He can do for you.

Did that touch your heart? They're going to be in the services not too far down here and I'd like you to meet her. But tonight he wants you. He wants you.

What is it? Alcohol or drugs? How long? Fifteen years? Did someone bring you tonight? A friend bring you tonight? Have you ever been here before? How did you find out about the church? Your brother? Is he saved? Was he on drugs? Oh. Your brother's here tonight. He called you and said come tonight? Oh, he told you about it.

Give me your hand. Lord, fifteen years. You can break it right now.

I command in Jesus name from every demonic spirit to go in Jesus name. Thank you. Don't be afraid to cry.

That's alright. Lord, let it all come out. One of the lady counselors our appointed counselors one of our sisters please one of our appointed counselors if you will come and stand over here one of the ladies maybe some of them already gone down.

We'll see you when you get down. We're opening invitations right now for anyone else. Have you been coming to this church? Have you all been coming to this church? Your first time? Third time.

Where are you from? Pennsylvania. Something keeps drawing you back. Let me pray for both of you.

Come on. Lord Jesus don't be afraid. Let it all out.

Lord, thank you for restoring. There's a restoration happening here right now. You're healing the marriage.

Brother, sister, he's healing your marriage tonight. Right now. That wall is down.

It's gone. Thank you, Jesus. Put your arms around her and just thank the Lord for the healing right now.

Lord, I thank you. The devil's a liar. There's total... No clapping.

Please, no clapping. This is not a show. It's life and death.

We're opening the invitation now to anyone in this church. You say, Brother Dave, I've got to have him tonight. I need him.

I need his love. I've been cut off. I've been slipping.

I've been astray. Come on. Where are you from? You've been here in this church before.

That's all right. The invitation's open to anyone now. Come as they sing it.

The last invitation. Oh, how he loves you and he Oh, how he loves you and he He gives his life for you Oh, how he loves you Oh, how he loves you Oh, how he loves me Oh, how he loves you and he I'd like to have everyone in this house who believes that Jesus Christ has everlasting love and almighty power. Brother Bob talked about that megaton power of grace.

If you believe the Lord has that kind of mercy and grace to break the chains of the alcoholic, the drug addict, those who are bound in their marriages by fear, or the enemy has said you can't make it, it's no use. I see three or four marriages being healed up here right now. God bless you.

The Lord's doing something very special in your heart. But I want this, but if you believe, pray with me right now. The Holy Spirit will come, release his power, and break these chains.

Lord, set captives free tonight. Break the chains of alcoholics, drug addicts, marriages, Lord, that seem to be collapsing. Heal these marriages tonight.

Break the chains of sin. Break the chains of sin tonight by the power of the Holy Ghost, the power of the Holy Spirit. Break it, oh God.

Break these chains and set them free. You did it for Jackie, you can do it for anybody in this church tonight. You can do it tonight, Lord.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. I want everyone of you who came forward tonight, raise both hands to the Lord.

Lift holy hands. Your hands are going to be made holy by His blood tonight. Pray this out of your heart.

Just pray it. It's a beginning. Jesus, say it loud.

Jesus, I know what I am. I'm a sinner. And I need You.

I don't need anything else. I need You. I come to You with my sins and my hurts.

Forgive me. Cleanse me. Make me clean and pure by faith in Your power and in Your name.

I trust You, Jesus, to break the chain of the devil. He can't hold me anymore. I believe Jesus has the power to set me free tonight.

Now, you thank Him right now. Just say, Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus.

Lord, I believe You to set people free. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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