

The Healing of the Home

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson emphasizes the importance of taking a new look at the divorce problem and seeking God's guidance in marriage to prevent the devastating effects of divorce on children and the breakdown of the family unit.

Duration: 1:14:52

Scripture: Numbers 32:23, Proverbs 15:1, Malachi 2:15, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, Ephesians 4:26, James 1:19-20

Topics: "Marriage Counseling", "Conflict Resolution"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of using a soft answer to turn away wrath and bring healing to the home. He criticizes those who rely on loudness as a badge of authority, stating that it is foolishness. The preacher shares five simple steps, derived from the Bible, to bring healing to the home and avoid divorce court. The first step is to turn down the volume at home, as a soft answer can defuse arguments and prevent further conflict.

Transcript

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I speak to you tonight on the subject, the healing of the home. Heavenly Father, never have we lived in a time like this, the ends of the world coming apart. We begin to rejoice as we look up and see our day of redemption drawing nigh.

Lord, our homes are falling apart, millions being divorced, millions of children living in broken homes. Never has this message been so desperately needed. Oh God, give me the courage, the anointing, and the unction of heaven.

Speak loud and clear to our hearts. Let no one leave this building tonight without being met solidly, straight on, by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, I pray in Christ's name. Amen.

The healing of the home. I'll never forget, as long as I live, a visit in our home by a well-known country western singer. In fact, she has two songs in the top 20 right now.

This young lady is a beautiful young Christian. But prior to her conversion, she'd been divorced two times. Since coming to Christ, she'd found a very fine young man who was anticipating getting married.

And I think she may have been a little apprehensive about it. And I'll never forget what she said to my wife and I, sitting in our living room. She said, the thing that bothers me of all my acquaintances, I don't know of one happy marriage.

I don't know of anyone who's happily married. And that shocked me because she attended a, quote, full gospel, end of quote, church. A evangelical full gospel church, and her pastor happened to be a friend of mine.

Over 300 members, I was told, in the church. I said, well, what about the deacons? Surely you've got some well-adjusted, happily married deacons in your church. She said, I can't think of one.

She said, they've almost all been divorced at least once. She said, one family's been divorced five times. One deacon.

I said, what about the pastor? Surely your pastor has the example for you. She said, haven't you heard? They've separated and filed for divorce. And since that time, that pastor has been divorced.

I said, would you please then meet your first happily married couple? She said, well, Mr. Wilkinson, you're not like the rest of us. You live in a different world. We're out there in the front lines of this world and its life and making a living.

And you don't face the same pressures. And I made a confession to her that I'm about to make this evening, later on in this service, why or how my wife and I just about did not make it. And what I speak to you tonight about has been very well tested.

I'm just not talking theory. My wife and I have been through it. And I want to share it with you tonight before the service is over.

I remember being in Chicago a number of years ago for one of these all-night talk shows. Five or six guests. H.L. Hunt was one of them.

This was before he died. And I was one of, I think, five guests. It was an NBC show, if I recall.

And one of the guests was a well-known comedian who had been divorced 10 times. And he was getting married for the 11th time, and his bride-to-be was waiting in the little green room listening on the monitor. It started about 11 o'clock and would last until 4.30 in the morning.

And do you know, for the first two hours of that all-night talk show, I listened to the worst filth and garbage I've ever heard in my life. I listened as a comedian mocked his 10 former marriages. And what he was saying, well, I've tried it 10 times and it didn't work.

I'm going to try it again. I've got another girl on the line. If it doesn't work, there's a million more where she came from.

Or words to that effect. And I thought to myself, that poor girl sitting in that room listening to that, she probably loves him. And even though she's the 11th one, she thinks she can make it work.

I never felt so sorry for anyone as I did for that young lady listening to that man put her on the spot. And for two hours, the host of the show and everybody but Mr. H.L. Hunt. Mr. Hunt said he didn't like it.

In fact, he left early. And for two hours, I sat there with a stone face with my hands folded listening to this garbage. Finally, the host of the show looked at me with a frown on his face.

He said, Mr. Wilkerson, you don't seem to be in with us. What do you think of what's been said here? And he shouldn't have said that. I've been sitting there two hours waiting my time.

And I pointed a finger at the face of that poor comedian who'd been divorced ten times and laughed and mocked about it. Mocking the institution of marriage. And I pointed a finger right in his face.

I said, I think I have just met the saddest, loneliest man in the world. That man puts on a big front and he laughs and he jokes. But I said, I think he cries himself to sleep.

And I have nothing but sorrow and pity for you, sir. And it was like dropping a bomb. I mean, they changed the subject.

The comedian tried to laugh it off. And they started talking about world affairs and politics. Not another word about marriage or divorce.

4.35 or so, I was outside the NBC studio waiting for a cab to go back to the motel room. And here comes the comedian and his wife-to-be. And I thought he was ready to read me off.

And he came up beside me and said, Mr. Wilkinson, please don't take a cab. Let me, let us take you back to the hotel. Please, we've got to talk to you desperately.

And I followed that man around the corner and got in his car in the parking lot. And I saw that comedian, a well-known comedian who still travels around the country today. I saw him bow his head over the steering wheel and cry like a baby.

He said, sir, you're the first man that's had the courage to put me on the spot. And he said, boy, did you hit the nail on the head. Sir, you have met the loneliest, saddest man in the world.

He said, I do cry myself to sleep. He said, I'm not, I haven't been fair with this young lady. She loves me and I've made a fool out of her tonight and I'm so sorry.

And he said, I have an itch in me that can't be scratched. There's a loneliness in me and I go from one woman to another trying to satisfy that empty feeling inside of me. And when she can't touch that spot in me, I go to somebody else.

It's not their fault. He said, ten women couldn't be wrong, it's me. Would you please mind praying for me? Would I mind praying for him? I've been itching to do that all night.

Boy, I prayed up a storm. And I got a hold of God for him. Now, he didn't get saved, but I know I gave him some good advice.

Now, I don't know what's happened to that man since I've lost touch with him. But when I went up to my room, going up the elevator, I thought, oh God, there it is, the big front. And that phony smile, but all the loneliness inside.

Now, I'm going to talk very plainly tonight about marriage and divorce. Now, I've never done that in 18 years of preaching to young people. I've always thought my call was to young people.

But friends, something's happening in America that alarms me. Something is happening to the American home. For that matter, homes all across the world, not just the sinner's home, but the Christian's home.

And it's an alarming thing that's happening. There was a song a few years ago, a country western song, and they spelled out the title, D-I-V-O-R-C-E. They spelled it out, divorce, so the kids couldn't understand it.

But friends, you can't hide from the little children today the dissension we have in many of our homes. You can't hide it when things begin to go wrong, even in a Christian home. I was visiting, for example, in a home, and the parents, the husband and wife evidently thought I had left.

And they started a royal argument in the kitchen. And finally, they almost came to blows, and this husband came at his wife. And a little boy, could have been more than two years old, had just learned to walk.

He couldn't talk. That little boy, and I was watching from the corner, that little boy went up to his dad and grabbed his leg and his trousers and started biting and screaming and kicking, trying to beat his dad up. He knew something was wrong.

He sensed it. I'm not saying that all children of divorced homes or broken homes turn out bad. But think of it now.

Newsweek projecting one million new divorces this year. Ten million more American kids living in broken homes. And all the tragedy.

Now friends, believe me, divorce has caused more kids to go to sex and drugs and alcohol than all the pushers in the world combined. I repeat that in case you didn't hear it. Divorce has caused more young people, primarily teenagers, to run off to drugs and sex and alcohol than all the drug pushers and bad kids and influences combined.

I had a mother call me recently to talk to her 13-year-old daughter, just been released from a mental institution. She said, Mr. Wilkson, the psychiatrist can't find anything wrong with her. She sits like a vegetable, just with her hands folded and looking out into space.

She won't answer questions. You have to feed her. And I got the story of a very well-adjusted 13-year-old teenager who loved her dad so much.

That girl, outgoing and full of fun and vivacious, suddenly overnight turns into a vegetable. Goes for six months in a mental institution, is released. They can't put their finger on any physical or emotional reason why it should happen.

And I said, Mother, I can't get through to her. She was just like an animal. And I said, There's got to be some reason why this was triggered.

A girl just does not crawl into a shell like that. She said, Mr. Wilkson, the only explanation I can give you is that this happened the week my husband ran off with another woman. And this girl idolized her dad.

And friends, there's a girl right now down in Denton, Texas, who's just been released from the terrible mental institution that I can't touch. And while I'm talking to you, she's sitting, looking out the window, staring into space like a vegetable. Nobody can touch her.

And it makes my blood boil because one day that dad's going to stand before Almighty God and answer, not only for his own sins, but he's going to answer for messing up the life of a 13-year-old girl who so idolized her dad. She's in his shell and nothing can bring her out now. And friends, that happens now all over the country.

Now, I know some of you as Christians sit here right now abhorring the word divorce. You say, I even hate to sit in a service and listen to a man preach about it because you've been programmed against the word itself. You say, I would never allow it.

Now, my husband and I may not have a perfect marriage, but even if we did split up, I'd never allow a divorce. I don't believe in it. The church teaches against it.

I am against divorce. But sadly, friends, this is dropping like a bomb and surprising many, many Christian homes. Almost daily now, Christians come home and the good wife says, Honey, have you heard the latest news? Guess who's getting a divorce? And it's usually somebody you never could imagine it happening to, someone you thought so well-adjusted, or ministering in his wife.

I picked up Time Magazine a few weeks ago, and there was a little article. It was amusing, yet it was sad. It said, Joseph Aliotto, mayor of San Francisco, divorce action sought by his wife, Angelina, after 33 years of marriage on grounds of irreconcilable differences.

Now, here's the catcher of it. At first, I laughed, and then I wanted to cry. It said, the divorce action evidently took Mayor Aliotto by surprise because he had just left his driveway, and a half an hour later, after waving goodbye and kissing his wife goodbye, walked into his office, and his wife's lawyer was waiting and handed him the divorce papers.

Now, get the picture, if you will. His wife knew all the time that her lawyer was in the office waiting for him to serve divorce papers. She kisses him goodbye and waves him off to work.

Bye, dear. See you for supper. Bang! Divorce.

By surprise. Well, friends, that's exactly what's happening now. People say, could never, ever happen in my home, and yet it is happening.

Happening all over the world. Some of you sitting here tonight may be a part of that statistic. Follow me, if you will, please.

I believe the church of Jesus Christ must take a new look at the divorce problem. First of all, let me tell you tonight, if you've been divorced, I'm not about to put you down here tonight. There's been enough of that in the church.

There are some people who've been victims of divorce. Jesus made exceptions to this problem. For example, in the case of adultery.

Also, I have found from practical experience after being in the streets for 18 years and working with some of the most troubled cases in the world, a woman who suddenly discovers she's married to a homosexual

is in a hopeless situation unless that man turns to Christ for a cure. Now, friends, for the past 10 years, we've supported a home for homosexuals in New York. Upstate New York, we have an estate.

And we have a young man there and a beautiful wife who's been delivered from homosexuality. And this past month, we've baptized seven homosexuals who've been delivered and set free. And I know it.

Their testimony rings clear. There's a witness of the Holy Spirit. Friends, I believe Jesus Christ cures and saves and sanctifies homosexuals who are desperate for a cure.

There is nothing in the Bible that can prove to me otherwise. Paul the apostle said some of you are feminine or homosexual and you've been justified and set free. But if a man does not turn to Christ for healing, that marriage is absolutely hopeless.

There is no hope. It must inevitably, eventually end in divorce. There's a scripture also that suggests that if a man departs from the home and he runs away, don't let him depart.

Now, some of you are here tonight as victims of divorce. You could not help what happened. Probably 10% of the divorces in the world today are cases just like the exception to the general rule.

I'm not about to put you down because the Church of Jesus Christ has done a pretty good job of making second-class Christians out of many victims of divorce. We treat them like they have leprosy in the church. We have special classes for them called mates without partners or parents without partners.

We don't allow them to have activities in the church. We want to keep our kids away from them lest they contaminate them. And friends, I think it's wrong.

There are people sitting here right now listening to me preach who have tears in their eyes, I'm sure, and a hurt deep in their heart at the way they've been treated. Even though they know before God they've been victimized by a terrible situation in their home. And yet they have been put down and put down and trampled on.

And I say it's time we stop that foolishness in the house of God. But friends, at the same time, something is happening that is absolutely frightening. You see, there are only two restraining forces left against pandemic divorce rate.

And that was the fact that society did not really accept it, still frowned on it, and the church preached against it as being immoral. And now, friends, those last two restraining forces are being removed. Society now accepts it.

It's no more sinful in many circles to get a divorce than to spit across the street. Think of it. You know that New York City this past month, there were more applications, listen to it, more applications for divorce than there were applications for marriages.

Think of it. For the first time in the history of New York City, more people filing for divorce than filing for marriage licenses. Frightening, absolutely frightening.

Now, I say that we have to face it head on. And I have never in my life preached on this subject, never. But I've been forced to because of what is happening to the kids I work with.

Because over 95% of all the kids who eventually wind up with us in the teen challenge centers, at least where I've been working, always look back to a broken situation in their home. Always goes back. I've made the full circle and I'm right back there.

And God's beginning to say to me, David, if you really want to help the kids, get back to talking some sense to their parents. Yes, we have pandemic divorce rate. We've got situation ethics and people trying to condone it and say it's all right.

I had a young assembly of God ministers stop me not too long ago after crusade, wanted to walk me back to my motel room. He said, David, I've got to talk to you. I've just graduated from seminary.

And he said, I'm Pentecostal. But he said, I work with high school and college students. And he said, something's wrong.

We have got to come up with an alternative to marriage. And I was so shocked. I said, explain what you mean.

He said, well, Mr. Wilkinson, the kids I work with see their parents go to the altar and go through the formality of saying till death do us part. And they go right out and get a divorce. They see them stand there and spend thousands of dollars and stand there in their beautiful gowns and then wind up in disaster.

And they say marriage isn't working. And they want to live together, just prove that they love one another. And he said, perhaps we should come up with some kind of an espousal ceremony so we could take the guilt problem out.

And I said, how many young ministers are thinking like you? He said, almost every one of my friends my age thinking the same thing. Since marriage is not working, we've got to come up with an alternative for them. It shocks me.

Friends, if that's the attitude, what happens five years down the line when they start taking their place in our pulpits and pastoring our churches? Now, friends, I tell you that God has not changed His mind about the divorce problem. For the Lord God says He hates divorce. Malachi 2.15. For the Lord God says He hates divorce.

Guard your affections. Let there be no divorcing of your wives. Let there be no divorcing of your wives.

If you want to see that made clear, get the Living Bible and see how very clearly it's made. For the Lord God says He hates divorce. God has not changed His mind.

I don't care how many church denominations change their stand. I don't care what anybody else tells you in the way of being a Christian psychiatrist. The Bible says God still hates divorce.

Let there be no divorcing of your wives. Guard your affections. Let there be no divorcing.

Now, I've heard all the excuses why a divorce is inevitable, why people are headed for divorce court. You've heard them too, haven't you? It goes something like this. Well, Mr. Wilkerson, we just don't talk anymore.

We've outgrown each other. We're in two different worlds. We don't communicate.

All the excuses that I hear all over the country today, and those poor judges that sit there and listen to all of it, and it's, well, she's gotten fat. He's got a potbelly. Doesn't take care of himself.

He's always put me down in front of people. He doesn't love me anymore. We've fallen out of love.

I've heard them all, but you know the number one excuse that you hear? Here it comes. Are you ready for it? Nobody understands me anymore. And everybody and his brother running around looking for some understanding.

And if they don't get it from their mate, by golly, they're going to go out and get it somewhere. I want to be understood. I had a pastor of a well-known large Pentecostal church ask for an appointment.

He said, Brother Dave, I heard you preach, but he said, I can't help it. My wife and I are headed for divorce court. I said, why? He said, frankly, I've outgrown her.

I've been fasting and praying and seeking God, and I'll tell you, Brother Dave, God is so many revelations, and my wife is so materialistic, all she wants to talk about is the drapes and the car and the kids. I've outgrown her. Hmm.

We don't communicate anymore. If she'd been a little more spiritual, she'd understand my problems in the ministry, but we're not communicating. I said, oh, come off it, Pastor.

I've learned something, and I'm going to tell you what it is right here now. I've always learned there's a third party involved. And he didn't like that at all.

He said, no, no, no, no. He said, well, there is a lady in the church that I've learned to talk to, that that's all. I said, oh, come off it.

Come off it, sir. Now, listen to me, friends. I'm going to preach like you've never heard any preacher preach in your life from this pulpit.

I don't care if it's my last invitation to this camp. God told me to preach it, and I want you to listen right here and now. You leave two normal people alone who have problems, and they're really in love, and they can work out any problem in the world.

But you introduce a third party, and there's no hope. There is no hope whatsoever. You tell me you're not understood.

You tell me you're not getting along. You tell me he's always putting you down. I tell you there's a third party involved.

Now, you would be surprised and shocked at how the Holy Ghost must be grieved at the kind of flirtatiousness happening in the church of Jesus Christ and beginning many in our church choirs when there are idle moments after practice, and if there is not a spiritual choir leader, and if the pastor is not there to see that things are done right. I have seen all kinds of hell happening, breaking out through flirtatiousness in the church of Jesus Christ. Our little social clubs now, and we are beginning to breed inside of our churches some of these little platonic relationships, especially when there's an unsaved husband sitting at home watching TV.

Now, friends, I think it's time that every minister, every man, every woman of God takes a good hard look at his or her life right now and say, God, is there any kind of a thing happening in my life that could eventually drive a wedge into my home and my marriage? How many, many people are going to stand before God and find out that this is one sin that you do not get away with? My Bible said, Be sure your sin will find you out. And sir, ma'am, if you've gotten away with it this far, watch out, you're on a powder keg. This is one sin that God always exposes.

It has never once in the history of the world gone unexposed. Never. And if you do not take it to the cross of Jesus, if you do not forsake it and get it under the blood and run from it for your life, you are headed, my brother, my sister, you are headed for exposure and then your whole life comes tumbling down.

The Bible says, Why be led away into incredible folly? Why embrace that which is not truly yours? Now, my brother, sister, it's time you and I looked ourselves right in the mirror, and I believe the Holy Ghost right now pulling off the cover and off the lids of some of us who think we've got some little secret thing down there and nobody knows about it. But my brother, sister, right now the Holy Ghost says to those few that are here right now, Get it out! Pluck it out by the roots now before you lose your home, your children, everything. Get it out! I'm not playing games, friend.

I'm on a life and death mission across the United States, and God warned me to say it and say it loud and clear. You be careful, my brother, my sister. Be very, very careful.

The devil is out to destroy every godly home in the world. The pressers are mounting, and oh, my minister brother, my minister sister, walk softly, reverently before God and say, God, guard my steps. Don't let it touch my life.

Feed the blood. Now, it's not always a secret affair. That third party can be another person.

It could be an in-law, like a mother-in-law. Now, don't wink at me like that. I had a beautiful black couple come to see me for counseling recently, and they had three lovely little children.

The man said, Brother Dave, in spite of your message tonight, we're headed for divorce. I said, Why? He said, My wife hates my mother, calls her a witch. I turned to her and I said, Is that right? She said, She is a witch.

Every time something goes wrong, he runs off to his mother, spends more time with his mother than he does with me. And I said, Isn't it a shame that you people are going to allow your home to be broken up over a third party? And I turned to him and said, Do you love her? He said, Yes, I do. I said, Do you love him? She said, Certainly.

And yet you're allowing a third party to destroy your marriage? And I got so indignant, I laid hands on her and started praying. I said, God, break that. And suddenly a smile broke out in her face, and she shook her head a minute.

She said, Mr. Wilkson, something's happened. She said, I may never be able to love her like I should, but at least I don't hate her anymore. I can put up with her.

He turned to her and said, Honey, that's good enough for me. He walked out and he looked at me and said, David, we're going to make it. We're going to make it.

Why, some of you men spend more time with your buddies on the job than you do your wife. You never take your wife out once. You say, Oh, I love her cooking.

Phooey, you're a cheapskate. That's all. You may laugh about that, but do you know there are many wives that are saying amen to me right now? Just think, his buddy asked him to go fishing.

He can go a whole week and stick a little thing in the water there without a nibble for a whole week and come home and say he enjoyed himself and his wife can't even get him to go out shopping with him. It's plain old peanut butter preaching, but that's what God told me to preach. Now, friends, it's not only a person.

It can be a job. It can be a disease. I'm going to give a testimony at the end of this message on how a disease became the third party that almost wrecked our marriage.

It can be sickness that changes the lifestyle. It can be the loss of a job, financial pressures. Recently, 15 couples that came to me for counseling, 7 of those 15 just a few weeks ago, were headed for divorce court because the husband had lost his job and the financial pressures could not be coped with and it caused such tension in the home, they said they just couldn't possibly make it.

That's the third party that I'm talking about. But, friends, I can tell you something far worse than divorce. Some of you people sitting here now abhorred by the word divorce.

You would never even think of it. But you're guilty of something far worse, as far as I'm concerned, as far as God's word is concerned, and I call it divorce by default. Those are two people who live together, claiming to be married, and in the sight of God and the law, they are.

But in all practical purposes, in the sight of God, they're divorced because though they live together under the same roof and are legally bound together, in the sight of God, they're strangers and they're divorced by default. They live together as a lie, an abomination unto the Lord. They fight and they bicker and they hate and they cheat.

And yet they say, I would never get divorced. A lot of Christians like that, that I know all across the country, would never think of allowing a divorce in their home. And yet there's no love in their home.

There is no peace. There is no quiet. There is no joy.

And if you can just look on a woman and commit adultery in your heart, you can be a stranger in your home and be divorced in your mind. The same practical way. And I think kids in high school or college who just go out and live together without a marriage license are far more honest than Christians who live together without love and understanding and the peace of God.

They're more honest. And a lot of you people sitting here right now that need this more than you need a psychiatrist or anything else. You need to hear it right now.

You say, well, Brother Dave, certainly if you're going to preach like this, you've got to have some plan from God, some message from God on how I can avoid living a lie, how I can bring healing to my home. I do. And I didn't get it out of a book.

I got it on my knees and out of the Word of God. Five simple little steps God gave me on how to bring healing to your home and to avoid divorce court. Are you ready? So simple you probably missed it.

But I've got Bible to back it up. I'm not a psychiatrist and I'm not about to play one either. But I've got some plain old plain English right out of the Word of God.

Are you ready? Step number one, turn down the volume at your house. The Bible said a soft answer turneth away wrath. A soft answer turneth away wrath.

The Bible said anger causes mistakes. And look what's happening. Our homes like Madison Square Garden fight night.

Or we've got people to go to church carrying those big Bibles that look like suitcases. Go around waving a Jesus sign, teaching Sunday school. And I'll tell you, they bicker and fight all the way to church and get in a car and jab and yell and scream at each other in front of the kids.

But as soon as they step out of the car in front of the pastor, they hold hands and put on that big Colgate smile. And go in there and sing, oh, how I love Jesus and talk in tongues. Talk about being filled with the Holy Ghost.

Put their money in the offering. Get in the car and roll up the windows and bam, bam, bam. Go home and gossip about the preacher.

I know some people with tongues big enough to lick their way three times around the Statue of Liberty without stopping. Then they wonder why their kids grow up to have disrespect for the house of God. Come on.

A soft answer turneth away wrath. But sadly, too many mothers think that loudness is a badge of authority. In other words, the louder you get, the more power you have.

That's foolishness. The Bible said a soft answer turns away wrath. And you know why mothers say, well, I yell at my kids all day and they never listen.

Dad comes home, snaps his finger, and off they go. You know why? Let me give you a case in point. Now, Johnny, you do that one more time and so help me, you're going to get it.

And she, he knows, Johnny knows her bark's worse than her bite. She's just making wind with her mouth. And she, he knows.

So he does it again. One more time. So he does it again.

I'll tell your dad. And the 99th time he's still doing it. One more time, mama says.

One more time. Then dad comes home and mom tells him all about it. And dad looks at that little boy right and I said, now, son, I'm going to count to ten and you better move.

He gets to two and that boy's gone. Why? Because he knows he's going to do just like my dad. My dad had no better sense than to raise me by the belt and by the book.

My dad taught me two scriptures before I could quote anything else. Two scriptures I had to memorize. Spare the rod and damn the child.

And another scripture, foolishness is bound in the heart of the child and the rod of correction will drive it far from him. And when I did wrong, my dad would take me in the room. He called it a personnel meeting.

And he always waited till the next day when I thought I'd gotten away with it. And then he sent me down his room. He said, now, David, you know you did wrong, don't you? And I'd say, no, sir.

He said, well, I'm going to show you what you did wrong. And then he'd get his Bible out and show me that. And he said, now, David, and my dad had a great big leather strap.

He used to strap razors with, great big four-inch strap, about a foot and a half long. He'd hang it on a nine-penny nail going down the basement. And that was his badge of authority.

My dad never talked much. He just had that leather strap. And, boy, he'd say, now, David, here's what the Bible says.

Here, see it. Read it for yourself if you want to. Foolishness is bound in your heart, and this rod in my hand is going to drive it far from you.

Then he'd make me kneel over the bed, and it went something like this. He'd come down across my backside. Now, David, bam, this hurts me worse than it hurts you.

And I could never understand it. And the worst part of all was next. He'd make me get up and hug him.

Then he'd make me get down and pray, God, forgive me. And then we'd go out and play ball. Now, listen, friends, if you just spank your kids, that's child beating.

But if you show them from the Word of God what the Bible says about foolishness bound in the heart of the child and the rod of correction, and you spank that out, and don't spank them anywhere except where they're well padded. That's right. None of this business across the face or the head.

You can injure a child. God especially prepared the child. Right on the upholstery.

Now, I'm not trying to be facetious, friends. I'm trying to give you something practical from God. Now, you spank that child, then take that child in your hand and love out the hurt.

That's Bible. That's how to raise your kids the Bible way. You know what you ought to do with Dr. Spock's book? Put a handle on it and use it.

He sent more kids to hell than anybody I know. We've got some friends of ours that we don't even allow in our house anymore. They're raising their kids by the book, all kinds of books.

And I'll tell you, they've got three little white tornadoes. And they come in the house, and they look one way or the other, and, boy, down comes everything off the coffee table, and then down comes the pots and pans. And I want to spank that dad and mom.

And you see some of that mom, and she says, Oh, no, she said, I don't want to hurt their expression patterns. They're developing their expression patterns. I thought to myself, boy, if they can't handle the expression patterns at six years of age, how are they going to handle 16 when they're really expressing themselves? A lot of dads and mothers need the spanking.

That's right. This is the end of side one. Please stop the machine at this point and turn the cassette over.

Turn down the volume at your house. All the arguing and the bickering. I've had drug addicts come to me and say, Don't ever raise your voice at me again, sir.

I've had all that my life. I don't want it anymore. All the screaming and the yelling and the bickering in some of our homes.

Turn down the volume. The Bible said a soft answer turns away wrath. All right, step number two.

And I'm going to give you something from the Word of God that could save 95% of all the marriages in America and around the world. It's so simple. I call it the sorry secret.

Learn the sorry secret. You know, there was a movie out called Love Story. And Time Magazine, in a review, said that the essence of that movie is love is never having to say I'm sorry.

Well, friends, that's a lie from the pit of hell. Love is learning how to say I'm sorry. Someone asked Jesus, they said, How many times will I forgive the person who wrongs me? Seven times? Jesus said, No, 70 times seven.

Now, that's 499 times in one day, and that's only the beginning. And furthermore, it says if someone wrongs you, you go to them. And you'll be the one that says, I'm sorry.

Now, friends, here's a secret that must be learned by every husband and wife in America within the sound of my voice right now. If you master this secret, you will never, ever wind up in divorce court. Never.

Learn how to say I'm sorry, and be first, and do it often. Uh-huh. But you know how it goes? Come on now.

I'm going to give you some red hot tooth. Me? Say I'm sorry? I always have to say I'm sorry. He's never wrong.

He's always right, and I always have to take the blame. This time? Oh, no, not this time. Or I've had it with him.

I'm telling you, if I give in this time, there's no hope. I'm always having to give in. He runs off and gets mad, and I have to go and say, honey, I'm sorry.

Oh, no, friends, that's not the way. That's not the way. My Bible says even if you're the one who's been hurt, you're the innocent party.

You take the step. And I've had married couples say, that doesn't make sense. I'm not saying it makes sense.

I'm telling you, that's what Jesus said. Jesus said, you go, and you say I'm sorry. Not like the lady said to her husband, and this is supposed to be true from what I hear.

She heard me preach like this. She went home. She said, well, I know I'm right, but Brother Dave said to say I'm sorry.

So I'm sorry. So there. Well, now, that's not saying I'm sorry from the heart.

The Bible said never go to sleep on your wrath. Never go to bed angry. Oh, how many homes there are right now.

How many people sitting here right now saying, Brother Dave, I've been deeply hurt. Yes, you have. But if you want your marriage to work, you're going to work at it.

There is no well-adjusted happy marriage that just happens. This crazy king and a queen living in a castle syndrome has ruined so many of us. You are not a king.

She's not a queen. You're not living in a castle. It's an everyday, hard, full-time job you work at.

Boy, my wife and I have learned that. We're always, she comes, I'm first. No, I'm first, honey.

I'm the one that's sorry. We're both sorry. We never go to sleep on our anger.

It's been so beautiful. Learn that now. Learn to say I'm sorry first and as often as necessary.

Step number three, quit your jealousy. The Bible said jealousy is more cruel than anger. That suggests to me that it's better to slap your mate across the face and send them reading across the room in anger than to be jealous over them because the Bible said jealousy is more cruel than anger.

It's more cruel. And how many marriages have had this cancer destroyed? Oh, listen, if there's jealousy in your heart towards your husband or your wife, pray for a miracle. Say, God, deliver me.

This is a cancer that must be plucked out. It will destroy your marriage. The Bible says so.

It's more cruel. That's a cruelty. You're absolutely cruel against your mate if you have jealousy.

You say, I have reason to be jealous. Take it to God. Pray for a miracle, O God, once and for all.

Take this spirit of jealousy from me. Pluck it out by the roots and bring peace and trust to my heart. Number four, quit being so cranky.

I'm going to give you a scripture you never thought was in your Bible right out of Proverbs. The constant dripping on a rainy day and a cranky woman are just alike. All you men smile and you're the one who made her cranky.

The Bible said you can no more stop her complaints than you can stop the wind. Crankiness. Now, wait, just a minute.

You know I'm telling the truth. Do you know, dear wife, if you would get up in the morning, no matter how you feel, you're the one who starts the day. If you could get up and pray that God give you that grace, just a little bit of sweetness, that's all.

Just a little bit of tenderness. Now, my Bible says be you tenderhearted one to another. And that's the word that's missing today in our marriage is tenderness.

Tenderness. My wife and I have been working on a case. In fact, we just quit this case recently.

A pastor about four months ago called us, a pastor of a rather large church. And he said, Brother Dave, I don't know what I'm going to do. My wife ran off, went back to her mother.

And she'd been gone two weeks, and I'm about to lose my mind. I'm afraid I'm going to have to leave the ministry. I don't understand for the life of me why my wife left me.

And he said the thing that bothers me, I understand that she's swinging a little bit. She's taking karate and jujitsu. I call her, and she won't let me in the house.

She lived with her mother. She won't answer the phone. And I love that woman dearly, and I don't know for the life of me why she's left.

And that man called and called for two or three weeks. And the poor man was really upset, and I felt sorry. He said, Brother Dave, please call my wife.

She's read the cross and switched blades, and you're the only one she'll probably listen to. You can get her to come home. So my wife and I called, and we got a different story from his wife.

She said, I think I could have loved that man. But she said, I just lost everything, and I'll tell you why. That man is mean and cranky as a devil.

Stands in the pulpit and oozes love to everybody else, preaches love. But that man was absolutely mean, always putting me down. I couldn't do anything right for that man.

And that man was absolutely mean. He would slap me in the face, and that did it. But she said, I think I could have learned to love that man if he'd just shown me a little tenderness.

If he hadn't been so cranky and so mean. Boy, we got to the other side of the story, and boy, a couple days later, he called me back again. And I mean, he was crying.

He said, Brother Dave, I'm going to have to quit preaching. I'm losing my mind. That woman has left me, and I don't know why.

I said, oh, quit your crying. I said, you're mean. Sir, your wife doesn't want you to come home and flip the keys to a \$10,000 sport car at her and say, honey, I love you.

There's my proof. Your wife wants a little act of tenderness. A little bit of kindness.

Not some big fancy gift. Quit trying to buy your wife off. Show a little love and tenderness.

When's the last time, sir, you brought your wife home some flowers? For no reason at all, because you loved her? Nothing else? Me, flowers? Yeah, you. My wife is here, and she'll tell you, I've got all kinds of occasions I dream up for sending flowers and potted plants and little love poems, everything else. Now, don't look at me like that.

A woman wants just a little bit of tenderness, sir. Why don't you take out the garbage once in a while, for example? Without complaining about it. And quit yelling at her for sitting there three hours watching as the world turns inside out, upside down, when you spend five hours watching football.

Are you ready for the last one? All right. Right out of God's Word, quit dancing to somebody else's tune. Jesus said, how so I liken this generation? They're like a bunch of little kids sitting in the marketplace saying, we pipe to you our tunes, but you don't dance.

Jesus said, that's your generation. Everybody's got a tune, wanting somebody to dance to it, and I'm going to tell you why. And here's where I'm going to add a little to what was said this afternoon about women's liberation.

Now, listen to me. I'm not trying to be smart or facetious. I'm on a life and death mission.

We've got all kinds of tunes being piped to us today, through radio and television and the written page. And there's a mind programming on right now, undermining something very godly and holy. And you know why we're headed for a pandemic divorce rate in America and the world? We're reversing the Bible rules.

We are breaking all the barriers that God set up. We are reversing the roles in our homes. Now, my Bible says the man is the head of the house.

Jesus, listen, the word of God, Paul said this, listen very closely. Even as Christ is the head of the church, so is the man the head of the wife. And so let her be subject in all things.

Even as Christ is the head of the church. Now, many things that are being said by the women's liberation movement need to be heard. Did you hear me? Because too long we have mistreated women.

We have put them down. We've had a bunch of little Napoleons running around, barking, Hey, Mabel, I want a drink. And so she jumps and has to go get the man a drink of water.

I've seen that all over the country. We've treated them, mistreated them, and wiped our feet on them, treated them like dirt rags. And friends, I'm one of those preachers who believe it's possible for a woman to have a career and be a good wife and mother.

Thousands and thousands of wives have proved that. In fact, I've seen them grow so much in God because they've had a goal and they've had a purpose in their life, and that's beautiful. But friends, what I am against is this programming that's happening right now, demeaning being a wife and a mother.

And it comes over the Dinah Shore, the Mike Douglas, the Tonight Today Tomorrow, all those shows. And there's some woman's liver there who couldn't get a husband if she wanted one. That's right.

Most of them are as ugly as sin. Now hold it just a minute. Don't pass judgment on what I'm saying until I'm finished.

And it goes something like this. You housewife there in the does with the Hoover Sweeper. Isn't it a shame you're becoming a vegetable? Your husband's out there growing, expanding his consciousness, and you're stuck there with the diapers and the kids with your hands in the dishwater.

Why didn't he do the dishes? Why didn't he clean the room? Why don't you vote on it? Now hold it just a minute. What I am against with all my heart and soul is the demeaning of one of the highest callings in the world, and that's to be a housewife and a mother. That's the highest calling in earth, better than the presidency of the United States.

And woman, dear sister, housewife, mother, don't let anybody put you down for being, quote, just a housewife or just a mother in the sight of God. Listen, who can find a virtuous woman? Her price is above rubies. She rises early, feeds your household.

Beauty is deceiving. Vanity passes away, but a godly woman is much revered. A godly woman, a housewife.

Oh, I wish I could say it and scream it in the microphone. It is not just a housewife. That's a calling in Christ Jesus.

God has a job for you to do, and there are going to be many that will come to you, dear housewives. And I don't think God's going to take a male like me, preacher, to give you the vision. God's raising up handmaidens and sisters of the Lord, giving the vision and trying to get into you and steal into your heart those wonderful concepts of usefulness and vision to be used of God.

And our women today are expanding and doing some marvelous things in the sight of God. And I'm for that 1,000 percent, and I believe in that with all my heart. But at the same time, I am totally against, and I believe the Holy Ghost is against, any demeaning of this calling and any reversing of the godly, holy roles that he has set.

The man is still the head of the house. That role must never be reversed. Never.

All right. I told you I wanted to share with you a confession. Now, my wife and I agreed she would allow me to share with you what I'm about to share.

And though this happened years ago, we felt at this critical time that we should share it because it would help a lot of others who are going through something very similar. Because my wife and I just about did not make it. That's right.

And it began one day when I walked in the kitchen, and I saw Gwen leaning over the kitchen sink, grabbing her side, and screaming in pain. And she said, Honey, come here. Put your hand here.

There was a big lump. I panicked. I said, My goodness, how long have you had that? She said, A couple months.

She said, It's like a knife. I'm so tired all the time, and I get these weak spells just drain my strength. She said, I'm afraid there's something there.

I took her to our physician the next day. He probed around a bit, and he said, Mr. Wilkson, it's just swollen over. It's infected.

Here's some medication. I'm sure it'll dissolve. It'll go away.

We were relieved. Went home. The medication helped for a couple weeks.

It was the second or third week after. We were in Pittsburgh visiting her mother. And we were at Gimbel's Department Store.

I'll never forget it. She was buying a pair of stockings, and all of a sudden, that scream. She bent over in pain.

She said, Honey, it's bigger. And it's worse than ever. It's like a butcher knife cutting me.

I really got scared. I called her mother. We got the name of an internist, a specialist.

I took her in. He probed around, and he called me in the next room. He said, Sir, you get your wife back to New York immediately.

Demand a barium enema x-ray. You've got serious problems. You're in trouble.

I started playing a game with Gwen. I just told her a lie. And that's where all the trouble begins when you're dishonest, when you cheat, just by being dishonest, even about this kind of a third party, even a disease.

A few days later, she's in the hospital. It's 10 o'clock in the morning the following day. The doctor called me up, and he said, David, I'm really sorry.

I missed it. I said, What are you talking about? He said, Your wife, sir, has a cancer on her lower bowel the size of a lemon, and I want permission to prepare her for surgery. She should be operated on right away.

And I was angry. I blew up. I said, What do you mean you missed it? You told me it's just an infected ovary.

He said, Well, we're human, sir. We do make mistakes. Boy, and I slammed the phone down.

When I went in the hospital, I started playing a game with Gwen again. I said, Honey, the doctor said that the ovary is infected. It needs to come out lest it affect the other ovary, so you're going to have to go into surgery.

And she agreed. The doctor let me wait in the little outer room. He said, David, I'll be in there about four hours.

I'll tell you what happens as soon as I get out. He was in there six hours, and I knew there was trouble when he was two hours overdue. He came out and pulled off that green mask, and I can still see him.

He shook his head. He said, Sir, it's a shame that a 32-year-old woman should have such a black, ugly thing like that in her. He said, I had to cut out all the lymph glands, half her bowels.

And he said, We hope we got it. We don't think it metastasized, but we had to take out all the lymph glands in the midsection. He said, It's in God's hands now.

When I saw Gwen at the recovery room, she was coming out. I tried to lie to her again, and this time she said, David, stop it. She said, It was cancer, wasn't it? I've known it all the time.

I said, Yes. And so the tension was gone. But friends, that was the beginning of a third party introduced in our home that was absolutely devastating.

I had no way, neither of us had any way of knowing how low it would take us in despair, despondency. And some of you people here tonight may have been through it, and maybe you're going to have to go through it, and the Holy Ghost is trying to prepare you. And this is very, very difficult for me.

But we've lived through it. My wife and I both agreed that so many people could be helped if you could just listen. Because when I was in Bible school, we would have ministers come, and they'd stand there, and I'd be sitting in the chapel with all my problems.

And all these evangelists would be talking about all their great victories and all the things that they'd accomplished. And I'd sit there with all my problems. I said, That doesn't make sense.

That can't be all right, and I'm all wrong. And I thought, Lord, if you ever give me a ministry, I want to get up and confess some of my problems so that the people who are going through it, like me, can relate to it. That's the reason I'm like this.

I can't help it anymore. And, friends, she got along for a year or so and regained some strength. But, boy, those tired spells would hit her again, and then another lump.

In the next five years, Gwen had, I think, five operations, three malignancies, two nonmalignant. It goiter, other midsection problems. And she was cut four times across, crisscrossed the stomach.

And after the fourth operation, I think it was the fifth operation, she seemed to be regaining strength, but becoming very weak. And we used to, we lived in Staten Island. She used to like to walk around the block.

And we were taking a walk one night, and she really shocked me. She said, David, they've cut me so much, I don't feel like a woman anymore. I want another child.

We almost passed out. I said, that's the worst thing in the world. All you've been through now to carry a baby? She said, I want a child.

And I knew, I know now why God put that in her heart, because soon after that, she'd not be allowed, able to have any more. We planned our fourth child. That's Gregggy back there.

Now, 10 going on 11. Healthy and strong and call of God in his life. He's going to be a preacher, he said.

It was a year later. After that, she seemed to be gaining strength. We were so happy.

We were coming home from Memphis General Council. And on the way home, she had one of those attacks. Started to bleed.

We rushed her into the nearest town, into a hospital. They sedated her, stopped the bleeding. Said, get her to a hospital.

You've got problems. And once again, dear Gwen was down. And this time, a surgeon friend of mine did the operation.

Very fine Christian, spirit-filled man. Thought it would make it a little easier. This time, a radical hysterectomy.

And I mean, it was radical surgery this time. When Gwen came out this time, she said, they'll never lay another knife on me ever. I don't care.

They'll never. It used to grieve me. People would come to me and say, David, you've got faith to believe God for miracles, for drug addicts, alcoholics, prostitutes.

Why can't you believe God to heal your wife of cancer? And it hurt us because God had done something wonderful for us. He'd given us what I call the faith of the Hebrew children. The Hebrew children stood in front of the fire furnace.

They knew in their heart God was able. And their message to the whole world was simply this. We know our God is able.

But if we have to go through the furnace, he'll take us through. And, friends, God saw fit to take us through the furnace. But it was in the furnace that we came out.

Came out with his hand on ours. That's where we met him, in the furnace. God takes you through the flood.

He doesn't bypass it. You go through the wilderness, through the fire, through the flood, and that's where he meets you. This time, a surgeon calls me in the next room, and he said, Reverend Wilkerson, you're a man of God, but you've got to know something.

We've taken two of the three lines of defense against disease away from your wife. She has no more hormone system being produced, no more goiters, so there's no thyroid. She has to take thyroid, hormone.

And he listed all the medications she'd take the rest of her life. He said she's going to go through massive, sudden changes in her body and in her psyche. And she's going to feel depression like she's never felt.

She's going to feel fits of jealousy and temper. And she's going to go through every range of human feeling, so high and so low, it'll be devastating. And unless you're prepared, unless you're patient and understanding, you can only make it more difficult on her and yourself.

Sir, be prepared. I'm just telling you, you're in for it. You're going to see things you've never saw before in your wife.

She's going to be another woman. And I couldn't understand then what he was talking. I couldn't even begin to comprehend it.

The first three months, we were able to take it pretty well. When I'd come home from Teen Challenge and walk in the streets and walk in the house and see her handshake when she's drinking coffee, I could take her to the room and pray with her, and she was relieved. But friends, it went downhill, downhill for the next six months.

It got worse and worse until finally it got on my nerves. I'd say to myself, now look, I'm walking the streets, I'm giving my life, and to come home to that torment. Maybe she's not trying because I came home one time and she was screaming at the children, and I couldn't understand that.

And she'd run to the room and say, David, why do I do that? You know that's not me. And we'd pray. But after a while, friends, the depression got so bad, she slipped so low physically, she said, I'll never get it.

Came home one day, she said, you don't love me. The kids don't love me. Nobody loves me.

I don't want to live. And suddenly that loss of a will to live. Nobody cares.

And friends, I'd been going around the country preaching and asking prayer, and she had more people praying. We had flowers and telegrams and people praying, and more friends had never had their life. But the enemy trying to say, nobody cares.

You don't care. Nobody cares. And boy, I would come home and go into the garage where I had a little prayer room and say, God, it's not right.

I can't carry this kind of a battle. And friends, for a whole year, I traveled around the country preaching crusades. And at the stand and hearing in my subconscious mind, David, you're a phony.

You preach deliverance, and yet you can't solve your own problem. You're going to wind up in divorce court, and the millions of people ready to cross on switchblade are going to laugh, and you're going to bring reproach on the ministry. And one night in California, I was preaching for Miss Kathryn Kuhlman, 4,000 people, and in the middle of the sermon, it rang through my mind, you're a phony.

You have no right to preach. You're a phony. And I was paralyzed.

I couldn't move. I grabbed the pulpit, and nothing came out. I stood there for three minutes just petrified, and suddenly turned and walked off the stage.

Walked off in front of 4,000 people right in the middle of my message. Miss Kuhlman had to take over the service. I went up to the side, and Brother Aaron Vick was there.

He said, David, what's wrong? I said, I'm a phony. He didn't know what he was talking about. I just walked out.

I said, I can't preach. I can't stand up anymore and tell what God can do until God heals our marriage, because we were not making, we were arguing now. We were not understanding.

We were not communicating. I knew she loved me, and I knew I loved her, and there was no other third party but this disease, and it was crippling, but I knew the enemy was going to use this, try to destroy our home and marriage. Our children knew it, and some of our closest friends knew it.

I went home and did what most people do when they're headed for trouble. They think a second honeymoon will solve everything, as if geographically removing yourself from the area of your problem would solve it. Friends, you take your problem with you.

You don't solve it by going somewhere. You solve it right here in your heart. And so I went home, and I said, honey, I've got to go to California for Crusades next week.

Let's get somebody who wants the kids. Let's take a second honeymoon. She said, we need something, David.

We flew to California, arrived Friday, checked into the hotel in Anaheim, and I had a Saturday afternoon banquet for some 400, 500 ministers and their wives, the Southern California district, and then a big crusade that night at the Long Beach Auditorium. Thousands of people expected. It was Saturday afternoon.

I was dressing to get ready for the crusade, and I don't know what triggered it, but for some reason or another, we started arguing, and I blew up. I said, that does it. God doesn't expect that of me.

I said, we're not making it. We came here to California. We're not solving our problem.

I said, I'm having a hard enough time preaching. I feel like a phony now. I've lost the victory.

You're not coming in the car with me. I flipped her a telephone number. I said, here, you call Ralph.

Eileen, if you want to come, you come with them. You're not coming in the car with me. I got in my Hertz rental car and drove off in a huff to the banquet.

They had my book set up down in the lobby, and when I appeared, kids came running up, wanting me to autograph the cross and switch blades. And if you'd have seen me then, you would have never known with that phony smile on my face that I was dying inside and going through a ravishing period in my life. Ten minutes before the banquet was to start, here comes my wife in with the pastor and his wife, and we'd learned by now to put on a big front, so she smiled and sighed up to me, and we walked in hand in hand and sat at the speaker's table at the banquet.

And friends, I felt like I was in an echo chamber. I didn't hear a word for the first hour of preliminaries. I was in an echo chamber, and I was so low, and I reached in my pocket, and I had \$500 in traveler's checks.

Now, it's not because I carry a lot of money, but the tickets alone were \$300, and we were going to be there for a week, we thought. And suddenly a scripture came to me. It's a scripture that David used.

It was what David said when he was going through a trial, and he wanted to run away from it. He said, Oh, that I had the wings of a dove, that I could fly off to some distant wilderness and escape this tempest and storm. Oh, that I had wings of a dove.

I could fly away to a wilderness, and on my way to the meeting that afternoon, I'd seen a bus pull out of the station there. It said Mexico City, and all of a sudden it hit me. God doesn't expect this of you.

You've got \$500 in your pocket. Just get up, walk out, and go to the bus station, and get a ticket, go to Mexico City, take your Bible and your clothes, and check into a hotel down there and write another book, maybe on family problems, because now you can relate to them. Fast and pray.

Call New York and tell Paul, the treasurer, to give your paycheck to your wife and take care of the family. Don't let anybody know where you're at. And one of these days when she really tries, when she starts praying and seeking God like she should, then she'll come crawling back to you.

Then you can come home. God doesn't expect it. Friends, I did the stupidest thing I ever did in my life.

I got up, put the chair under the table, and walked out. People must have thought I was going to the restroom. I headed for that bus station feeling sorry for myself and hurt and depressed, the lowest I'd ever been in my whole ministry.

I got that bus station, and I'm standing there getting ready to lay money down for a ticket. And friends, all of a sudden I began to shake and tremble because the fear of God came on me. The Holy Spirit fell on me, and I heard it ringing through my subconscious mind, saying, David, what a fool.

What a fool. You talk about being hurt. You talk about not being understood, and yet you haven't had the knife laid on you.

You haven't had the tubes down your throat. You haven't had to face the trauma of cancer. She has done all the suffering.

You don't even begin to know what suffering is. She's gone through it all. If anyone has a right to run away, she does, not you.

Get back before it's too late. And I'll tell you, I literally ran. I remember jumping over a car.

I put my hands in the front and leaped right over the front of it, over a fire hydrant, and I huffed and puffed my way back, and I got there five minutes before they'd introduced me to speak. My wife later said she knew what I'd tried to do. She wanted to do the same thing.

I don't even know what I spoke, friends. I got through it. But after the banquet, about 5.15, 5.30, I handed my wife a key to the room they'd given us there at the hotel.

I said, Honey, we're not making it. And I said, I can't go on. I'm at the end of my rope.

I said, You go to the room. You know I love you, and I know you love me, but I can't go on another day. I said, No, I've got to preach to thousands of people tonight, and I'm not going to do it unless God meets me, unless God heals our marriage and our home.

And I went up to the little dressing room. It's still there, up at the Long Beach Auditorium, dirty old filthy dressing room. And I slammed the door, and I pounded my fist against the wall almost till I bled and said, God, like Jacob wrestling with the angel of God, I'll not let you go until you answer prayer.

God, you've met me all these years. You've met my financial need. You've healed boys like Nicky Cruz.

I've seen your miracle working power, and this burden is too much. And I'll tell you, friends, He said He'll make a way of escape. Hallelujah.

God said He'd make a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it. And friends, after an hour or so, something happened in that little room. God poured on me a fresh anointing, an anointing like I had never experienced in all my life, even fresher than when God first called me to the streets of New York.

And suddenly all that poison was worsed out. Glory to God. It doesn't take God all night.

It just takes God a few moments. Then He worsed out all the fear, and He worsed out the depression. And I knew God was going to bring healing to my wife and our home that night.

Friends, at 7.30, I walked out, and the place was packed and jammed. I didn't even have my Bible with me. I didn't even know where I'd left it.

I didn't even have a note. All I remember, I was in a daze. I was in the Spirit.

And I heard someone introducing me, and I stood before thousands of people. And I remember for just a half an hour, I preached on love. If God marked iniquities, who among us could stand? He remembers our frame.

He remembers that we're but dust. And oh, I began to just pour out of my heart the love that I felt for Jesus, and the love that He was giving back to me. All the love.

I spoke for half an hour through tears stained eyes, and halfway through my message. And I'd never experienced such anointing. It was as though I'd stepped out of my body, and the Lord Himself just speaking through my lips.

Just pouring out. I couldn't wait to hear what the Holy Ghost was going to say next. Just poured out, and halfway through my message, the Lord let me pick out Gwen's face.

Way in the back aisle, thousands of people, I could see her. And her hands were raised, and tears streaming down her cheeks. And suddenly, I had a Holy Ghost premonition.

God is healing your wife right now. God is healing. The miracles happened.

And boy, they just rolled off of me, and I knew it, I knew it. I gave an invitation that night, and over a thousand people came forward. I'd never seen anything like it.

And people were crying and making up with each other. It was a beautiful experience. And about ten minutes later, into the altar service, I heard somebody going, psst, psst, psst.

And I turned, and there's Gwen behind the curtain going like this, motioned for me to come here. Boy, and I walked away from thousands of people. I went over, and I picked her up and hugged her.

And she said, David, I feel like a thirteen-year-old girl. I have never felt like this in all my life. She said, you know you preached your whole sermon right at me? I said, honey, there's a thousand others there thinking the same thing.

She said, no. She said, halfway through your message tonight, the anointing of God came on you, so your face lit up. She said, I saw a ring around your face.

She said, and God took that anointing and broke the yoke. In my life, the anointing on you touched my life and broke the yoke. She said, the depression snapped.

She said, the glory of the Lord filled my heart. And she said, God told me I'm healed. She said, I am healed.

She said, the depression is gone. She said, let's get out of here. And we got out of there.

We walked away from thousands of people. I didn't tell anybody in France that second honeymoon was ten million times better than the first. And we've been going on it ever since.

Hallelujah. It's just been absolutely beautiful. You say, you got no more problems? Oh, yes.

But we always make sure, I'm there first, honey. I'm the one that's sorry. We've learned the sorry secret.

Hallelujah. Glory be to God. Now, I'm going to tell you something.

You tell me your marriage is hopeless. You say, well, it used to be nice. Come on.

You stood one day, and with this I close, you stood one day with your husband or your wife before an altar. I don't know whether you were in a right dress or not, but you stood there either before a justice of the peace or a minister of the gospel. You said, I love you until death do us part.

And you were married in the sight of God. And I don't know what's happened in the meantime. I don't care if you're retired.

Maybe you say the magic is gone, David. I'll never be able to sense what I had before. Well, friends, we don't live by feelings.

We live by faith. That if by faith you'll come to Him now, pray for a miracle, God can heal you. God can heal your marriage.

And he said, here's what the Bible said. I've got something against you because you left your first love. You didn't lose it.

You left it. So remember how it was and repent and go back and do it all over again. Come on, remember how it was and go back and do it all over again.

Now, I used to have people come forward that wanted their marriages healed and I'd have them repeat the marriage vows until I saw how stupid that is. Those are just words. I didn't mean anything.

It's the act of kindness. It's determining in your mind. I'm going to make this work.

I believe in miracles. I believe in God. I believe God can keep my hope.

I'm not going to give up. I'm not going to let the devil destroy my home and ruin my kids, break up my husband and my wife. I'll not allow it.

Never. Some of you young married couples needed this so much tonight. Look what's happened.

All the pressure of this age. Father, I've made a confession. Now, we've all got to make a confession.

Lord, I needed this tonight. This is exactly what I need. I need it.

I acknowledge it. I admit that I need help. That's where it begins.

Amen. Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55438.

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