

# The Ministry of Beholding His Face

by David Wilkerson

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*David Wilkerson emphasizes the transformative power of beholding the face of Christ as the core ministry for every believer, highlighting the role of suffering and the Holy Spirit in this process.*

**Duration:** 56:39

**Scripture:** Matthew 24:33, Romans 12:2, 2 Corinthians 3:17-18, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, James 1:22, 1 Peter 2:9

**Topics:** "Christian Witness", "Hope In Christ"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of preaching the word of God in a world that is watching. He refers to 2 Timothy 4:1-5, where Paul charges Timothy to preach the word and make full proof of his ministry. The speaker shares a powerful example of a woman who, despite her physical ailments, radiates peace and joy, attracting the attention of others, including a Jewish doctor. The speaker urges listeners to be mindful of how they react in difficult situations, as their actions can serve as a testimony to the world. He also acknowledges the fear and despair that many people are experiencing, but reminds believers that they have a blessed hope in Christ and do not sorrow as the world sorrows.

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## Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, PO Box 260, Lindell, Texas 75771 or calling 903-963-8626.

You are welcome to make additional cassettes of this message for free distribution to friends. However, for all other forms of reproduction or electronic transmission, existing copyright laws apply. New York Times today says, America mourns again.

Then the article goes on to talk about so much mourning has been placed upon this nation, the world, and now the whole world mourns. And we pray for, I hope you have uttered a prayer, a godly prayer, a sincere prayer for the families of the astronauts that were killed. You know, it was an amazing thing to listen on the radio to people being interviewed and to hear them say what's happening and to hear them talk about things spinning out of control and the hopelessness and the despair and the fear.

And didn't Jesus say that the day was coming when men's hearts would fail them with fear, watching those things coming upon the earth. God doesn't cause these things, but I thank God, as Pastor Carter said, that we have hope and we don't sorrow as the world sorrows. We have a blessed hope in Christ.

And we mourn as the world mourns. We sorrow and yet not as the world sorrows. We mourn but not as the world mourns.

And we can come to church this morning and clap our hands and rejoice in the Lord because we know our redemption draws nigh. I want to talk to you this morning on the ministry of beholding his face. The ministry of beholding his face.

I want you to go with me to 2 Corinthians 3, 3rd chapter, 2 Corinthians. 3rd chapter, 2 Corinthians, the 3rd chapter. I'm going to read one verse, two verses, verses 17 and 18.

Now, the Lord is that spirit and where the spirit of the Lord is, there's liberty. I want to thank God for the marvelous presence of the Lord in this service, to be away for a season and then come back and sense the continual presence of the Lord and the blessing of the Lord here on Times Square Church. There's liberty.

Verse 18, but we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory even as by the spirit of the Lord. I read it again, but we all, all of us, none accepted with open face, that means unveiled face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord and we are changed into the same image from glory to glory. How? Even as by the spirit of the Lord.

Heavenly Father, I thank you that I can stand here this morning knowing that you have brought a word from your heart and you've worked it into my very soul in my life and what I preach this morning is not theory, it's not something I've learned from any other experience, but that which you brought me through by the Holy Spirit. It's something Lord that I believe with all my heart is your word for this moment and I pray Lord Jesus that you quicken me by your Holy Spirit. Nothing I say, nothing that comes out of my mouth today is going to have any impact.

It's not going to touch anyone unless you anoint it because the letter itself kills, but it's the spirit that gives life to that word. Give life to your word this morning, I pray. Quicken it, I pray, in Jesus name.

Give his ears to hear what the spirit has to say in Jesus name. Amen. Every single believer is called to the ministry.

Scripture, Paul says we all have this ministry. We're going to talk about this ministry that Paul, I'm going to deal with, that Paul's outlined in his epistles. Our modern day concept of ministry is so corrupted.

We think of ministry only as a career, ordained, licensed men, women who marry and bury, they pastor churches, they build and maintain institutions. We think of the ministry as someone who's gone to seminary or Bible college and comes out and some denomination or some organization ordains or licenses that individual. We say he is in the ministry.

That is not a biblical concept, not at all. No human being, no bishop, no denomination can put you in the ministry. They can give you a paper, but that does not make you a minister of the gospel.

And folks, God doesn't judge ministry by effectiveness, by magnitude. There are pastors that have built mega churches and great institutions, and some of the greatest so-called ministries, those that have been so applauded and so recognized by men often have come about through the intelligence and the skill of men who were black in heart, had black hearts. Some evangelists, television evangelists and pastors of large churches have been exposed over the years for homosexuality and for adultery and for horrible sins

and yet able to accomplish ministries, so-called ministries that were abomination to the Lord.

Now thank God that God does send apostles and he sends prophets into the church, and there are godly men who have raised up institutions, godly institutions, and godly men, met them all over the world that are in the pulpit. And they are ordained, yes, but they have the ordination of the Holy Spirit. It was like Paul said, the Lord put me in the ministry.

Thank God for these ministries, but Paul speaks of a ministry that every single one of us listening to me today have been called to. Paul says it's a calling that every born-again believer has been called to undertake. It's our first calling.

It's a ministry out of which other, all other godly endeavors are birthed. Nothing that pleases God, no ministry that is accepted by God can be birthed in any other way than what I'm going to lay before you today. There is a ministry that you and I have and out of that ministry comes every endeavor, every other kind of service unto the Lord comes out of this ministry.

It's called the ministry of beholding the face of Christ. It's a calling that we all have been called to, to spend quality time in the presence of Jesus, just beholding. That's quietly worshiping.

It's not just quiet worship. It is dedicated, focused worship. It's time given to him just beholding his face.

The scripture I just read to you, we all with open, unveiled face, with nothing hidden in our lives come before him. You see, there's liberty when you allow the Holy Spirit, the liberty is what we give to the Holy Spirit to change us, that we are given the character of Jesus Christ. But we all, none excluded, with open or unveiled face, beholding as in a glass.

Then Paul in chapter 4, verse 1 says, therefore seeing we have this ministry, look at verse, chapter 4, verse 1, therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we've received mercy, we faint not. We, he's including all, we have received this ministry. This word beholding is a very serious and strong word that the apostle uses.

It's not just taking a look, but in the Greek it's fixing the gaze. It's making a decision that I will not move from this position. This is my calling.

Before I do anything else, before I try to attempt anything for God, I've got to come out of his presence. I've got to come out with something that I've received in his presence that is changing me. I have been changed.

I have not gotten this in a seminary. I have not gotten this from man. I got this along with Jesus beholding his face.

I have fixed my gaze on him. I said, this is going to be my life. If my life is to count, I'm not going to sit around saying, what can I do with my life? I'm not going to try to figure out what I can do as a career, for a career.

I am going to do the one thing God has called us all to do. Get alone with him, stay in his presence, worship, behold his face. The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Now, there's no mirror here. It's just a glass, as in a glass. We picture that we are a mirror, or that Jesus is a mirror, and we see his face in the mirror, and we look in, and that bounces back and forth.

There's no such thing. It's the face of Jesus. Paul talked about the glory of God in the face of Jesus.

This is not going into the presence of the Lord like it was a mirror. Jesus is not a mirror. We are not just a reflection.

We become his very nature and character. No, it's spending that quality time beholding his face, and as if we were looking into a glass, only as if we were looking. In other words, we are studying, we are looking, we are fixing a gaze.

Not just a passing glance. We've got a lot of Christians giving Jesus passing glances. They get these spurts of religion, spurts of holiness, and spurts of worship and praise, but it doesn't change them because they have not made a commitment to fix their gaze.

The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. It's the picture of someone shot in the holy of holies with an obsession, an obsession to get to know him and to commune with him. Paul tells us the man or woman shot with him and beholding him is being transfigured.

He's being changed, in other words. But we all are changed into the same image, and the Greek word is metamorphosis, changed, transfigured. I want you to know that this is what the heart of this ministry is that I'm talking about, is that when you spend time alone with the Lord, he becomes the center and the obsession of your life.

You know that you can't get what you need any other place. You can't get it from counseling, you can't get it from friends, you can't get it from husband, you can't get it from wife. And you know that there are trials coming into your life, and you know there are hard times you know may be in it, and you know the only place to go is into the presence of the Lord.

And the Bible said those who spend time beholding him are transfigured. There's a metamorphosis happening. They are changing.

They're being transfigured just as Christ was transfigured on the mount. That was the capstone of his character that he learned through obedience to the heavenly Father. And there was a capstone, and it's folks, it's the capstone, it's the opening up of the heart and the mind of Jesus until every time you come into his presence there's a change.

You may not feel it, you may not see it, others may not see it right away, but there's a metamorphosis taking place. There's a change. Something is happening.

The glory of the Lord is being manifest. You cannot choose how that metamorphosis takes place. You can't choose.

You say, well, it's the same. I wish God could change us just by our having happy, painless lifestyles. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could be changed, transfigured into the character of Christ painlessly.

The Bible said changed as by the Spirit of the Lord. Where the Spirit of the Lord, there is liberty. That means we give him the liberty.

We say, Lord, I give you the liberty. I give you my heart and my life. And when the Spirit comes in and you give him full control, you say, I want to be governed by the Holy Spirit.

Where that Spirit of the Lord is, when you shudder with him, the Spirit of the Lord is there, and he'll ask you for the liberty. I give him the liberty to do anything he has to do, whatever it takes. Whatever it takes, Lord, take your liberty to transform me into the character of Christ, shut in looking to Jesus.

We have the privilege, too, of seeing ourselves. And I think that's the first thing that happens when you behold Christ in his glory, begin to see how short of that glory you've come and how blind you've been, how blind you've been in struggling and striving to be holy, struggling and striving to do something to please God, striving so hard to overcome sin and temptation. Because you see, when you shut yourself in and fix your gaze with the Lord and give him freedom, there's a spontaneous work of the Holy Spirit.

You don't ever again have to strive and sweat and plead. You simply go in there and believe that he is changing you, changed as by the Spirit. There is not a person within the sound of my voice that has fixed themselves to seek the face of God and to be a worshipper, not just in church, but have a holy place, go into the holy of holies and have a place where I worship.

It can be in your car, but it has to be a continual thing, because the changes are continual. There's no such thing as stagnant growth. I can't understand how many people just receive the covenant truth, they receive the justification truth of Jesus Christ and his imparted righteousness, and they say, I'm seated at the right hand of the Father, and then they go to sleep.

Don't tell me that you can sleep being seated at the right hand of the Father. Impossible. Get saved and then go to sleep.

Transfiguration comes primarily through trials and suffering. I'll say it again. The change, that metamorphosis, that change into the character of Christ comes only one way.

We have this treasure in vessels of fragile clay, Paul said, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves. How is it possible that these fragile vessels of ours, some of us are more fragile than others, some have a fragile clay more than others, and how is it that we can have a continual manifestation of the character, an ever-increasing outshining of the character of Jesus in these vessels of clay? How can it happen? When Tiffany, we were told she had terminal cancer and my first thought was Debbie. How will Debbie take it if God takes her? And the Lord had clearly warned me, told me what the future was and why he was going to do what he had to do, because there's never been a day in those 12, 13 years that Tiffany lived that wasn't a day that I hadn't prayed for her.

And my prayer was, Lord, do whatever you have to do to save my children and my grandchildren. And I had this pre-knowledge, but all along what will Debbie do? She is so tender. Oh God, I can't see how she can handle it.

Home-schooled, I mean inseparable. But you know something? Debbie was a rock. She was the rock.

And I'll tell you why she was the rock. Now her husband, Roger, too, solid as a rock. Little Tiffany was in the back room in one of the back bedrooms of our house for the last 30 days and her family coming and going.

And Debbie was a spark plug, the peace of God. And I knew. Why? Because the previous three months she had spent shut in with God and she was feeding her.

She was beholding the face of Christ. She had been spending time reading Madame Dion, Amy Carmichael, Fenlon, a number of books that she has. Dad, what books can I read to bless my soul? I just want to get to know Jesus more.

And folks, that metamorphosis had happened. And the ministry she had, everyone she talked to, she ministered. Even when people came up to the casket and said, what a cruel thing.

She said, no, no, no, don't. In words, she said, don't accuse God of being cruel. It's not cruel.

God knows what he's doing. There was a peace that passes understanding. I talked to Debbie last night on the phone there in Florida.

She said, Dad, I can't explain to you the peace that we have. It's incredible. Oh yeah, we cry.

There are times of sorrow, but there's a peace and there's a rest and there's a strength. I want to make a statement. I'm going to make it very boldly and I'm telling you I can back it up with everything in this book.

Listen closely. All suffering in the life of a righteous child of God is a call to ministry. I'm going to say it again.

All suffering, all pain, all trial that comes to the life of a true child of God is a call to ministry. Now, let me go on to prove it. No denomination, no bishop can do it.

Paul said, I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, who has enabled me for he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry. Now, what does Paul mean when he says Christ enabled me, counting me faithful? You can't, that can't be in human strength. What Paul is, you see, three days after Paul's converted, he receives this call to this ministry.

Three days after he's blinded and he goes into Damascus and he's in a house by himself and Ananias is sent by the Holy Spirit and here's the message, here's the call. He says, Christ put me in the ministry. But he said, tell Paul I will show him how many great things he must do for my sake.

Is that what it says? Is that what it says, folks? No, tell him that I'm going to show him the great things, not just things he's going to say, great things he's going to suffer. And then Paul goes on to say, we all having this ministry. All have this ministry.

Why did Paul say Christ enabled me, counting me faithful, before he says God laid this ministry of suffering upon me? Because he said, what he's saying, I have God's promise that he's going to be my enabler to be faithful through it all. And the Greek word there, enabler, is a continuous supply of strength. What he's saying, not only did he tell me he's going to take me through great suffering, but he says, I'm going to give you more than sufficient strength.

I'm going to give you everything you need to go through it. I'm going to enable you so that you can be faithful in this ministry. You will not be approached, reproached.

You will not give in. You're going to be the testimony. Now, how did Paul look upon his ministry? Did he consider himself put in the ministry because of the manner of his preaching? Hardly.

He said, I don't preach with enticing words. And he was accused of not being well understood. In fact, Peter said, he writes some things that are hard to understand.

He didn't judge it by his preaching nor his teaching. He didn't judge it by any of his wisdom because he said that was all done. He had thrown away all of the worldly wisdom, the earthly wisdom, and all of the things he had learned of his skills and how to use psychology, whatever it may be.

These things are all gone. So how does he judge his calling? How does he judge his ministry? Oh, not by the standards we have today. You know, how many of you have in church and what have you done? Show, what can you show? I get so weary of that.

That is not God's plan. It is not the scriptural way that God looks at ministry whatsoever. My speech was not with enticing words, he said.

His ministry, listen to me closely, Paul's ministry was the outshining of Christ produced in him through great sufferings. It is how he reacted. It is what the world saw of his reactions to his sufferings.

It was the sweetness, the outshining of Jesus Christ. And Paul said, I live, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me. He said, yes, you see a human being, but I want you to know that God is taking me through great sufferings and all of those sufferings have produced the nature, the spirit, the character of Christ.

It is the character of Christ, you see. Only the enabler could do this. Only the Holy Spirit could take me through what I have been through with a song, with a testimony of victory.

Paul impacted his age and he is still impacting our age today by the way he responded to his sufferings, by the way he glorified the Lord in his sufferings. Let me give you Paul's ministry. Here it is.

We sang about this morning. I am troubled on every side, but not distressed. That means I am not crushed by it.

Yes, I am hurting, but it is not going to crush me. I am perplexed. Yes, I do not understand it, but I am not in despair over it.

I am persecuted, but I am sure not forsaken. I have been cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in my body.

That is his ministry. Paul was no superman. He knew what few other men knew about despair.

There were times he thought he could not make it, despair unto death he called it. Sudden trouble that came to him that overwhelmed him. I want to go to 2 Corinthians now, the first chapter, to slip over the first chapter.

2 Corinthians, first chapter, beginning of verse 8. For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia? We were pressed out of Masia, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life. We had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will deliver us. He also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us, he's calling their prayer for him as a gift, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many on our behalf.

Pressed down beyond all strength, utterly at a loss to explain it, at the point of believing it was all over, but in his most trying time he remembers his ministry. A world is watching me. All my friends are watching me.

I've preached a lot about God's power to keep. I've told everybody how Jesus comforts and the Holy Spirit comforts, and now I have a world watching me. And suddenly his ministry that God has given to him rises up in faith, and he cries out in so many words, and we trust in God who raises the dead.

And then he tells the Corinthian church, it was your prayers that helped, enabled me to come through with the song of victory. Ye also helping together by prayer for us. Folks, don't take lightly this matter of praying for your brothers and sisters in need.

Don't just take it lightly and say, I'm going to pray for you, and then while you're driving in a car or in a moment you remember, just you flash a little prayer to the Lord. No. Paul says, I came through this by the work of the Holy Spirit and by your help.

You prayed for me, and it helped me, and it brought me through. And folks, our family knows what that's all about. Many of you know what that's all about.

Those 30 trying days in her home, in the last hour as we gathered around the bed, she was breathing her last breaths. We were all holding hands and singing, God is so good. God is so good.

And in that moment, I'm telling you, we felt the power of the prayers of Saints of God. It was just as real as the breath we were breathing. And I thank so many here and all over the country.

We've been receiving calls and emails from all over the world. So many, many prayed. We thank God for that.

But Paul said, he said, you're also helping together by prayer for us. He said, that was a gift. Because you gave us that gift, we're able to glorify God.

This ministry is glorifying God because there's a testimony now. We came out of this. It didn't cross us.

The world didn't have, the devil didn't have the pleasure of seeing us coming apart. Folks, listen to me very closely now. The time is coming, I believe it's even now, when the only message that's going to impact a world that's gone insane is this ministry that I'm speaking about.

I'm going to go into it a little deeper, but I want you to follow. I want to make this statement again. The time is coming and it's even here now.

The only message that's going to impact an insane world or the atheist, Muslims, whoever it may be, is this ministry that I'm speaking of. Why don't you go to 2 Timothy, the fourth chapter, and let me prove it to you. 2 Timothy, the fourth chapter.

I want to start at verse 1 and read the first five verses. I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead as appearing in his kingdom, preach the word, be instant in season out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering a doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lust they shall heap to themselves teachers having itching ears.

They shall turn away their ears from the truth and they shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of the ministry. Now look at me and listen closely.

In the annex, wherever you may be, listen closely. The time is here now. And the Bible said that men are going to be so given over to their lust, what is given so over to hearing messages, having itching ears and creating teachers that will minister to their own lust.

He said they're not going to endure sound doctrine, but he said yes, go ahead and preach sound doctrine. Yes, reproof is needed. He said preach the word, be instant in season out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering a doctrine.

But then in the next verse he said the time is coming, it's not going to work. They're not going to hear. They will not endure sound doctrine.

They're not going to endure sound doctrine. They're going to turn away their ears to the truth and shall be turned unto fables. The time is coming that no amount of preaching, no amount of doctrine is going to get through to these hard hearts.

So they're going to turn away their ears. So what ministry is it that will reach them? What ministry is going to reach these? Folks, I believe we've come to this point, not only here in the United States, but worldwide. Oh, bless God, there is a ministry.

There is a ministry that reaches atheists, that reaches Muslims, and the more, the closer we get to the coming of the Lord, and you've heard it from this pulpit. You heard it last Sunday, understood very strongly from Pastor Carter, and you've been hearing it from Pastor Neal and all the pastors. You've been hearing it.

The hard times are coming. Difficult times are coming. What is the ministry that is going to have an impact? It is going to be the outshining of Christ in and through deep, hard suffering in the lives of the redeemed.

I say it again, it's going to be the outshining of Christ. It's going to be how you and I as believers, who for years and centuries have boasted on the glory and the power of our God and our Christ. When all these things begin to happen, and everything is being shaken, and when your life is being twisted and turned in by sickness or disease, when your family is being shaken, everything is being shaken, only the outshining of Christ, only that victory that is not just in words, but in deeds.

Men and women who have been through the fire and they've come out, they have endured the pain and the suffering. I leaned over to Pastor Carter doing a song that was sung this morning. It says, I'm giving up my pain and trouble, and I said, well, I'm getting up and preaching.

I'm going to embrace my pain and suffering. I didn't see too much Scripture in that one part. It's not because I want it to happen, because I know there's no other way for the character of Christ to be produced in me.

No other way. Even Christ learned obedience by the things He suffered. But watch thou in all things endure afflictions.

Do you know what he's really saying? Be careful now, the world's watching you. You're going to endure afflictions. But be careful that you don't, listen, don't discredit everything you preached.

Don't discredit everything you have testified to this world about the keeping, comforting power of the Holy Ghost. Don't discredit it. The moment of time when something comes into your life, suddenly, unexpectedly, it comes into all of our lives.

It's going to come to yours. It comes to all of us. It's going to come.

He said everything's going to be shaken. It's going to come. He's not the author of it, but when it comes, the testimony, he said, do the work of an evangelist.

You know, when I was a young preacher, I thought it'd be so wonderful to go through the hospital corridors and have faith. And I said, boy, what an evangelism that would be. I'd just go and lay hands on them and people get up off the beds all over the hospital.

And I said, why not? That's what the Bible, you know, Christ is the healer and all of that. Let me ask, let me illustrate this. Who is the real evangelist? Here comes down the hospital corridor, a young preacher who's never had any pain or suffering in his life.

He's got a good Bible under his hand and he's a sincere young man and he walks into a room with an atheist who's suffering and he opens the scripture and he says, God sent me here and I want to tell you that without Christ you're going to hell. And he gives the scripture. Now, folks, I'm not putting down hospital visitation.

Hospital visitation is a high calling. And this church is deeply involved, marvelous involved in that. But which one is the evangelist? This young man who's told to leave the room because he's not working in wisdom and God hasn't really sent him and he really doesn't have the word.

He's never really experienced the kind of pain this man has because this man's just had a heart operation and he's here talking about something a man doesn't even understand. But you see across the hall there's a woman who's had a double mastectomy. She's had a kidney removed and she can hardly walk and she's been in a wheelchair and she lights up the room and every nurse loves to go into the room because there's something in that room.

And there's a Jewish doctor that can't wait to come there every day and sit and he said, I want to know the secret. How can you have such peace and joy? What's the secret? Tell me which one's doing the work of an evangelist. Paul said watch because the whole world's looking at you.

All your co-workers, everybody's watching how you react. Are you going to complain? Are you going to just go and dump your problem on everybody you see? During Tippi's last 30 days with us, there was a workman that was coming. We had some work being done and he would come once or twice a week and he knew there was a little girl in there dying.

And after three weeks he went home and told his wife, he says, look there's something going on in that house. He said, I don't know what it is. He said, I want what it is.

And nobody would preach to him, not a single verse given to him. We just loved him. He'd look at our faces.

What was the ministry? Me getting down on my knees beside him and say, are you saved brother? You're smoking, don't you understand? You're killing your lungs and God said your body's the temple of the Holy

Ghost. Folks, I'm not mocking, I'm not putting any of that down, but you see how far away we've gotten from true ministry. The ministry here right now is that I am telling the world that I have a Christ in me, that I have a spirit of God in me that can take me to anything the world can throw at me.

Not through human strength. Doesn't mean you don't cry. I've cried a river of tears.

Folks, you come out of it, look up, and don't you ever dare say to God, ever. What a cruel thing, what a cruel thing. Now beloved, before I close I want to tell you something.

Everybody in this building, everyone hearing the sound of my voice, we're all changing. One way or another we're changing. You are in the process of changing.

There's a transfiguration taking place in all of our lives. Our character is formed and changed by what obsesses us. Whatever has your heart, whatever your eyes have fixed, the one thing that you're going after, that's going to form your character.

Folks, I have seen the changes that come to the homosexual, especially those who are just engaging in the lifestyle. For example, there were men, two years ago, when Fifth Avenue, there were numbers of gays who stood by, and one of those parades that I was there watching, and there were homosexual men, business men that said, I would never, I never ever want to march in that march. No exhibitionism for me.

I will never be an exhibitionist. And two years later, they're leading the parade half naked. I have seen, in the homosexual lifestyle, the changes in appearance, voice, countenance, and then suddenly a boldness to sin without fear, in your face kind of sin, that you see the degeneration, you see the character changing.

Nothing changes a man or a woman quicker than pornography. Nothing. Because first it's a girly magazine, and then finally it goes down, down, down to the pits of hell into child pornography.

The character changes. The adulterer, he's honest, or she's honest, and for a number of years is married and loves her children. And she'd tell you at one time when she was honest, or he was honest, I love my children, I would never give up my children, and then you watch the change in their character until they can walk away from their own children.

Both men and women walk away without shame, without one iota of conviction, because their character, they've been metamorphosed into another person. Whatever you're feeding your soul on is changing you. It's affecting you.

We're all being changed, the Scripture says. Slothful, lazy Christians. Oh folks, I tell you, and I'm going to close in just a minute.

One thing I dread more than anything else, if anything puts the fear of God in my heart, is that either through vacations, thank God for vacations, or just having a long period of ease where there's no demands made upon me. I become lazy. I'm not into the Word, and I don't have that time of beholding His face.

Then I know that the growth is fucked. And I want to tell you, you start going back the other way. And I tell you, you can lose the very vision until the face of Jesus just begins to fade away.

I would rather die. I don't ever want that to happen in my life. Say, God, do whatever you have to do to keep me on my face in the Holy of Holies.

I'm going to give you one last gift. I'm going to tell you again before I close. If you're going through a hard time, now if you're facing a trial, the Lord has just put you in the ministry.

So be careful. The Scripture says that you do not bring an offense to that ministry by turning into a sniveling, complaining coward. You may not think that you have the strength, but I'm going to tell you something, folks, you better be prepared.

If you're not seeking God now, for example, you get a telephone call. I've had numbers of them and suddenly everything changed. Just think of how quick it happens.

Ten minutes from the Florida landing, families are all gathered around, everybody's happy, great smiles on their face, and suddenly the word comes, they're gone. They're gone. You see, you have to prepare.

You have to have the character before the impact. So now the call to this church and all God's people, prepare your heart. Your ministry now is to get alone and behold my face, worship me, get to know me, and you'll be ready for anything.

And out of that will come this outshining, this ministry of outshining, of peace and rest and joy in the Holy Ghost. Here's the last Scripture, giving no offense in anything that the ministry be not blamed. No offense.

Don't be an offense by reacting just like the world reacts. Oh, folks, I have seen people coming apart, going in the hospital so much recently, and funeral parlors, and seeing people screaming. No consolation.

They have nothing. And folks, the time is coming. Many of you will fall apart because you have not been beholding His face.

That's your ministry. That's mine. When I get to heaven, the Lord, when He opens a book, He's not going to be talking about any building that I was enabled to build or any institution.

He's not going to talk about any of the crusades. He's not going to talk about that. He's going to talk about the outshining.

We'll talk about the character. He's going to talk about how I responded. But in all things, approving ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience in afflictions, patience in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in strife, in imprisonment, the sorrowful, but always rejoicing as poor but making many rich.

How do you make people rich? You make it rich by when atheists and Muslims stand by amazed. What's the secret? How can they take it? Where did they get that peace? Where did they get that strength? Where did they get that rest? That's the ministry. If all of it is an inquiry, it opens up the door and then you can tell them what a ministry that is.

I ask God to give me that. And if you're suffering or headed for suffering, God has put you in the ministry where you stand. I'm asking for those that came this morning in the annex in here, in the main auditorium, in the overflow roof.

You came here this morning carrying anguish and trepidation and fear. It may be a financial disaster that's looming ahead of you. Some of you may be facing a situation.

You say, I don't know how I'm going to take it. I don't want it to overwhelm me. I'm telling you, if you love the Lord, you've been walking with Him, you may think that you'll fail.

You may think that you won't have it. But sometimes I've seen some of the most fragile, most tender people become like Gibaltars, Rock of Ages, because the Holy Spirit came and gave strength they didn't know was possible for them to have. If you're here with fear, you're facing something.

I don't know if it's a divorce, you have some family problems. There's a whole catalog of things that may be. But if you're here this morning, you carry this burden.

The Lord, the Holy Spirit doesn't want you to walk out. You're among friends. You have pastors and you have saints around you that care to invite you to get out of your seat.

You may have walked into this church this morning. You say, I don't even know why I'm here. Or somebody may have invited you.

But you know what you're going through. You know what you're facing. And you want Jesus to give you the power, the strength to endure.

Wherever you're up in the balcony, I'm even going to invite those that are in the annex. You can go to the hall. They'll tell you how to get into this auditorium.

You can walk down this aisle. Here in the auditorium, up in the balcony, you go to the stairs on either side. You say, Pastor David, I'm in despair.

I've got fear. And I want to be a true minister. I don't want to bring reproach on the Lord.

And I don't have the strength in myself. Now, if you don't know Jesus, if you're backslidden, you can follow these that come down. Nobody will know why you came forward.

The Holy Ghost knows. Come move in tight, if you will. Please make room for those who are coming as we sing it.

Oh, how I love Jesus. Let Him minister to you. Let Him minister to you.

Now, just open up your heart and He'll do that. Wherever you're at, the Lord wants to meet your need this morning. He wants to lift this burden from you.

He wants to give you a sense of His love, a sense of His great care. Lord Jesus, we're convinced of your love, your great tender love for your children. You will never put anything on us to hurt us.

You never allow anything in our lives, oh Lord, but that which is meant to produce Christ's likeness in us. But everything that comes into our lives, if we're in trust with you, if we're walking with you and we're just loving you and resting in your promises and your word, we need not fear. We need not fear anything that happens in this physical body.

We need not fear what happens around us or to us. Because you said you have everything under control and you know what you're doing. Oh Lord Jesus, send a comforter.

Send the comforter this morning. Not when everybody came forward. And those in the auditorium and in the annex and who have been touched by just maybe one statement or one thing that was said in the message and the Lord's trying to reach your heart and encourage you before you walk out.

Why don't you just lift up your hands to the Lord right now. Right now. And tell the Lord Jesus that you trust that He'll do only what is right in you.

And say, Jesus, give me the strength of the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, I pray you come down now to everyone that's reaching out to you. We are changed as by the Spirit of the Lord, not by our own strength, but by the Holy Ghost, by the Holy Spirit who abides in us.

Oh, blessed Holy Spirit, come now and fill every vessel with faith. Fill every vessel with confidence that in the trial we're going to be transfigured. We're going to be changed to the character of Jesus Christ.

And we're going to have a testimony, oh Lord, not just in word, but by the very reaction of our lives, the outshining of Jesus, the outshining of Christ in the trial and in the hard time for those, Lord, that are facing financial disaster. Those, oh Lord, who say, I am nearly being crushed. Oh God, undergird them now, give them faith and let them know God said, I'll never fail you.

I'll never let you down. God, for those that are facing cancer, those facing marital problems, those that are facing all kinds of physical health problems, God, remove all fear. Bring the peace of God.

Oh, Holy Ghost, come and minister to your church. Now, if you're coming to Jesus and you're backslidden, you know what to do. Just say, Jesus, here I am.

I surrender and I yield. Holy Spirit, come, make Christ real to my heart this morning. Just yield.

Father, we thank you for your faithfulness. We thank you for your mercy and your goodness and your grace. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Glory, glory to Jesus.

Let's just worship him. Worship the Lord. Lord, we worship you.

We give you thanks. We give you praise. Lift the burden of your children.

Oh, blessed comfort or common comfort now. You said, I'll never leave you. I'll never forsake you.

Yea, though I walk through the valley in the shadow of death, thou art with me. You are with me. Say it out loud.

You're with me, Lord. Again, you're with me, Lord. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. This is the conclusion of the message.

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