

The New Covenant Part 4 of 6 Walking in the Power of the New Covenant

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson emphasizes the importance of understanding and walking in the power of the New Covenant through faith and righteousness.

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Topics: "Holy Spirit", "New Covenant"

Description

This sermon emphasizes walking in the power of the new covenant, highlighting God's loving heart and commitment to protect His children from trials and temptations. It discusses the importance of surrendering human efforts and relying on the Holy Spirit's power. Through examples from the Old Testament like David and Jacob, it illustrates how walking in the covenant brings strength, relief, and power in life.

Transcript

I want to talk to you about walking in the power of the new covenant, walking in the power of the new covenant. Heavenly Father, show us your loving heart this morning. Show us the loving heart of Jesus and the great love and compassion of the Holy Spirit and the commitment that you've made to keep your children from the problems and the trials and the temptations and the terror that comes in these final days.

We're not on our own, oh God, from the foundation of the world you've made provision. God open our eyes and our understanding. We can't see this in our own power, we can't see it in our own strength.

I can't convey it in my own power and strength. I can't produce an anointing, I can't produce unction. I am but a voice, I am but a channel, oh God in Jesus' name send your Holy Ghost.

Give us ears to hear and eyes to see and a heart to yield to you we pray. God send truth that sets us free we pray, hallelujah, amen. Now in the Old Testament, now folks, please, you have got to put on, my teacher at school said put on your thinking caps.

We like to be spoon fed, we like just little bits and tidbits and try to, we have such a short interest span. You're never going to get this unless you ask the Holy Ghost to help you. No matter how eloquent or how sadly I present this, it's not going to be understood without the anointing of the Holy Spirit on your ears as

well as on my tongue.

So pray for that as we approach this incredible subject of the covenant. Now in the Old Testament, it was the practice of Godly men to lay hold of the covenant to find relief and strength in their terror times when there were difficulties and troubles that they couldn't understand. They always laid hold of the covenant, it was in the covenant they found their strength and relief.

It's all through the Old Testament. Take David for example, David in his last days is looking back over his life. He's looking back at all the trouble, the distress, especially caused by his sin in his own life and in his family.

What tragic times, there's no life that seems more troubled than David's life, a man after God's own heart and even in his final days he can't understand why he was so tempted and so tried with fiery trials and he said, my sins are so innumerable, they're more than the hairs on my head. And yet in his last days he said, although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. He said, I know one thing, God gave me a promise and I have walked in my life in the power of that and now in my dying days I die in the power of a promise given to me from God that I'm going to have a sure house until the end of time, that someday my descendants will rule and reign on this earth.

And he wasn't thinking about his own name, he was thinking of the Messiah. All of these men, all of the Old Testament prophets and kings like David understood if they walked with God that one was coming to redeem mankind. He found relief, he said, no matter what my condition may be, no more I see.

It may not be what I want it to be, but God has made me a promise and I've cast myself on that promise and that produced power in his life. Consider Jacob, if you will, with me. His father sends him away to Patam Aram to find a wife.

It's a long journey, it's going to be set with dangers from wild animals, from thieves. It's long, it's hot, it's a long journey. And you read the story and something seems strange to the human eye.

This father, Isaac, is a very wealthy man. He has cattle, he has camels, he has mules, he has riches, he has servants. Sends his son away with nothing.

He sends him away with nothing. In fact, Jacob's own testimony was, I had nothing but my staff. When I crossed Jordan, I went with my staff only.

Now why would a rich father send away his son on an errand of his own choosing in his own direction and not give him anything of material benefit? Why didn't he give him a few servants to go with him? Why not a camel to travel on? Why not a little bit of finances, a little bit to establish him when he finds a wife so he can buy some cattle and a piece of land and start over just like his father had? But yet his father had inherited so much. You look at that and say, well, he sent him away poverty-stricken. But no, he didn't send him away poverty-stricken.

Isaac gave him something worth more than all the cattle on a thousand hills, gave him something more valuable than all the riches of gold and silver on the earth. He sent him away with a covenant blessing of his grandfather Abraham. I picture him laying his hands on his head and he's saying, you know about your grandfather, how God revealed himself as God Almighty.

That was the first time he was revealed as God Almighty. And when he said, what will you give me, God Almighty? God says, I give you myself. I'm all you need.

You will need nothing else. I am. I'm everything you need.

That was the revelation that was given to him, and it was such a powerful revelation. He said, I will be your shield. No one can harm you.

And Isaac lays his hand on Jacob's head and he prays that same prayer. And God Almighty bless you, Jacob. Make you fruitful and multiply you and give you the blessing of Abraham.

You see, his father didn't want him to be able to go out in the world and say, I have heard of a covenant. I have heard that a covenant was given to my grandfather. My grandfather was delivered from all of his enemies.

My grandfather told me that God was his protection. My father Isaac taught me these things. No, God wanted him through his father Isaac to have his own revelation.

Isaac knew that God would not fail him because God had made him a promise. He stood on this promise had given to Abraham. I am going to bless you and keep you and be God Almighty to you and all your children.

Your sons, your daughters, your grandkids, your great-grandkids, your great-great-grandfather and great-great-grandchildren, as far as you can see, I am going to be God Almighty. That's all you need. Whatever danger, whatever enemies, it doesn't matter where it's a bear, a lion, doesn't matter where they're thieves, doesn't matter whether your relatives cheat you.

Whatever happens, you've got a promise. And you're going to live on that promise. You're going to cast your life on that promise.

He goes toward Paddan Arab and he lays down on a rock and he has a dream because you see God, hallelujah, is keeping covenant. The promise he gave to his father and grandfather and to Isaac is now being given to Jacob. There's a ladder, remember? And he sees angels ascending and descending and God Almighty is at the top of the ladder.

You see, he's going to be able to say now, oh, I heard about the covenant. My grandfather enjoyed it and all the blessing walked in the power of it. My father had a revelation of it.

He walked in the power of it and it kept him all these years. He's been blessed and kept and protected from his enemies and he's been drawn closer to God. He knows God the Father.

Now Jacob can say, I have seen the covenant because God came down to Jacob and said, the Lord said, I, to Jacob, I am the Lord God of Abraham, your father and the God of Isaac. And behold, I am with you now in all places, wherever you go and I will bring you again into this land. I will not leave you until I've done everything that I spoke to you about.

Never leave you. Folks, if we've got better promises in the new covenant and God says under the old covenant, I'll never leave you until I fulfill every promise I've made to you. I will never leave you.

I'll never forsake you. I'll keep you from the wicked one. How glorious these promises are.

Now God makes covenant with man simply to show how committed he is to protect and keep and preserve us from all the powers of the enemy, from devil himself. That's why God makes covenant. Covenant is God trying to convince his people they're loved.

It's almost as though God comes at us as if he couldn't be trusted and makes these incredible promises and then swears by himself because there's no greater one to swear by. God makes covenant because he's yearning to be God to his people, to be almighty in their behalf. God is doing everything in his power and authority to get us to trust him and cast our lives and our future on his word.

You see, God wasn't satisfied that Jacob had a secondhand revelation of the covenant. And folks, I can tell you right now, God's not interested in you just getting it from a sermon from this pulpit. I can preach about the covenant, Pastor Carter, and others can preach about it.

You can get tapes and you can read books and you will never understand it. These will just be words of mystery to you unless there is something in your heart that is craving and yearning to know Jesus in a greater way. There has to be a yearning and craving in your heart to walk in holiness and righteousness in a dark age.

And the darker it gets, the more you see violence, the more you see mass hysteria, the more you see the arrogance of the wicked. There has to be something in your heart that rises up and says, Oh God, I want to be a shining light. I don't want to go this way.

I want to be a witness to your holiness, your power to keep people in the darkest of ages. Let me remind you of some of the great promises of the covenant, new covenant. Now folks, there are only two covenants mentioned in the New Testament, the old and the new.

They represent two ways of approaching God, two ways of serving God. The old covenant has to do with works. It has to do with sweat.

It has to do with striving to please God by human nature, human willpower. Now you're under one of these covenants. You're either in the new covenant or you're in the old covenant.

If you're a believer, you're in one of these covenants and you have to choose. There are some of you still striving to please God in the flesh. I want to show you some, we'll come back to that, but I want to show you first some of the great promises of the new covenant.

I want you to go to Luke, the first chapter if you will please. Start on verse 67 if you will. Luke 1 beginning with verse 67, I'm going to read five or six verses.

And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost. Now remember John Baptist has just been named. His father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost and prophesied saying, now folks listen, God has loosed the tongue of this man and the spirit of God has come upon him and he's preaching covenant.

He's preaching covenant. God has remembered his covenant. Listen to it please.

Verse 68, blessed be the Lord God of Israel who has visited and redeemed his people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David. As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets who have been since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies. Now these are the promises of the new covenant.

That we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all them that hate us to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham. That he would grant unto us that we'd be delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life. Look at it.

To serve him in righteousness and holiness without fear all the days of our life. Now think about that for a minute. God said he's remembering his covenant.

Look at me please. When man was just a thought in the heart of God, long before the world was ever created, the blessed Trinity, God Father, God Son, and God the Holy Ghost, covenant with each other to plan and put in place a fail-safe commitment, a fail-safe agreement, a fail-safe contract between themselves. Not with man at the time.

That would come to those who were united to Christ. But there was a fail-safe plan in the very councils of the heavenlies. An incredible plan was devised.

So incredible when you see it. You're not going to be swayed by every wind and wave of doctrine. You'll not be swayed by your feelings anymore.

You have a foundation and the devil doesn't want you to understand covenant because he knows it's going to be the end of your fear and your guilt. And it's going to be a security to you like you have never known or understood before. The plan of salvation that was devised in heaven long before the world was created, when man was just a thought in the heart of God, the plan of redemption was made.

And that plan of redemption was not just an exit plan. Should the devil defeat and ruin God's creation? It was not... I heard a young preacher saying, with all pathos and tears in his eyes, he said, God looked down over the balcony of heaven and he saw the devil deceiving Adam, his perfect creation. And he turned to his son and said, we've got problems.

What are we going to do? And Jesus, his son, said, well, Father, I'll go and I'll atone for sin, and when you're ready. And he said, God hurried and sent him to the cross and he quickly died and bled and let all humanity be lost. That's nonsense.

Absolute gooey nonsense. The new covenant was ordered and all things ensured before the world was made. In this mutual covenant between God, Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, it was agreed that there would be a plan.

Christ was the center of the plan, but that plan would never be... No created being would ever believe, would ever bring themselves to accept it. It was so full of grace and love and mercy, no one could accept it. So they had to be taught.

The old covenant was given to bring man to believe the blessings of the new. Man could never believe that God could just so love him and forgive him, that he would take his sins, that God himself would take the sins, that God would become man. You see, at the time, Jesus was a spirit.

He did not have as a body, yet Jesus said, I've prepared for you a body. In fact, Paul the Apostle said he's the express image of the invisible God. We picture Jesus as a man walking around in the councils of heaven.

He was an invisible spirit, just as the Father, the same essence. God, Father, God, Son, Holy Ghost, Spirit. But all personalities, all with minds, divine minds.

The plan was this, that the Holy Spirit would move under the old covenant upon certain men, and they would write, and they would reveal what was devised in their council before the world began. It was all of love. The Holy Ghost would be the missionary of love to come down and try to convince men they were loved.

No matter how they failed him, no matter how they sinned against him, the Holy Ghost would come down eventually and set up his power base within the human body. Oh, glory to God. He would send a prophet before the new covenant to prepare the hearts of the people.

You know that to be John the Baptist. Now, we know now that as God has revealed it in his scripture that this was all pre-planned. It was all in the council of God.

Many, many eons before the world was created and this galaxy put in place, Jesus would come as the first of a new humanity. He would be given a body. He would be incarnate in man, and he would take the sins of the whole world, and he would atone for those sins.

He would be the beginning of a new humanity that was drawn into him a mystical body. He would never fear this man Jesus, would never have to fear the devil. He would not have to have his own mind or his own will.

He'd just do the will of his Heavenly Father. That was agreed. These were terms that were agreed upon.

I've preached that before, but there were terms between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This is revealed now here to Zacharias. God is revealing by the Holy Spirit what had been predetermined.

Blessed be the Lord God, for he has raised up a horn. That means an atonement for salvation for us, that we may be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us. An oath he swore to thy father Abraham, that he would grant to us that we being delivered out of the hand of the enemy.

Who's the enemy? The devil himself and all the demons of hell. Delivered out of their hands that we might serve him without fear. In holiness, righteousness before him all the days of our life.

Now these are promises just almost too incredible to believe. You know the rest of the promises of the New Covenant in Hebrews 8 chapter. He said, I'm going to put my laws in your heart.

He said, you're going to see and hear things that some of the teachers have been to seminars for years will never know or understand. I'm going to reveal them to babes. I'm going to reveal myself and babes.

There are some of you sitting here now that have never had a secular education, but you know more about Jesus than any seminary president because you've been walking with him and talking. The Holy Ghost has revealed him to you. He said, I'm going to be almighty God to you just as I was to Abraham.

You see, all the promises of the Old Covenant were encompassed in the new and many new ones were added. Wonderful promises beyond comprehension. God says, I'm going to be merciful to your sins.

I'm going to forgive and then I'm going to forget them. All these wonderful promises. Every promise in the book is a covenant promise.

All planned before the world was made. Hallelujah. You still coming with me? I'm asking you now, are you enjoying the provisions and promises of the New Covenant? Let me ask you, are you living without fear all your days in righteousness and holiness before the Lord, not your own but his? A few amens.

I'm not painting the New Covenant walk as one without suffering and trouble. It rains on the just and the unjust and many of the afflictions of the righteous. But I'm saying if your life is filled with fear and dread and there's no power to resist the enemy, there's no growing strength in you, no drawing near to the Lord, then you're not walking in covenant.

You're living far beneath your privileges and you're like those starving lepers right within reach of all the provisions that they need. Zacchaeus said God has remembered his covenant. Didn't mean that he forgot it.

God said, I remember. He said, I remember this is the time, this is the moment in history that is to go into effect. And that's what Zacharias is saying.

The New Covenant is coming into effect. God has remembered it from the foundation of the world. The Lord desires for us to lay hold of the covenant.

I read Isaiah 56, 4. Choose the things that please me and take hold of my covenant. Take hold of it. If you've not entered the New Covenant and walking in its power, if you have not really wanted to understand it, then I would hope the question you have in your mind now is how can I lay hold of the covenant? How can I do it? How can I come into the covenant? How can I walk in that power? I totally disagree with the hyper-Calvinists who say there are no conditions to the covenants of God, especially the New Covenant.

Their teaching is that God does it all. Even the faith that is necessary has to come from God, that he has to instill the faith, and you can do nothing but wait until God acts. I'm telling you that there are conditions to the covenant.

This covenant has nothing to do with lukewarm Christians who just want to escape hell. Nothing at all. Forget it.

Don't even go another, just drop out at this point. If you don't have a heart for God, if you don't want to change your ways, if you don't want to walk before him in righteousness, not in striving, but if you don't want this wonderful gift of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which alone will stand before the Father, this covenant is a vehicle. It is something God has given to us in the way of promises to enable the thirsting, hungering heart to come into fullness.

There's nothing to do with the double-minded. Has nothing to do with those who want to hold on to their sins. It's for those who are sick of their sins, sick of temptation, falling, sick of all of the worldly ways and sick of their striving.

It's only for those. Now, let me show you what I believe are the conditions of coming into the new covenant. First of all, there has to be an absolute final renunciation of all confidence in the flesh to please God.

Total renouncing of all human power, effort, willpower, whatever it may be, to try to merit something in the eyes of God. You cannot come into the new covenant, you will never understand it until you have come to

this place where you realize that with all of your promises, God has said, I don't care how sorry you are, I don't care how long your prayers are, I don't care how many promises you make, I don't care how you sweat, I don't care what you do to try to cut off things in your own power and strength. God says, you're going to renounce it because it doesn't stand, it has no merit, it has no meaning to me.

I don't accept it. When I was a boy, we had little toy-led soldiers. Now, some of you over 60, some of you men will understand what I'm talking about.

You got a big bar of lead, and there was a little smelter, and you had little molds, and you made your soldiers, and then you painted them. I had a whole army. Little toy men and little toy women.

I always put them in the back. They're feeding these soldiers. But you see, I was God.

I could move them and smash them and make them victorious. I could do anything. And you know, that's a concept a lot of people have of God, that we are his toys.

That he created these little men and women to move them about and little battles and struggles and smash anybody he wanted to smash and promote anybody he wanted to promote. Oh, no, no, no, no, no, folks. God, help us to get that concept out of our mind.

We've got to understand that man is his highest creation, the highest expression of his love that God could possibly give. We are an expression of his love. You know, I used to think God made us just to love him.

Yes, yes, but we are an expression of his giving love, God's own love that he gave, that he gave, he gave. I stand before you as an expression of the love of God. And you sit before me as a great expression of the love of God.

I don't care how mean you are. You're still an expression of the love of God. It says of Jesus in Matthew 13, 35, he taught by parables that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet.

I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the earth. You know what the word is saying? Jesus, everything I tell you now is coming out of the eternal counsel before the world was created. What I'm telling you now is what was devised in this counsel in heaven.

I speak you words that come to me before the foundation of the world. Every word he spoke was covenant. Every word he spoke was predetermined in those counsels in heaven.

How sure this is. What a firm foundation. The Lord wasn't shooting from his hip.

He wasn't making it up as he goes. Folks, it's all in divine order. The world may look like it's spinning apart, but everything God is in control.

No surprises. He saw it all. He sees it all.

He knows it all. I don't believe in the limited foreknowledge of God. Hallelujah.

Oh, to have been there, be privy of that counsel and glory before the world was begun, when the Godhead said, now how are we going to make this humanity understand our love? And I'm sure it came from the Son. He said, I'll grow up before you's a tender plant, Father, and I will come to them as a bridegroom. See, the covenant's all about love.

How else could God express his love but by marriage? He said, I'll come as a bridegroom searching for a bride. They'll understand that because they get married. They're going to be getting married and there will be love.

There will be affection. They will understand that. Paul the Apostle didn't concoct this concept of a bride and the church being one as a husband and a wife.

He didn't concoct this doctrine in his own mind about a bride adorned for husband. He didn't concoct any of this great truth that was devised in the eternal counsels of God about him being our husband. In fact, the scripture says, thy maker is thy husband.

The Lord of hosts is his name. That's covenant language right out of the counsels of heaven. Turn, O backsliding children, and say of the Lord, for I am married to you.

I will take one of a city and two of a family and I'll bring you unto Zion. And what about the Song of Solomon? Remember God said in the eternal counsels of glory, he said, the Holy Spirit, you will move upon men. The Holy Spirit agreed, I will move upon men and I will give them the mind of the Father.

And this is the mind of the Father, Song of Solomon. Is God trying to help you understand the new covenant? Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse. He's talking about the bride of Christ, those who are in Christ.

Thou hast ravished my heart with one of your eyes, with one chain of your neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse. How much better is your love to me than wine? God's speaking all through the Bible, old and new.

I love you. Christ comes to prove that love of God. Holy Ghost comes to bring it to the mind and the soul and make it reality.

And I want you to know that in the counsels of heaven, every contingency was considered. Every contingency. And I'll tell you, the divine mind could miss nothing.

What if the bride strays? What if one of the members of this bridehood just leaves the flock and goes? And Jesus said, I'll go after him, Father, and I'll find that one who strays and I'll put him in my arms tenderly. I won't rebuke him, that lamb. I won't chastise it.

I won't beat it. I'll bring it back and restore it to the lamb. What if my servants, my ministers, fall into sin and they're besotted by their sins and they're in despair? And what if they are bound by habits and chains? And Jesus said, I'll go, Father.

I'll release them from their prisons. I'll break every chain. I'll be responsible.

There's nothing that is going on in your life that God and the Holy Ghost and his Son did not take into consideration. God's not surprised by anything going on in your life and mine. He knew it and saw it all.

But what if the Bridehood is tempted by fiery temptations and they fall and commit diverse kinds of sins, besetting sins? Will they be cut off? And it's Jesus who, according to what we know of Scripture now, said, I'll be merciful to their sins and iniquities. That's what the covenant says. They will not be cut off.

I'll be patient, long-suffering, tenderhearted, forgiving. I will be a reconciler, Father. I will reconcile them to you.

I'll bring back all for full restoration who turn to me in hunger. Those who repent, come to me. I will not cast out.

I'll not bruise a bruised reed. I'll not quench a smoking flax. Wherever there's a spark of love, I'll fan it into a fire.

I will quicken the faint-hearted. I will ransom them from the power of the enemy. I'll break all the dominion of sin.

Folks, it's an absolute dishonor to God in his covenant to think that we're cut off from God by every single offense. We are not cut off from God. We are not in his disfavor just because we fall into some kind of failure before God.

Now, if we persist in that, we turn away from all the work of the Holy Spirit and his wooings and his callings, and we willingly, forcefully drive the Holy Ghost out of our hearts, then we have broken covenant. But God's covenant is not fickle. It doesn't rest on every ebb and flow and tide of our healings.

His love is unconditional. Unconditional love. Now, folks, there was one stipulation God made in the covenant that was not negotiable.

Now, I want you to listen closely now. God would accept no... This was determined before the world was begun. Jesus, my son, this is something that can't be negotiated.

This is something that is final. I will accept no other righteousness but yours. Yours alone.

You live the perfect life. You fulfill the old covenant. You fulfill the law.

And then when I bring you back to glory, I'm going to look only at you. There'll be no other man in my presence, no other man that I honor. There'll be no access to me but through you.

There will be no good works of any man on the face of the earth that can do no good works, no amount of praying. None of these will bring any merit. The only merit you can bring to my throne is your merit.

No other blood but your blood. No other sacrifice but you. The prophesied one.

The seed of Abraham, the son of David. No other man. Folks, there's one man in glory and only one man.

And you and I come into the covenant. The covenant was made with Christ the Father and the Holy Ghost. The only way you and I are in it by faith, we are the seed.

God said, everything I give to you, I will give to your seed. I promise to you and your seed, which is his children. Are you a child of Jesus? Have you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ? Folks, every promise in the book is, every promise in the covenant is yours if you're in the covenant.

The Lord says, I will accept no one's righteousness. I don't care if they sweat and try and plead and promise. It's all filthy rags.

I won't accept it. Until you come to the end of that, until you get sick and tired of trying in your own strength, until you get fed up with all of the failed promises, sin confessed, sin confessed, guilt, fear, and trying to struggle and finally give up and say, there is no hope. There is hope.

There is a way out. It's the new covenant. You say, well, then where's the power? I need to overcome sin and temptation.

Where's the power? Well, remember, there was a third party to this council, this covenant, and it was agreed upon by the Trinity, and it was a mission the Holy Ghost gladly received. God said, I will give you as the power. Folks, it is the Holy Ghost in us that is the power of the living God, all power over all sin, all power over human powers, devil's powers, principalities and powers.

All of it is in the power of the Holy Ghost. That's why he said, pray that you receive the Holy Ghost. He comes in and sets up his power base here in this temple, but he cannot do his work until you've given up your work.

And that's why many don't have the power, and they're not walking in the power of the covenant because they're still trying to do the work of the Holy Ghost, and you can't do it. You get along with God in a secret closet and say, Lord, I'm sick and tired of all these broken promises. I'm sick and tired of trying and sweating and not getting anywhere.

I last a week, a month, and I'm right back where I was before. And you finally say, oh, God, I cast myself under the hands and the power of the Holy Ghost, and I believe it. It may be that I have to say like David, I have not yet seen it.

I have not yet experienced in fullness, but you made me a covenant, and I stand on it. I'll live and die on it. If there's any failure still in my life, I go to the covenant.

I go to the Holy Ghost, and I said it's been promised that I, through the Holy Ghost, do mortify the sins of my flesh. I shall live. The Holy Ghost has come to kill and mortify the power of sin in our lives, but he's got to be acknowledged.

The Holy Ghost has promised for this reason. As for me, this is my covenant, saith the Lord. My spirit that is upon thee, he's speaking to his son.

This is what he said. This was told to him in that council meeting before the world was beginning. He said, son, my spirit's upon you.

My words which I put in your mouth shall not depart out of your mouth, nor out of the mouth of your seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forevermore. I will not take away my Holy Spirit. I know what is needed.

The Father said, Holy Ghost, you go, and you take up residence, and you be the power of the covenant. Hallelujah. The Holy Ghost inclines us to obedience.

He prompts us. He reminds us. He's always there speaking and doing when he finds a willing heart to obey his inclination and his desires and his whispers.

Then he acts. How he does it, I don't know. He's got a million ways beyond my thoughts and how to do it.

Hallelujah. Now, folks, if you find all these blessings hard to believe, all this great love of God that way back then he would have devised this wonderful plan just to keep you, just to assure you, just to give you confidence, and not to be afraid all your life so you can serve him in righteousness with no fear whatsoever because of the provisions that he has made. If you find that hard to believe, let me tell you a true story.

Some of you have heard me tell it in part, but let me tell you the rest of the story. I had a young minister friend. A number of years ago, his wife went bad, really bad, out into gross sins.

She started partying, and she would go to bars and get drunk. This man wept and he grieved because he truly loved his wife, so dear to him. He's a godly man.

Finally, she got so bad he'd have to go out, especially Saturday nights before Sunday service, and tour the town trying to find her in bars. He'd find his wife sometimes in the gutter, beaten and bruised, drunk. Didn't even know where she was.

He'd pick her up, take her home, and wash her and clean her up and have his daughter babysit her while he went to church and preached under that burden, drugs. For about two years, it just got worse. She was raped, beaten.

She sold her body in prostitution. Her whole body was marked. One day he called me, called my wife and I. We were in Texas at the time.

He said, Pastor Dave, my wife's been missing a whole week, and I'm such a disappointment. I can't find her. He said, I'm at the end of my rope.

I said, look, I'm gonna FedEx your ticket, and I want you to come to our house. We had a little trailer for missionaries there, a trailer home. He flew in.

We picked him up at Dallas Airport. What a broken man. He said, I can't find her, Brother Dave.

He said, I love her. He told me all about it. I knew her.

I'd known her when she seemed to be so on fire for God and such a wonderful woman, a wonderful wife. He said, I can't find her. He spent a week just praying and weeping before the Lord.

Toward the end of the week, he got a call. He'd left our number with one of his associates. It was from his wife.

She was weeping. She was on the street. She said, please come and get me.

He went and got her. I gave him round-trip tickets, and they came back. My wife's here this morning.

She remembered it well. I've never seen such a mess of a human. She was covered from head to foot with bruises.

She was bleeding. They'd put some patches on her. Her hair was matted.

He had literally picked her up, and in fact, he had to carry her out of the airplane into our car. He went in, and my wife and I went into the trailer where he'd sent her down. He went and got towels, hot towels, and started bathing her.

And with loving care, he started pushing her hair back. He asked Gwen for a comb, started combing her hair. And I'm looking at this man, and I'm saying to myself, I can't do that.

I could never do that. I couldn't accept a woman that's just been manhandled and raped and beaten and drunk and living on the streets. Filthy mess of humanity.

And there he is, tears rolling down his cheeks, and he said, Honey, I love you. I love you. My wife and I wept.

I just went up and said, God, I don't have that kind of love. Now, folks, I'm talking about just human love. And I want you to know that the next week, the strength started to come back to that woman.

Our headquarters at the time was on a 200-acre ranch. And we watched them watching the fields hand in hand. And I watched that man bring love, healing to that wife, how he embraced her, how he forgave her, how he wrapped his arms around her.

And I watched her just blossom. That love drove out all the horribleness. And they prayed together.

And through the power of the Holy Spirit, that woman was totally, absolutely healed. Within two weeks, you would have known her. She was another woman.

The beauty of Christ came upon her. And, folks, that woman became a great wife, a woman who stood beside her preacher husband in prison work. We supported them.

We have all these years. And he just died two years ago, a young man. But she still has reports.

She's carrying on that ministry. And that's been some 20 years now. Now, folks, that's human love.

How much more does our heavenly Father love us? I don't care how beaten you are. I don't care how bloodied you are by sin. I'd be spotted by it.

He said, I'm coming after you. He said, I'll never let you go. He's not willing to let anyone perish.

Now, there's one other, in closing, there is one other requirement, condition to coming into the new covenant. And if you'll come into this now, your life can be changed. There has to be an affectionate response to the wooing of Christ.

There has to be an affectionate response to the wooing of Christ. Now, listen closely before I close. Don't turn, but in Hosea, the second chapter, you find God has just discovered the lewdness, the terrible lewdness of his people.

It's a tremendous discovery. God just said he discovered it. And he begins to judge them.

First of all, he takes all their joy and mirth away from them. And then he dries up all their fields and everything withers. There's no fruit anywhere.

And the people are in a sad condition. But suddenly, the heart of God is moved. And God looks at these people, these lewd, unfaithful people.

And you know what he says? Now, therefore, behold, I'm going to allure her and bring her into the wilderness and speak comfortably to her. And that word allure, entice. She may not want to come, but I'm

going to entice her.

I'm going to take her to the wilderness. I'm going to restore her. He's talking to people, his own people who had become lewd.

They were under his judgment. And God says, now, that's enough. I'm going to allure my bride now into the wilderness.

She's forsaken me, and I'm going to allure her back, and I'm going to speak comfortably, and I'm going to heal her. Now, folks, if you want to know the response, the affectionate response that God wants, I can't explain it, but it's been already explained clearly in the word of God. Do you want to respond to the Lord in the same way he's responding? He has come to you with love, absolutely love.

He has come to us. Now, you have got to respond in like an affectionate love. Folks, the covenant is all about affection.

God's affection for us, our affection for him. That's affectionate. Folks, you can't serve God until you're convinced he loves you.

You can't serve, you can't come into covenant unless you're absolutely convinced by his word that he loves you. Now, the expression of love that God wants is fully explained, and with this I close, in the book of Solomon, Song of Solomon. Now, I don't want you to turn there, but I'm just going to give you three words that I believe are the heart of the Song of Solomon, and it's the response God is looking for to bring you into the power of the covenant.

Come, seek, and yearn for a come unto me. In other words, he says, give me your quality time. He says, how can you say that you love me if you won't even spend time with me? I want to get to know you, and I want you to get to know me.

And he said, I have a garden, and there's an apple tree. And he said, if you'll come and sit under that apple tree, I'll come and minister to you under that apple tree. And you'll find that apple tree mentioned two or three places in the Song of Solomon, in his garden.

That's a secret place, that's communion. How can you say you love Jesus, and you want to have all of these blessings of the new covenant, and you're not even willing to give him an hour a day of your time? You're not willing to ever show affection to him, you won't come? Come. He said, just come, come to me, come to my garden, come to communion.

And secondly, he said, seek me. In fact, Song of Solomon says, God hides himself from his beloved. Those who really want him, he will hide himself for a moment, wanting you to come after him.

He goes to his garden, and he hides, and the scripture says, who is this that cometh from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? Leaning. She's been seeking, and she's found him, now she's leaning on him. How can you lean on him when you're not even near him? Leaning on Jesus.

He said, I want you to lean on my covenant, I want you to lean on my promise, I want you to just lean on my love. Come, seek. Then he said, yearn.

Folks, you've got to have a yearning heart. If God's given me anything, I know, if I don't have anything else, I know he's given me a yearning heart. I get so hungry to be with him.

If I, even when I go on a, I'm leaving next Sunday night for three and a half weeks, I think I'm preaching 25 times in May to ministers' conferences in France, and Balkans, and Romania, and Poland. If my team's around or others are around, I just have to get away, find some place to get alone with him, because I know I can't preach, I know I'm not worth being a husband, I'm miserable without that time with him, that yearning. My beloved put his hand on the door, and my bowels were moved for him.

He said, my innermost being, all he did was put his hand on the door, and I knew he was there, and my bowels moved within me. That's affection. Do you love him this morning? Do you want to walk in the power of the new covenant? Then you have got to move out of the old covenant.

The old covenant has done its work with this, I close, it's done its work when you say, I can't do it in my own strength. Lord, I come to you. I cast myself into your loving arms, and folks, that's what faith is all about.

It's a leap. You leap out of the old covenant, you leap out of your works, you leap out of everything, so I pass that by. I'm coming to you, Jesus.

I am simply going to trust your word. I have cast my life on this covenant. I have cast my life on his great love for me.

Hallelujah. When I've sinned, when I've failed him, I run to his love. I run to his promise of forgiveness, and I have a repentant heart, and he brings great restoration.

Will you stand, please?

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