

# The New Covenant Part 5 of 6 the Cross and the Covenant

by David Wilkerson

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*The cross of Jesus Christ totally annihilates all works of the flesh and salvation is by faith in Christ alone.*

**Duration:** 52:06

**Scripture:** Matthew 18:1

**Topics:** "The Cross", "New Covenant"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the profound revelation of the cross and the new covenant as depicted in Matthew 18. It emphasizes the annihilation of works of the flesh by the cross, highlighting the stumbling block it poses to legalism and the need for childlike faith and uncomplicated devotion in the new covenant. The sermon warns against offending new believers with man-made doctrines and emphasizes the sufficiency of Christ's finished work on the cross for salvation.

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## Transcript

Please go to Matthew 18, if you will, please. Matthew 18. This could be my final message on covenant.

I don't know unless God opened something else, but this summer I'll be finishing the book entitled, The New Covenant Unveiled. My message this morning, the cross and the new covenant. First, 11 verses of Matthew 18.

Now first reading, you'll not see the covenant at all probably. Some of you may, but when I'm done I want to show you both the cross and the new covenant in this unusual passage. And at the same time came the disciples unto Jesus saying, who's the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him and set him in the midst of them and said, Verily I say unto you, except you be converted and become as little children, you should not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same as greatest in the kingdom of heaven, and whoso shall receive one such child in my name receiveth me, but whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offenses, for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh. Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, I'm reading you one of the most misunderstood verses in the Bible.

Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, cast them from thee, it is better for thee to enter into life, halt or maim rather than have two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. If your eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee, it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. Take heed that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

The final verse, for the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost. Praise the Lord. Give me a little more monitor if you will, please.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for the word of the living God. I pray you give us hearing ears to hear. Open our ears, Holy Spirit, open our understanding.

Lord, don't let anyone in this place allow their minds to wander from the youngest to the oldest. Let us hear what the Spirit has to say. Lord, give me words that are simple and clear.

Let it come through, Lord Jesus, because I believe that you want us more than anything else to understand the new covenant and what the cross is all about. I pray, Father, that in this message that there would be something of simplicity and reality come through that would be life-changing. In Jesus' name, amen.

Now, the passage I've just read to you doesn't mention the cross at all, but I really believe that Jesus has given us here one of the most profound revelations of the cross and the new covenant. Incredible revelation. Never seen it before, and I hope I can make it understandable through the power of the Holy Spirit to you this morning.

Now, listen closely, please. The cross of Jesus Christ totally annihilates all works of the flesh. Totally annihilates it.

Does away with it completely as there's no merit, as no contribution to your salvation by anything, any human merit or any willpower, any striving of your flesh. The cross did away with all of that. Now, that's the foundation of what I'm trying to teach you here this morning.

The cross, therefore, is a stumbling block or an offense to those who are trained in legalism, who are trained in keeping the law, all the rules and regulations. The Jews, remember, in Christ's time, truly believed, they honestly believed they could help earn their eternal salvation by keeping the 900, more than 900 rules, regulations, and ordinances that came under the law. They really believed that they were earning their salvation, especially when they took on the mark of circumcision.

And the first church at Jerusalem, the Pentecostal church at Jerusalem after Pentecost came, there were numbers of Jewish converts, many of them that were priests, who had been trained under the legalism and the striving of the law and circumcision. And what they were saying, yes, Jesus died, he paid for our sins, but it was not a full salvation. You have to be circumcised to complete your salvation.

And they literally said that you can't be saved unless you're circumcised and your flesh is cut. Paul was incensed by the Holy Ghost against such a mixture. Paul boldly cried out, the cross of Christ has abolished all your rules and regulations.

He's done away with it. He said it's of no value, has no meaning. God doesn't see it.

God doesn't look at it. He doesn't appreciate it. You're wasting your time.

Ephesians 2.5, Paul said, having abolished in his flesh, that's his cross, the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in all your ordinances. Wherefore, brethren, if you be dead with Christ from the elements of the world, why is no living in the world? Are you subjecting yourself to man's ordinances like touch not, taste not, handle not, which are all to perish with the using after the commandments and doctrines of men? And then he capped it off and he made, I mean, he drove the nail in it. It's impossible to get away from what he said here.

Christ blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that were against us, which were contrary to us. He took it all out of the way. He nailed it to his cross.

Anything, anything that contributes to your salvation, anything you think that earns the favor of God other than the blood of Jesus Christ, Paul said that's all finished. Now think how offensive that is to these striving, burdened down, hapless, unhappy Jewish believers who had been taught except you'd be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved, Acts 15.1. You see these priests, you see these Jews going about their weary way trying to struggle with the law. These are believers.

They've given their heart to Jesus Christ and they're still burdened down trying to merit something with God, trying to invest in their salvation. They're still trying to walk only the prescribed amount of mileage per day, keeping certain rules of the Sabbath, washing of hands, pots, pans, utensils, making sure that they didn't squish their clothing across a Gentile or touch a Gentile or shake hands with a Gentile dog. They were still under the law, striving, making sure that they kept the Sabbath, their long prayers, their tedious chanting, long hours trying to understand the law, still sitting under scribes and Pharisees, and every night taking inventory of their lives and figuring out every jot and tittle of the law and then their conscience railing against them because they failed during the day and they couldn't keep the law.

And here they are claiming to be Christians and they were going to the priest to be circumcised even though they were believers. Many of them were priests and can you imagine the offense to tell these men who thought that their whole lifetime of religious activity is in vain? And especially thinking that that mark on their body of circumcision enhanced their standing with God and assured them of eternal salvation, and Paul's coming along saying, that's of no value. That's the offense of the cross.

That's the offense that Jesus did it all, and I have no way to merit other than coming in repentance and faith to the finished work of Jesus. I have nothing to offer. I have no goodness in me.

I don't care how good you think you are. It's all filthy rags in the sight of God according to the scripture. And some of you good people, I'd like to talk to you of this service.

It won't take me ten minutes to find some bad. Now it seems that there were certain Jews that spread a rumor that Paul also preached circumcision plus Christ. Christ plus circumcision.

And boy did he put a quick stop to that rumor. Paul said, if I am preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? Then is the offense of the cross ceased. He said, now wait a minute.

He said, I preach Christ. I preach salvation by faith in Christ alone through repentance as the only way of salvation, and I know that's an offense to all of you who spent your lifetime striving and pleading, trying to do good to please God and earn your way to heaven. He said, that's an offense.

But he said, that's not what I preach. I preach that that is all finished. I preach that circumcision has no value or uncircumcision.

That is simply faith in Christ. He said, if I'm preaching circumcision, then you would be applauding me. I would be your hero because I removed the offense of the cross.

I would be part of your crowd. But he said, why am I being persecuted by all of you in the circumcision? Why are you turning against me? Why are you fighting me? It's because I will not let go of the offense of the cross of Jesus Christ. It's not by works, it's by faith.

We'll let it go. Now, there are multitudes of believers, including many ministers around the world who are not dead to the law. They still have certain terms that they've added, and in every country, in almost every city, in every section of the United States even, the different denominations have their own standards about touch, not taste, not proper makeup, proper length of dresses and skirts.

In every country, there's an absolutely different standard. Now, folks, I believe in high standards. I believe in moral dress codes, and I believe in separation from the world, but God help us if you ever, ever say to your heart or to anyone else that any of these things add to your salvation and that merit favor with God.

God said forbid. God said, I forbid that you should even think that. I can always tell when a pastor or a believer is under bondage to works, thinking that that is holiness.

They're striving so much in the flesh, and they don't want to believe that all of their sacrifice over the years, all of their struggling to do right and dress right, and make sure that their makeup was on right, that there wasn't too much red, or their hair was at a certain length, and keeping all these laws and struggling and saying, look, you know, it's hard for a Christian. It's an offense when the cross comes along and a preacher comes along and said, no, it's by faith. All of those things you do led by the Holy Ghost after you were saved by faith.

No one will have to tell you to do it. The Holy Ghost will deal with you about it. But I can always tell when somebody's under the law and under the works because they get angry, and they say, oh, I get letters from people when I preach this grace message.

Pastor Wilkerson has become permissive. He doesn't preach holiness anymore. Now, in light of all this, let me show you how profound the words of Jesus are now in chapter 18.

Very, very profound. This chapter begins with the disciples arguing among themselves who is greatest in the kingdom of God. Imagine just coming off the Mount of Transfiguration.

The presence of God should have so humiliated them, so brought them down to see what human nature is in light of the pure holiness of God. And here they are now squabbling among themselves who's the greatest in the kingdom of God. And how do you measure greatness among men unless you're measuring it by your works? They are trying to measure their relationship with Christ, their nearness to Christ, their place in God's work and God's kingdom by the works they've done.

Which one is greatest? And folks, I don't know what they said, but I know human nature, and the Bible's also giving some good hints about the nature of some of these men, like impetuous Peter. You know, don't you, that this man was very hot-headed? And Peter, in this conversation, I can just imagine saying, no, wait a minute, gentlemen, I have just come from the mountain. And I'm, Jesus said, I'm not, I'm not

supposed to speak about it.

I want you to know that God talked to me. I heard God speak. And by the way, gentlemen, who was it that walked on water? If anybody merits, if anyone is close to Him, and here they are talking about how they sacrificed for Him, the things they've done for Him, what they've given up for Him, as if that merits anything in His sight.

Now, folks, I want you to get a picture here, trying to make the new, an old covenant so simple that a child can understand it. The Bible said there are two covenants, and you're sitting here, and you're under one of these covenants, either one. You may know nothing about the old or new covenant.

That's an agreement God makes. It's how you serve God. It's the attitude of your heart.

The one attitude, the old covenant, is the striving, making God promise or sin confess, sin confess, and it doesn't work. And I'll tell you what, God just let you play that game, and let, He just let the law wear you out. That's the reason for the law, just to show you you can't make it, just to show you your heart.

And here are these men, there's the picture of the old covenant. Competition. And we got, we got preachers all over America in competition.

Who's got the biggest church, the biggest budget? And here's a dying world, and here are God's servants over here. Come right out of the prayer class and still talk about how big the budgets are, and how big the churches are, and they're competing, and they're still living under this, I have got to accomplish something for God. There's a drive, a horrible drive, there's no rest.

I see it all over the United States and around the world, striving. There's a, there's a big church in Indiana somewhere, supposed to have 25,000, a sinner-friendly church, and, and they're coming from all over the world to get some idea how they can get in on it. Oh my, this is, this is what the Lord saw.

He had to have been appalled by what He heard and saw. It matters not, thinking of Peter and those men, it matters not if you've had some revelation up on a mountain. It doesn't matter how good you can preach or how bold you are on the street corner or anything else.

That is not what counts with God. It's do you have a simple childlike faith in the finished work of the cross of Jesus Christ? Every waking moment of Christ's ministry here on earth, He, I believe, was focused on His church, and these apostles are the foundation stones of the church. You'll find that in Revelation.

He's building His church upon these men, and, and, and the Lord knows that He can't build on this kind of mixture. Here are people who loved Him. These are servants of His that love Jesus with all of their heart.

They're willing to die for Him. But they are still focused on their works in their relationship to Him, and the Lord knows that soon He's going to be sitting at the Passover, and He's going to hold the cup of the new covenant before them, and the new covenant, a new arrangement is coming. It's going to do away with all these works.

It's going to do away with all of this striving, and this, this is the cup of the new covenant, and the moment He dies, the moment the cross finishes at work, and, and He goes into the grave, the new covenant, the new agreement is in effect, that it's not by works. It's not by the works of man. He calls a little child.

Now see, He's interested in that little child is Jesus setting before those of the old covenant a concept of what is coming. He takes a little child, and what He's really saying, this is my church to come. Now all through the Bible, you'll hear the Lord referring to new converts and His children as little children.

You'll find Him talking about my little children, children of the kingdom, children of God, children of the bride chamber, children of the promise. Paul in Galatians refers to them as my little children. This little child that Jesus there is representing every convert that's going to come from every nation and every tribe.

They're going to come in childlike faith under the new covenant, and He's putting this little child before them, and He said, except you become as a little child, you can't, He said, you've got to repent. Now, let's read this. Verse 3, 4 and 5. Verily I say unto you, except you be converted, become as little children.

Verse 2 says He called a little child unto Him and set him in the midst. Mark said He took him in His arms, the child in His arms. Except you be converted.

Converted? These are His disciples. That word in Greek is sudden twist. God said, there has got to be a sudden turning, a sudden twist in your thinking, your theology.

Because I am building a church, I'm building it upon you. He's not saying it, but this is what He's, this, according to what we see in Scripture, this is what He's thinking. This represents every single convert, black, white, red, yellow.

From now, though, Jesus comes, this is His church. This little child, and He's trying to show the kind of relationship to be developed under the new, the new thing, the new covenant, the new agreement that God made with His Son. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And I'm telling you, it's something to humble yourself from this thinking that you can do it on your own. God said there's a pride in that, that's the pride of the flesh, and that has to be dealt with unless you humble yourself, and you get rid of that concept in your mind that you can save yourself. Folks, it's a humility that's required, and that's difficult.

The Jews never did attain it. They never did humble themselves. They stuck to the law.

They said, Jesus, you did this, we've lived with this, we can do it on our own. They stayed under the new covenant in the process, ruined it, ruined themselves. Whosoever shall receive one such child in my name, receiveth me.

He said, I'm going to give you a theology now that you have to receive, and if you receive it, you receive me, you'll understand me, and you'll understand the Father. He that receiveth me, receiveth the Father. He said, if you want to understand the kind of relationship that I desire under the new covenant, I'm going to die on the cross.

New covenant goes into effect, the agreement that I, and I alone, will present my blood before the Father. I will redeem all mankind, and whosoever cometh to me, I will not cast out. Hallelujah.

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hung around his neck, that he was drowned in the depths of the sea. Now, folks, please follow me. Jesus knew that all these little children would be coming under the ministry of these men.

He foresaw the ministry of Paul the Apostle, I'm sure, but you see, his disciples had missed it completely. They were not understanding the cross that was looming ahead. Do you know, if Jesus let this go by, he would have, this would have destroyed the work of the cross, the eternal purpose of God.

If he allows these men to go on believing and teaching this competitive thing of, how do I become favorable to God? How do I become greatest in the kingdom? Through my works. The cross would have been in vain. It would have been totally in vain, because everybody would have said, well, I can do it myself.

Jesus had to strike a blow that would kill this once and for all. You must become as little children. Humble yourself as this little child.

Now, plain and simple, folks, I've read books where people trying to explain what Jesus is saying, all the childlike attitudes and a childlike behavior. I don't see that at all, folks. What he's talking about simply are two things that have to do with the relationship that Jesus wants with us, if you're under the new covenant, believing that salvation and justification by faith, by repentance and faith in his finished work.

Jesus is saying, my church is going to be built on childlike dependency and uncomplicated devotion. Two things. And this is what the Holy Ghost is striving with every one of us about, to bring us to this place, not some deep doctrinal place.

Oh, what complicated theologies and doctrines we have invented. The Lord foresaw all of this. Denominations that are going to say, you can be saved by faith, but you must keep Saturday as the Sabbath.

Yes, you can be saved, but you've got to venerate Mary, his mother. And you know, while the doctors of law are all standing around debating about where he's to be born, they're debating about how he got his knowledge without going to any one of their schools, and they're debating and debating and debating while Jesus is walking into the temple and he is throwing over the money changers, and what are the children doing? The Bible makes it very clear. The children were crying in the temple, singing Hosanna to the Son of David.

Devotion, uncomplicated, simple dependence on Jesus. Are you getting a picture? Are you under the old covenant here where you're going to Bible studies trying to figure out? Now, I believe in Bible studies. We have Bible school here.

I believe in good doctrine. I believe in good theology. We need to know what it means to be justified by faith, sanctified, made holy by the Holy Ghost.

We need to know the things about the covenant, but there are some people study, study, study, and they never get it. And the reason they don't get it is because they don't have this simple dependence and uncomplicated love for Jesus. That is what he's trying to say.

There's a new covenant coming. I'm going to do away with 900 regulations, go nail them all to my cross, and all I want out of you is to put your, fling yourself into my arms, love me, and believe that I'll direct you and give you everything you need. He said, I'm gonna be your everything.

Glory be to God. Why is it that some people get it, and they know more than the theologians? They can't explain the new covenant, but they're living it because they've just been close to Jesus, and they don't do

anything without checking with Jesus. They don't go anywhere.

They don't talk to anybody. They go to the secret closet, and they pray, and suddenly they're understanding Jesus and the Father. They've come into the covenant without any Bible school.

Jesus said, if any man will do his will, he'll know the doctrine. If you just love me and depend on me, you'll know the doctrine. You may not write a book on it like I'm going to do, but some of you probably understand it better than me anyhow.

There are a lot of preachers and a lot of people in church need to be converted. I mean converted from this, I can do it doctrine. They need to be converted from the foolish spirit of competition back to the secret closet of prayer, back to just trusting the Lord.

Verse 6 to 10, read it with me now. And but whosoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a little stung were hung around his neck, that he were drowned in the sea. Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, cast them from thee.

I'm not going to go into that, but I want you to listen very, very closely. Now here's something you've got to see in God. So we're coming into this very misunderstood passage portion of Scripture.

Offenses will come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes. Now beloved, listen to me. This is the heart of the gospel right here.

Jesus is now expressing his wrath against those who come teaching that the cross was not totally sufficient. He's talking about the offense. This is the offense of the cross right now.

He's making, it's so clear, he's not talking now to Jewish leaders. He's talking to the foundation stones of his own church. Now who are these offenders? Who are these offenders? Those who bring in the offense of the cross, those who are offended by the new covenant, the truth of Christ alone is full payment for sin.

The offenders came along and they said, yes, believe in Jesus. Yes, the cross was payment, but it wasn't full payment. You must do this.

You must do that to be saved. You keep the Sabbath, all of these things. You have to do these things and that.

These are the offense. The Lord says, woe to any preacher, any teacher, any witness who goes to a baby convert that's just come to me by simple faith and repentance, and you add, you offend that person by saying that's not enough, there's more to it. If you really want to be saved, here's what you've got to do.

This is what it says in the doctrines of our church. Take this young man, young lady that comes into church and she's got black lipstick, she's got spiked hair. Now she's not here this morning.

She's come off drugs, she's prostituted, but she's sick of it all and she's tired and she wants Jesus. She's been praying, oh Jesus, if you're real, show yourself to me. Someone brings her to Times Square Church and she sits there in church and tears rolling down, mascara, black, everything all over her face, and she just gets genuinely in love with, falls genuinely in love with Jesus.

Oh Jesus, save me. She comes next Sunday, she still has this spiked hair, she still has all the black stuff all over her face, and she's got dangles down to her shoulders, and their hair still spikes to constrain all

directions, and here comes one of the offenders. Here comes an offender and this lady says, now honey, I'm gonna tell you something.

If you're going to really be saved, you have got to get that muck out of your hair. You've got to get red instead of black lipstick, and you don't ever come to church again wearing tight pants like you have on right now. Now folks, that is the work of the Holy Ghost, and if that woman who had just left her alone, she'd have been here one night and nobody said anything, and the Holy Ghost, she'd just get her hanky and go like this, it'll look so black, it'll look like sin to her.

Now if you've got black lipstick, I'm not talking about your black lipstick. I don't care what color lipstick you wear. I don't have to like it, but I did.

Long-haired boy comes into church, gets saved, he's on drugs, cries, weeps, and gives his heart to the Lord, and within a week or two, there's another offender, somebody going up there and says, Bible says it's a shame for a man to have long hair. And so they forget the next verse, but if anyone's contentious about this, we have no such rule. But you see, their salvation says if you're going to serve God, you have to look a certain way.

If you're going to really be saved, this is what it's all about. There's been legalism all over the United States and around the world. When I first came to New York, and I told you once about it, I went up to the 100th Street, and there were a number of little Pentecostal churches there, and we got drug addicts, girls and boys that were on drugs and prostituting, and I would pray with them.

They'd weep in the street, and I'd go up, and the pastor would be in the church, and I said, look, you see these kids? Can I borrow your church for the next two hours, and pray? I went to a prayer meeting with them, and he'd look at these girls and their makeup and their short shorts and their scroungy hair, and one of them said, I wouldn't let any of them in here. They'll ruin my kids. Some of those girls were so offended, they walked away and said, what kind of religion is this? Offenders, under the law.

Here is, oh folks, come on to Times Square Church. Would you get your eyes off of what people look like? Someone just told me the other day, a dear Methodist couple got saved, and invited the pastor of this Bible Church that they were starting to attend, and they had some wine on the table. He looked at the wine, got up and walked out.

It just offended them, and they said, well, what would we do? And he said, well, it was that wine on the table. We didn't know. Why didn't he say something? Seldom in the word has God spoken so harshly on any subject, anywhere in the Scripture.

And folks, listen to this. Let the seriousness and the harshness of these words sink into your soul. It sunk into my soul, and I'll never forget it.

Better than a millstone were hung about his neck, and they were drowned in the depth of the sea. Now, nothing stirred God's wrath more than anything that would pollute his church. Remember when he drove the money changers out of his house? But that was nothing compared to this indictment.

You hear it now. It's even stronger, because he knew if this mixture is allowed to continue, then the eternal purpose of God through the cross is absolutely destroyed. And this is what I hear in all this.

If any one of us, any minister, any teacher, any of us, preacher, teach any man-made moral code, legalistic rules, or human standards as necessary to salvation, we face the wrath of God. God said, I would rather a millstone hung around your neck than that you should offend one little baby convert by your man-made doctrines, your man-made ordinances, your man-made rules, because you have offended and you have damned an innocent child. Burdening down converts with their denominational standards, telling babes in Christ they're not completely saved until they comply.

He said, better a millstone hung around that kind of teacher, preacher, witness, and cast into the sea. Matthew 18, 8. This is one of the most misunderstood passages in all the scripture. You know, look at verse 8, would you please.

Wherefore, it begins with the word wherefore. You know what that, that ties it in to the whole context. Wherefore means in light of the past.

In other words, in light of what I've just said. So this, these next few verses are tied into the context of what he's saying about this mixture of false doctrine of works. He says, if your hand, your foot, your eye offends you.

Now folks, the offense is not alcohol, drugs. That's not the thing that God's talking about. He's not talking about mutilation of a flesh, spiritual or physical.

He's trying to get at something that has their heart and it has to come out and has to be cut out of their innermost being. It's this same doctrine we're talking about of works added to the finished work of the cross of Jesus Christ. This striving, trying, struggling to do something to invest in your salvation.

Remember what Jesus said of many because of the word they are offended. Because of the word they are offended, his own contentment were offended in him. The same word used.

The hand, I mean the hand, look at me please. The hand, the foot, the eye. What are we talking about? Flesh.

We're talking about flesh. You see, the Jew is saying, no, I can handle it. I'm going to go as I please.

You see, if you're offended by anything in your right eye, you can be offended by your left eye just as much. You're offended by your left right foot, your left foot can lead you just as much astray. We're not talking about that at all.

We're talking about the flesh trying to find merit and favor in the sight of God. Works. Folks, how many of you have come to a place where you have cut off, you have finally cut off by faith any dependence on your own flesh.

How many of you come to a place where you've said, Lord, I can't handle it. This hand of mine that's taking control of everything. Folks, if you're still in control, you're under the old covenant.

You have to say, Jesus, I'm not in control anymore. I've messed up everything my hand has been put to. My feet have led me astray.

Lord, I go the wrong, I've been giving, going in my own direction. I'm not totally dependent upon you. He's talking about total dependence.

And the Lord said, you're not seeing with, he said, your eyes focused on the wrong thing. He said, you've got to cut off that focus. You are not focused on the right thing.

You're focused on your own ability, your own power. Your eye is, you've got to pluck that out. You've got to absolutely rid your body, rid your mind, rid your heart of this kind of thinking.

And folks, that's what God's been dealing with me about. St. David, you'll never understand the new covenant. You'll never understand the cross.

You'll never come into rest. You'll never be able to face what is coming until you have finally, once and for all, cut off any hope of pleasing me or bringing something to my throne of goodness. There's no plea that you have.

And until that is final, and you have cast yourself completely at the cross, then there's no hope. He said, surgically, remove that thinking from your mind. Now, Paul the apostle picked up on that very quickly.

He understood the new covenant because the Jewish believers in Jerusalem, Paul said, were taking these children of Christ and putting a yoke of bondage on them. They were insisting that the believers had to be circumcised in order to be saved, and that the cross did not fully justify. And Paul cried out, Christ has become of no effect to you people.

Whoever of you are justified by the law, you're fallen from grace. For we, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness, which is by faith. For in Christ, neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by love.

It's that devotion. It's that dependency. He said, I would they were cut off which trouble, or in the word, there's offend.

I would that they were cut off that offend you. Now, he's just talking about cutting off, cutting off, cutting off. Now, here's something that amazed me when I followed the original Greek on what Paul was saying.

And the original, the statement original Greek says, I would to God that they would mutilate themselves as the apocopy of Sibyl. Now, let me just stop there a minute and show you what it's all about. Paul knew it.

Everybody in Galatia knew about this cult. Every worshiper of Sibyl, a goddess, in the headquarters was in the city of Pasilis. And Paul knew it.

It was known all over the known world at the time, especially in Galatia. And there were a group of people called apocopy, and they were mutilators of flesh. They worshiped this by cutting off members of their flesh.

They were like flagellants who beat their backs, and it was blood, and it was mutilation. And Paul said what he's trying to say, if you believe that cutting the flesh is pleasing to God, it merits anything, why don't you go with the group called apocopy? Why don't you go worship Sibyl? Because that's mutilation taken to extreme, because if your theology is right, a little bit of cutting is not enough. A whole lot of cutting is more holy.

They said, why don't you go on down and truly mutilate yourself? Folks, that's where it goes. If you are not so on the foundation, the cross, and the finished work of Jesus, where does it all end? The cutting of the flesh. Where does it all end? Where do the rules and regulations end? It ends up in 900 or more ways to

try to please God.

Paul's saying, no, for the Son of Man has come to save that which is lost. All you have to acknowledge is that you're lost. With this I close.

Paul said, first of all, he saved me, because I was the worst among sinners, and I'm a pattern. Now I'm telling you, I can't go to Europe and tell anybody that Jesus saves till I know I am saved. Jesus came to save.

I was lost. I've acknowledged it, and I know now I'm 60-some years old. When I get to 70, I'll tell you.

If these hairs, these gray hairs could talk. My goodness, no man in the world has striven more than I did over the years to be holy. Oh, Christ, oh God, you know I want to be holy.

You know I want to be pure. God, I don't want anything hidden in my life and striving, and when I'd fail, God, so help me, God, I'll never do that again. God, I'll never do that again.

And boy, it would, by the time I got to two months and didn't do it. Hallelujah, Lord. You've got to bless me in the preaching tonight, man.

I've made it for two months now. Now don't try to figure out what I'm talking about. You know what you're talking about.

We think we've earned it. We think God owes us something. No, no, no, no.

That's the cross at the end of it. Hallelujah. It's so simple.

Will you stand? Oh, how many there are watching and hearing right now? How many of you? Listen closely. How many of you tired and weary of the struggle to do right and be right in the sight of God? Just struggling so, so hard. You have so many temptations.

You're in a situation that just makes it more and more difficult. I don't care if it's adultery, fornication. I don't care if it's pride.

I don't covetousness. I want to tell you something before I close. You know what I fear? The sin I fear more than any sin known to mankind, more than anything of this flesh.

The one sin I fear more than anything else in the holy fear of God is covetousness. Wanting the things of this world. I'm not saying that's a problem in my life, but I don't ever want it to be a problem.

But I fear that more than anything else, that something in this world would get a hold of my heart and take me away from Jesus, from my prayer closet, from that first love for Jesus. And folks, that's the number one thing in America. America is going spending mad.

They're going, the stock market, everything's going wild. I went into a garage the other day to get a car fixed, and he must have had 7,500 cars. And he couldn't, he said, I can't keep men, young people coming in.

Everybody's going in debt. They're just signing no-dump payment and going deep in debt. People are buying homes like crazy who can't afford them.

We're in a mad spending spree, and America is gripped in the spirit of covetousness and never able to get enough. Never able to get enough. Like the prosperity preacher I told you about, I saw his tape.

He said, I live in an 8,000 square foot house. He said, I'm building a bigger one, one that King Saul would be proud to live in. And he said, when people see my big house and my Rolls Royce sitting in the front lawn, they know there's a God in heaven.

And he said, that's a \$32,000 ring, and I just spent \$15,000 for a dog. If I named him, you'd know him. Covetousness.

Does that have your heart? Never having enough. It's never, nothing is ever enough. We just keep reaching and grabbing and grabbing.

It's taking us away from our first love for Jesus. Folks, you can't lick that. You can't beat that spirit if it's in you by just making a promise.

You can't do it in your flesh. You just say, Holy Ghost, come, expose it in me. If it's there, expose it, and come now, Holy Ghost.

If we through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, we shall live. Hallelujah. And the cure for it all, I just told you.

Fall in love with Jesus all over again. Get close to him, and depend on him. Depend on the Holy Ghost.

If you have an open heart, say, God, I depend on the Holy Ghost to do what he's been called to do, and that's to convict me of my sin. Every day in a prayer closet, that's what. God, is there anything? Turn a light on.

Show me anything that's unlike Jesus in my heart. Do it, Lord Jesus. I don't know what's in my heart, but you do.

Bring it out. I can't do it, but I trust the covenant. I trust the cross, and I trust the blood.

And all through my struggle, the whole time I'm struggling, the devil tells me I'm damned and can't make it, and I'm foolish. The whole time, Jesus has the blood applied. Jesus stands before the Father, and I am totally accepted by the Father through my struggle until the battle's over.

I'm still his child. He's still in love with me. He's still not going to cast me out, because he knows that I'm his.

You are his. He's not going to let you go. He may chastise you, but he said, I'll never take my Holy Ghost from you.

I won't take my spirit. His spirit's here now. I don't have to ask you if you're under the anointing, or under conviction right now.

The Holy Ghost, he said, if you're his, he'll never take his spirit away from you. So he's there dealing with you in love now. I'm going to open these altars.

I'm going to open. Now, in the annexes, you go forward to the stage, I mean, to the screen. Go up toward the screen, and then what room do we go in there? You will go to room 206 for prayer.

Those that are in this auditorium, up in the balcony. I would like to pray for those who say, Pastor David, something you said this morning turned the lights on for me. Something you said, and I truly want to come into that rest of the new covenant, where I don't have to even consider my works anymore.

That I come into this rest in fully trusting Jesus, no matter what battle you're in, what sin you're in. If you're not right with God, if you're backslidden, or you're going through a great struggle, striving to please God, and you're losing the battle, step out of your seat and come and join these that are coming now. Let me pray with you.

We'll trust Jesus. We don't count heads. Please don't come unless the Spirit draws you.

Upstairs in the balcony, come to the stairs on either side. Come down any aisle and join these that are coming, please. Move in close to make room for those that are coming, please.

Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus. Holy Spirit, finish the work that you've begun.

Finish the work that you have begun.

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