

The Restraining Power of the Holy Ghost

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon emphasizes the vital role of the Holy Ghost in restraining believers from sin and guiding them toward God's purpose.

Duration: 1:09:03

Scripture: 1 Samuel 25:32-34, Proverbs 15:1, Proverbs 29:11, Matthew 6:33, Romans 12:19, Ephesians 4:26-27, James 1:19-20

Topics: "Holy Spirit", "Godly Intervention"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the story of David and Nabal from the Bible. David sends his men to Nabal's house during shearing time to ask for provisions for his hungry army. However, Nabal insults and mocks David's men. This angers David, and he decides to take revenge on Nabal and his household. But then, Abigail, Nabal's wife, intervenes and pleads with David not to shed blood and regret it later when he becomes king. Abigail's actions demonstrate the restraining power of the Holy Ghost.

Transcript

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None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. ...of the Holy Ghost, the restraining power of the Holy Ghost. Let's pray.

Spirit of the Living God, I must have you, or I can't preach. I can't preach this at all without you, Holy Ghost. And I stand here now as your shepherd.

I stand here, Lord, as your anointed. And I pray, Lord Jesus, that you come against your power, against all the powers of darkness. Lord, remove any hindrance from the Word breaking through to every single ear and every heart of this place.

Lord, break my heart. Let me not rail against your people. You warned us that we dare not reprove to accuse the righteous or comfort the wicked.

And help us to find that fine line and obey you. And, Lord, I pray that the Word that comes forth will bring a healing Word, as sharp as it may be. It may be a surgeon's knife, but, oh, God, that's how healing comes.

Oh, God, you've been speaking so powerfully today. And we hear your voice. Sanctify our ears.

Sanctify me. Let the Word go forth now. Accomplish what you wanted to accomplish.

Let it produce life, in Jesus' name. Amen. The restraining power of the Holy Ghost.

One of the most amazing pictures in all the Bible of the restraining power of the Holy Ghost is found in 1 Samuel, the 25th chapter. You don't have to turn there, but let me tell you this story. It's well known to all of us here tonight.

This is in 1 Samuel, chapter 25. David has just commanded 400 of his motley soldiers to get on their steeds and their horses, and he's heading out toward Nabal's house, this wicked shepherd, this man had, the Scripture says, 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats, very rich man of his time. And this was at Carmel, and David was camped nearby in a cave hiding from King Saul.

And for months, David's soldiers had watched over. They were on those hills, and they made sure that no marauders came in to steal the sheep. They took care of all the wild animals because they were there anyhow as guards watching for Saul's army.

So in the process, they were watching over the sheep and probably fellowshiping with the shepherds of Nabal's household. Nabal's name means wickedness. He was a wicked, vile, wretched man.

And it was shearing time, and they were shearing the sheep. And David sends 10 of his young men to Nabal's house because it should have been a time of Thanksgiving, a time of harvest. They were harvesting fruit as well.

And he sent 10 young men, and he asked kindly of Nabal that he would give him something for his army. His army is hungry. They've been out there.

They're hiding in a cave. They have no way of feeding themselves. And, you know, David is expecting perhaps a number of sheep, you know, 40, 50 sheep.

I'm sure he gave no figures, but how about some goats for milk for the children of our families and some dates from your trees, whatever you would do. They came graciously, and Nabal railed on them, mocked them, and David mocked his men. And they came back with this story and told him what happened.

And David said, Get on your horses. And this man, David, is spitting fire. And he is ready to kill Nabal and his whole household.

He said, So help me. You could almost hear his language. So help me.

Nobody talks to me like that. Nobody talks to my men like that. So help me.

Not one man will remain till tomorrow. They're all dead. I'll save the wives, the women and the children, but Nabal, his shepherds, his shearers, they're dead meat.

You can hear, I mean, this man is burning. He's about to make one of the most foolish mistakes in his life, and it's the devil himself who has incensed him, trying to avenge himself, trying to take things in his own hand. And here come 400 horsemen and David in the front, spitting fire.

Abigail is told that, evidently one of their shepherds, somebody came running and saying, David's army is coming, 400 men, and they are moving. And word comes that David said he's going to destroy the whole household. Abigail quickly, and I believe the Holy Ghost came upon her, she got together as many mules as she could, loaded them down with as much meat and dates and fruits and cakes and whatever she could get, and got on her donkey, and she headed out to intercept David.

And God somehow got her out there in the field before David got to Nabal. She lights off her donkey. She falls on her knees before David.

David gets off his horse, I'm sure, in deference to this woman. And she says, David, don't do such a rash thing. The Lord sent me to withhold thee from coming to shed innocent blood and from avenging thyself with thine own hand.

God does not want you to regret shedding blood when you become king. Now you look at this lady, Abigail, at the feet of David, and you see a picture of the restraining power of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost sent her.

That's a wonderful picture of the Holy Ghost. Here's a man of God, anointed to the Holy Ghost, full of the Spirit, a man after God's own heart, about to make a stupid mistake and have blood guiltiness on his hands and do something that would never be forgotten, a blotch on the name of God Himself. And the Holy Ghost comes.

God uses people. He uses circumstances. He uses conditions.

He'll send voices. He will get His Word to you. The Holy Ghost knows how to do it.

And Abigail says, David, stop. And let me tell you this very clearly. The test of a true heart, the test of a heart that is wholly surrendered to the Lord, is that it is easily restrained by the hand of God, easily restrained by the Holy Spirit's working.

Listen very closely to what David said. David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which has sent thee this day to meet me. Blessed be thy advice, which has kept me this day from coming to shed innocent blood.

See? I've hearkened to thy voice. I've accepted thy person. He said, I hear you.

Your word got through. That's the test of any Christian, any believer, that has the hand of God upon them. You see, God says, I have my hand on this man.

I've got a work for him to do. And I'm not going to let him make a fool of himself. I'm not going to let him destroy my interest in him and my eternal purpose in his life.

I will not allow it. Many of you sit here now. God has saved you.

He's called you. He's got an eternal purpose for you. If it's to be a living witness to your family, to your job, whoever it may be, there's an eternal purpose for you.

And God says, if you love him with all your heart and you're obedient to his word, he will restrain you. He will send his spirit with his power and he'll hold up that hand and say, Stop! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! The restraining power of the Holy Ghost. You see this restraining power of the Holy Ghost to work in Joseph's

life.

You remember the story of Joseph? He's now... Potiphar is captain of Pharaoh's guard. And one day he goes down to the Ishmaelite slave market and he sees this young man. His name is Joseph.

He's being sold at a slave market and Potiphar buys him. Purchase Joseph at a slave market of the Ishmaelites. And he takes him to his house and there's such an honor in this man.

This man is intelligent and little by little he wins the confidence of Potiphar and Potiphar turns over the running of his whole estate to him. But there's a problem in that household. Potiphar's wife is a seductress.

She's a wild woman. And she eyes this young man and she comes to him when Potiphar is gone and says, Come to my room, lie with me. And the restraining hand of the Holy Ghost comes to Joseph and Joseph says, No, no, no, I will not sin against my God.

I will not sin against my God. Now this is a vibrant, healthy young man. And this woman is no fool.

She's probably intelligent and a very beautiful woman. And this young man says, No. And the Bible says that she kept after him day after day.

And one day she comes to him and she has a plot. Potiphar's gone. And he's alone in the house and he's walking no doubt to his business.

He's going about his business. And she grabs him by his garment. And she says, I say, you know, go with me.

Lie with me. The Bible makes it clear and he fled from her leaving his garment. How is it? How is it that a vibrant young man who is being tested more and more everyday gets stronger and stronger as the temptation keeps coming on? How does he get so strong? Where is his strength? Folks, it wasn't because he was some super saint.

He's a good man. He's a godly man. He's a called man, anointed man.

But it's more than that. He's human just like you and I. He was responsive to the restraining power of the Holy Ghost because when you listen to him the first time and keep listening, that restraining power becomes stronger and stronger and stronger in your life. Hallelujah.

You resist the devil. You resist him in the power of the Holy Ghost. And oh, I'll tell you, there's a joy arises and power arises.

The first time Joseph said no, he went to his room and felt it. He said, that was good, Lord. That felt good.

She came again. He ran again. He said, it's better.

And he got stronger until finally when she laid hold upon him, he was ready. The restraining power of the Holy Ghost. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. To restrain means to hold back, check, to hinder from acting or going in a certain direction on a certain path. And this is one of the primary works of the Holy Spirit.

He's a comforter. He's a guide. But one of the primary works of the Holy Spirit on the face of this earth is to be a restrainer.

Now, I want you to follow me very closely. Who was more powerfully restrained by the Holy Ghost than Saul of Tarsus? This man is on his way to Damascus literally to imprison and to kill Christians. And he's convinced he's doing the perfect will of God according to the light that he's received.

And he's on his animal. He's heading toward Damascus. And what does the Holy Ghost do? You talk about restraining power.

Knocks him off his horse. And God from heaven begins to speak. You talk about a restraining power.

In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul said... I'm getting ahead of myself. Let me back up just a bit. With Saul of Tarsus, aren't you glad for the restraining power of the Holy Ghost in his life? That I can stand here tonight and preach the revelation that God gave to this man? Aren't you glad that the Lord restrained him by his hand and said, that's as far as you go? When God has an eternal purpose, nothing can stop the restraining hand of the Holy Ghost.

Hallelujah. The Holy Ghost not only restrains the believer from a path of unrighteousness and wickedness. He also restrains satanic Antichrist powers seeking to be released before their time.

He is restrained. Do you know that if the Holy Ghost were not on the face of the earth now, restraining, holding back the powers of darkness... Can you see the Antichrist spirits? The beast spirit, the Antichrist spirit is building up into a crescendo. And it's just like if you were holding back a river that's flowing, it backs up and gets higher and deeper.

And the Antichrist spirit is absolutely bellowing for release, seeking release. And the Holy Ghost has been holding back... Can you imagine what happens when God's restraining power is lifted from a society? And the only reason we don't have absolute anarchy on the face of this earth and especially in America today is because God has been restraining. Every sinner has a measure of his corporate restraining power.

Because if God didn't restrain every individual... Did you hear the news today? Another mother threw her weekday old baby out the fifth floor window yesterday. Just threw out the window! Folks, if it were not for the restraining power of the Holy Ghost, there would be 10,000 of them every day. If it were not for the restraining power of the Holy Ghost, you couldn't walk any street.

The Holy Ghost has been restraining the power of Antichrist. Very, very clearly told in 2 Thessalonians 2, the day of the Lord, Paul said, shall not come except there come a falling away first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, which we take to be the Antichrist. And you know what holdeth... And the word there is restrained.

You know what is restraining him, that he may be revealed only in his time. Paul said, you ought to know the Holy Ghost is restraining him because God says it's not time. And it's the Holy Ghost holding back the revelation of the Antichrist.

It's the Holy Ghost holding back the powers of iniquity that want to bring chaos and total destruction to mankind. It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Antichrist powers are mounting higher and higher.

And I thank God for the restraining power of the Holy Ghost, that right now Antichrist would be enthroned here in the United States and on the face of this earth. The day is coming when the Spirit would lift his restraining hand. The earth will reel and sway under the wickedness of this Antichrist spirit.

For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who is now restraining will do so until he's taken out of the way. The Holy Ghost is going to keep restraining until God says that's enough and he lifts the Holy Ghost's restraining power.

Now if you don't want to believe the Holy Ghost leaves the earth at a certain time, you must believe according to this that his restraining power is lifted. Now if you love the Lord with all your heart, I can assure you that the restraining power of the Holy Ghost has apprehended you time and time again. How many times has he come, stopped you from making an absolute fool of yourself, doing fully stupid things.

How many times has he restrained you when you were about to do something very wicked and evil and the Holy Ghost came and said, no. Where did you get that no power? Where did you get that? That's the restraining power of the Holy Ghost. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Isaiah 59, 19, When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. That simply means when the devil comes in and tries to swamp you, he brings temptation and trial.

That really means God will send restraining power. God will lift up a standard in the word. There is restraint.

He will restrain the enemy. He will come in. He restrains not only the flood, He will restrain the enemy.

He will restrain the flood from overpowering you, but he will also restrain you from going the wrong path. Hallelujah. That's a promise all through this book.

Now, tragically, there's overwhelming evidence in this scripture that the Spirit's restraining hand of God can be lifted from those who refuse to heed the word of God and to obey the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, hear me closely. I'm telling you again, there is absolutely evidence, and I'm going to prove it to you tonight.

I'm speaking to Christians now. There comes a time when God lifts His restraining power from the life of someone who has hardened their heart. The scripture says, He that being often reprov'd in the heart of his neck shall be cut off suddenly without remedy.

Now, folks, we have got to deal. If we're going to see God move in this church like He wants to move, God has to do a deep work in our hearts till He gets the last little black thing out of our hearts, till He gets into the little resource, gets into the basement of the heart, gets down in there and deals with these things. Now, I want you to listen very, very closely, please.

God warned Noah's generation, My spirit will not always strive with man, yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. He's not predicting man's life span because that's already been said at 70, and many men after this live to be 800, 900 years of age. No, He's saying, Look, this generation has heard a righteous man preach.

They have heard and heard my warnings. And He says, I'm a patient God, and this appears to be after 400 years that this came. This man had been preaching for so long, and God finally says, You have 120 years.

I'm going to give you 120 years, and then I'm not going to strive anymore. And folks, when that 120 years ended, God no longer, He lifted His restraining power, and when it began to rain, He would not restrain the rain. The rain kept coming until God's hand restrained the rain.

But when God lifted His restraining hand, I imagine as soon as Noah was in the ark, one last fling, one last fling of wickedness and vileness because the Lord destroyed the earth because of violence. Can you imagine the violence in those last hours when the restraining hand of the Holy Ghost was lifted from the earth? It's incomprehensible to my mind. I can't even comprehend it.

The rains came in for 40 days and 40 nights, and the Lord kept His word. In 2 Thessalonians 2, 7, He, the Holy Ghost, who now restrains, will do so until, until He be taken out of the way. And I'm telling you now, and listen closely, because I feel in my own heart when God deals with me, He deals with me as a loving Father, but He deals with me in a sharp, powerful way, getting down to the depths of my soul.

I take that to be the greatest sign of mercy that He could give me. That is true mercy preaching. It is mercy preaching.

It is grace that God would put a mirror up to us and show us what has to be done to bring us to this place that He wants us to be. And there's a point of total rejection of the voice and the commandments of the Lord. There's a point of casting aside the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the wooing and the callings of the Holy Ghost.

There's a point where you harden yourself to the word of God. And it can happen. Christian, it can happen to you.

Listen to it. He was taken out of the way. The Holy Ghost, the Scripture says, will be taken out of the way.

His restraining power will be taken out of the way. The most vivid example of this in all the Bible is the life of Saul. This past week, as I started studying the life of Saul again and going through this and showing, God was showing me by His Spirit what happens to a man.

Here is a man of God. Here's a man appointed by God. He is chosen as king by God Himself.

And the Spirit of God comes on this man. The Scripture said, The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, Samuel speaking to him. Thou shalt prophesy.

Thou shalt be turned into another man. This man is not ignorant of the movings of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has come upon him.

Samuel sent him on his way, saying, God is with thee. Saul prophesied so powerfully that there was a saying in the land, that Saul also among the prophets. Powerful prophecies came out of his mouth.

It was just not one. You don't assign a man as a prophet on one prophecy. It would pour out of this man.

The Spirit of God was on this man. He was not an atheist. He was not a heathen.

This was a chosen man of God. And yet, God's restraining hand is lifted from His own servant. The next thing you hear of Saul, he's preparing to go out against the Ammonites.

And the Spirit of God came upon Saul. His anger was kindled greatly. He goes out to battle.

The Spirit of God comes on him. And he wins a mighty battle. But there's something wrong with this man.

There's something in his heart. This man does not really take God's word as reality. He doesn't really honor the servant who preaches it.

And I want you to listen very closely because this comes down to the very heart of what God is saying in this message about His restraining power in our lives as Christians. I'm speaking to Christians tonight, mostly from the rest of my message here. God was prepared to bless this man.

He was prepared to give him an everlasting kingdom. He was prepared to keep His word with this man and guide him and lead him and bless him. His whole family could have been blessed.

Jonathan could have been his heir apparent. He would have sat on the throne. God was prepared to use this man and go with him.

Because even later, when the Spirit of the Lord was lifted, Samuel said to him, the Lord would have established your kingdom upon Israel forever. But now the kingdom, your kingdom shall not continue. You see, he was told by Samuel the prophet, before you ever go to battle, whether it's Ammonites, Hittites, Philistines, you go to Gilgal.

You send word to me and I will come. It'll probably take me seven days by the time your messenger gets to me and I get there. It's probably going to be seven days, but don't wait any less than seven days.

You go to Gilgal and I will offer burnt offering to the Lord and I'll wait on God and I will give you the battle plan from God himself. Now folks, Jesus says my commandments are not grievous. They're not grievous.

These were not grievous commandments. They were not hard at all. Go down to Gilgal, wait for me at least seven days, don't do anything till I get there.

Don't sacrifice anything because Saul can't sacrifice and he knows, he knows the scripture. He knows that he cannot sacrifice because that's the role of a priest and he's not a priest. Samuel is a judge, but he's also a priest, anointed priest.

And he's told very clearly. Folks, the commandments of the Lord Jesus are not grievous. They're not hidden.

They're very clear. Jesus said, He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me. You can talk all you want about loving Jesus, about being intimate with Jesus.

You can talk about anything you want about your closeness with Jesus, but if you don't seek his commandments and go after them and obey them, he said you don't love me. You don't love me. You can fast, you can pray, you can do all these things, but unless you have his commandments and obey them, he said you cannot even be my disciple.

You don't love me. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not grievous.

That's not Old Testament. That's 1 John 5, 3. A huge Philistine army gathers now. They have 30,000 chariots and 6,000 cavalymen, all on horseback.

And they are rushing toward the battle. And Saul's motley army begins to leave on all sides. They're running down caves and in the hills.

And those that are still with them are trembling. They have no life in them. They are trembling.

It's near the end of the seventh day. He's at Gilgal. And Samuel has not even arrived.

He's not arrived yet. No, Samuel's just over the hill. But God's testing this man.

And he sees the people running and he looks at that huge army. And he turns to one of the priests and he said, Slay a lamb and bring it. And he said, I'm going to offer it.

This man, who'd just been commanded not to do anything, totally disregards the word of God. Totally disregards this instrument of that word, the messenger of that word. Totally disregards him.

And he offers a sacrifice as if he were a priest. You see, he's going to do it his way. Oh, I know what Samuel said.

I know what the Bible says. I know what God said. But, you see, he really didn't have any value for the minister of the gospel of that day.

I think he looked upon Samuel as a father. Samuel's an old man now and he's gray-haired and he probably stumbles around a bit. He's not strong.

And he's a kind old man. He's like my grandfather. Saul offers a sacrifice and as soon as he's finished, Samuel comes lumbering down the hillside on his donkey.

And he can't believe what he sees. He approaches Saul. He said, Thou hast done foolishly, Saul.

Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee. Now your kingdom shall not continue. And at that very moment, the restraining hand of God is lifted from Saul's life.

It's gone. Up to this time, God is restraining this man, but now there's no more restraint because soon after, just a few short months later, Saul faces the Philistines again in a battle and Saul asks, Counsel of God, shall I go down after the Philistines? And God answered him, Not that day. Not a word.

The restraining hand is gone. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in this man has been finished. And the Lord repented that he made Saul king of Israel.

Then these frightful words, and when I read them, it's like a knife. The spirit of the Lord departed from Saul and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. And even his servants knew now there's something wrong.

And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold, now an evil spirit from God troubled thee. Now, I'm not going to get into the theology of that statement, an evil spirit from the Lord. I'm going to take it just as it says.

I'm going to take it just as the Bible says. An evil spirit from the Lord troubled the man. And Saul now becomes so depressed.

He's possessed. He goes about his living quarters bellowing like a madman. The scripture says, when the evil spirit came upon Saul, now King James says he prophesied in the midst of it, but in the original Greek, it means he raved in his household.

He went about raving as a madman. They had to bring David into play, the harp to try to calm the man. He's a madman.

Now, why did God lift his restraining hand from his chosen? Folks, it has to do with respect for God's word and the messengers of that word. Saul took lightly the word of God. He never trembled at it.

He never had great respect for the instrument. It's like the people that came to hear the prophet Ezekiel. God said, Lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well in an instrument.

For they hear your words, but they do them not. They sit before these my people and they hear thy words, but they will not do them. With their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

Folks, today in the church of Jesus Christ, the word of the Lord is taken so very lightly. God has spoken, the Bible said to us in these last days, by his Son. He still has anointed servants and prophets who stand in the pulpit and deliver his holy word.

And I want to tell you something here, folks, and I want you to listen very, very closely. This man had the restraining power of the Holy Ghost lifted from him according to Samuel because he would not keep the commandment of the Lord and honor the word and the commandment of the Lord. He heard it.

It was not confusing. It was not grievous. God doesn't put grievous.

My yoke is easy. My burden is light. But it's only light when you yield to it.

It's only light when you accept it. Folks, a man who's under the anointing of God and is heard from the heart of God and has the burden of the Lord and he has no other agenda but to bring a bride to Christ, sanctified and holy and righteous. He's not just granddad.

He's not a pal. He's not just a good man. He speaks at the oracle of God.

It's the voice of God. The voice of the Lord. So, hears the word gladly and he doesn't do it.

This man is so easy to repent against. I have sinned and he goes right back because he really didn't mean it. Lord, thou art unto them as a very lovely song.

He's not a lovely song. He's called to carry the word of the Lord. I have made it my daily prayer.

Oh God, as much time as you give me left, I want nothing else on this earth but to be an oracle of God and to be one of his voices that bring a sanctified holy people on that day. Hallelujah! Sanctified holy, righteous people to bow before him. Hallelujah! On the day of judgment.

Saul hears, but he doesn't do. Now, what are the consequences of rejecting the word of God and not applying it and not making it work in your life? Just taking God's word lightly. I'm going to give you at least very quickly, I want to list five of the awful consequences of rejecting the word or taking it lightly.

Listen closely, please. Number one. Those who have no more restraining power of the Holy Ghost in their life end up with turmoil and warfare the rest of their life.

The scripture says, in Saul's life there was sore war against the Philistines. All the days of Saul. Saul, his whole kingdom, never one day did he have a day of peace.

Not one day of rest. Everywhere he turned, there was an enemy to the right and to the left on all sides. God allowed the enemy to harass him.

There was no restraint of the Philistines. There was no restraint on any of the enemies. The enemy had free course to come and go because there was no restraining power of the Spirit of the Living God in Saul's life.

Saul lived in absolute torment of enemies all his days. I've seen Christians like that, who will not obey the word of God. The word of the Lord comes and he puts his finger on something that's hidden.

The Holy Ghost comes and says, now look, I love you, I'm patient, but you have not been serious about this. You're really not dealing with it. You expect to go on year after year, ten years, twenty years living with this thing in your life.

And he says, God says, no, because I know the consequences of it. And God will come to you and he will come with power and authority and he will warn how faithful the Holy Ghost is. He is such a faithful, patient, loving, caring ministry.

Hallelujah. But he says, you can't go on until you deal with this. You cannot go on.

Saul totally rejected the commandments of the Lord and he said, I'm going to do it my way. He's like so many who say, I'm okay. Or else they have so lived in their sin, they have so been comfortable with their bosom sin, they've made peace with it, they're no longer convicted by it.

No preacher, no evangelist, they could read this word from cover to cover and nothing convicts them anymore because they have made peace with it. They really don't want to get rid of it. And that brings a hardness, that brings a spiritual blindness.

And this restraining power of the Holy Ghost is lifted from Saul's life now and there's nothing but absolute, constant warfare. His enemies are not restrained. Number two, fear of man and being easily influenced by the wrong voices.

I feared the people, he says. He was supposed to kill all Agag and his whole society, nothing was to remain. And you remember that he kept the best of the cattle and the sheep and even kept King Agag as a trophy of his authority and his victory.

I feared the people. When Samuel came and said, why I hear the bleating of the sheep, you didn't obey God. Why didn't you obey God? He said, here you are again.

You hear the word, it's so simple and you disobey again. You're living in disobedience, Saul. And the word had come to him and Samuel says, or Saul says, I feared the people in a fear of man.

I obeyed their voice. I obeyed their voice. You disobey and disobey the warnings of the Holy Spirit and one day you will not, because you won't hear his voice, you will hear the voice that tells you it's all okay.

You will hear a voice from the enemy. You will be influenced by sinners and you will believe them eventually more than you will believe a pastor from a pulpit. Number three, envy bitterness toward righteous people who pay the price with the Lord.

Saul envied David. And Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him and had departed from Saul. Oh, what a tragedy.

The Spirit of the Lord is no longer restraining an individual. They become jealous and envious of anyone around them who is righteous and holy and pure and without guile. There is a bitterness that rises up.

Folks, you can be in this, you can be right in this church and if you're paying the price and you, you are absolutely walking in, in, by faith in the righteousness of Jesus and have the Holy Ghost deal with every hidden thing in your life and, and God is dealing with you and you're walking in His holiness, I'm going to tell you, you're going to be a marked person. There'll be people rise up against you from the right and the left and these are backslidden Christians that have no longer the restraining power of the Holy Ghost in their life and you, they are envious of you because you have paid the price. They see what they could have been and now what they are and they compare it and they want to bring you down to their level.

Pastor Carter covered it well this afternoon. Every time he looks at David, oh, I, I have, I have seen minutes of the gospel in, in, in conferences. You can, you, it's interesting to watch.

You, you see a man who once had the touch of God and he compromised and now he, he sits there and, and, and, he sees a young man get up, a young man full of fire and power and anointing and that man can't rejoice in the anointing on that young man. There's an envy rises up in his heart because he, he's afraid of that anointing. This is the end of side one.

You may now turn the tape over to side two. Nothing scares a compromising Christian more than the anointing on somebody else. Number four, a spirit of self-pity and a persecution complex.

You see, Saul is chasing David one day and he stops to rest. He's got his army with him and he's sitting under a tree and he's looking around and oh, suddenly this spirit, see there's no more restraining power of the Holy Ghost in his life and now this spirit comes upon him and oh folks, I read this, you want to cry, you want to weep. Here's, here's a mighty soldier, a man that was once greatly anointed, the spirit of God upon him and now because the restraining hand of God is no longer in his life, he sees everybody is against him, everybody's his enemy, everybody's out to get him, everybody's talking about him.

Is this sounding familiar? Listen to it. He points a finger, he looks around all of his soldiers and he says, all of you have conspired against me and there is none that shows me that my son has made a league with the son of Jesse. That was an outright lie and there is none of you that's sorry for me.

Don't make me want to weep. Nobody cares about me now. Nobody has any pity or sorry for me.

Everybody's out to get me. All of you are against me. He's looking at his soldiers who have given their life for him.

He's accusing his own son for his sin. He said, my own son has caused David to flee from me and now I have to choose to chase David because my son made it happen. What an awful, horrible thing.

I literally wept when I started picturing this man of God and what he could have been and what God had prepared for this man and he missed it all. He missed it all. What a horrible sight.

Now the clearest one of all, number five, most tragic, the clearest evidence that one is without the respect and the restraining power of the Holy Ghost. There's evidence of it. When you harden your heart and reject the word and God keeps speaking to you and speaking and speaking and you do not listen and you harden yourself and you reject his wooings, his pleadings, there comes a time, there comes a point where you, because you despise the word and would not obey it, you will totally despise and turn against the messenger who delivers that message.

You see this in the life of Saul and how grievous it is. Saul finds out Doeg comes and he gives him a perverted story because you see Doeg is there when Saul was saying nobody feels sorry for me, nobody pities me and here comes this wicked man. Doeg says, well I feel sorry for you and I'm going to tell you a story.

He said, I was at the priest Himalek's place at Nab and David came in and Himalek gave him some hallowed bread to see him on his way and he gave him the sword of Goliath. How do I know that Saul had the hand of God lifted from him because he had no respect for the word of God, he didn't tremble at God's word and he had no respect for the ministry because he immediately turns to one of his servants and said, I want you to go right now to Himalek and Nab and I want you to kill every one of those priests, 85 of them, I want you to kill their mothers, I want the mothers, the children, I want their cats, their dogs, their sheep, their donkeys, I want them all slaughtered. Now how can any man say that if he had not had a total disrespect and finally comes out of his hut gushing what was there all the time.

His servant said, I can't do that, I'll not touch God's anointed. Here's where it all ends, folks. He sends Doeg, Doeg goes up with his sword and he kills Himalek.

He kills 85 priests of God. Now folks, I know that fulfills the prophecy given to Eli, it was told to Eli that not one of his posterity would remain except one and that happened, Himalek's son escaped, there was only one left. But folks, it was at the hand of this man, Saul, who had no respect for the ministry, had no respect for the word of God.

He could hear it and hear it and not do it. And it ends up in this, that you finally curse the prophet. You lose all respect for ministry and you turn on the ministry and you finally end up blaming preachers for your problem.

There are people who sat in this church a few years ago and rebelled and walked out hearing the word of God and they blame Pastor Carter and I now for their downfall. No, it was because many times I had to stand back here, I stood back here for weeks listening to young people who were part of that rebellion and I had them look me right in the face and say, Brother Wilkinson, I've been told you're a phony, I can't hear your message anymore. And that came from parents who had no respect for this pulpit, no respect for the word of God and I tell you under the anointing of the Holy Ghost, I'm not on a soapbox.

I love this congregation and I don't want to see anybody go to hell and Jesus is coming. This is where it ends when you listen to slander, when you hear the word of God and you don't tremble at it, when you are told this is where your life is and where you get your faith and you don't open this book and you sit in front of a television set and fill your mind with filth. How can you respect the word of God when the Lord says set no wicked thing before your eyes and you're in a video and you watch stuff that's out of the pit of hell and the name of Jesus being crucified and mocked.

No, no, no, no saints, not at this last hour. You don't tremble at the word of God if you can do that. You read that I set no wicked thing before my eyes and you say that's me Lord, I tremble.

That's why I won't look at smut, that's why I don't want television filth in my mind because God said no. His word says no. Little by little you see the hand of God's restraining hand being lifted from this nation.

How else can you explain that here in America now something's happened that couldn't have happened even 20 years ago? How is it that they can make movies now that make Jesus out to be a filthy man, a fornicator? This was just two years ago that movie came out mocking Christ and yet this year they make a hero out of America's biggest pornographer Larry Flint and now he's the biggest thing in America today. The pornographer is glorified and Jesus spit upon. How else but the hand of God, the restraining hand of the Holy Ghost being lifted.

That couldn't have happened if the restraining hand of the Holy Ghost hadn't been lifted some. And God said it's being lifted little by little by little. The hand, his restraining hand is being lifted from the nation and I tell you it's being lifted from the hands of many so-called Christians who are playing games with the Holy Ghost.

You say, wait a minute Brother Wilkerson, you're preaching Old Testament. You're not preaching grace. Alright, go with me to Hebrews.

You want New Testament? I say lovingly, I give you New Testament. Bless you Jesus. Hebrews 12.

Folks, which Testament is it in? The New. The Day of Grace. The book of Hebrews 12 chapter verse 18, beginning to read please.

For we are not come unto the mount that may be touched. In other words, we're not under Mount Sinai, we're not under the law now, that burned with fire. Now folks, by the way, we are not under the ceremonial law.

We are still under the moral law, the ten commandments. We are still under that law. Tell me which one that you can break and get to heaven.

We're not under the ceremonial law, the washing of pots, and the some 350 priestly commandments. We're not under that. And that doesn't save you.

The Bible means that the moral commandments will not save you. You can keep all the ten commandments and still go to hell if you don't have a heart for Jesus, if you don't give your heart to Christ. For it will not come unto the mouth that might be touched, that burned with fire, not unto blackness and darkness and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, which voice they heard, it treated that the words should not be spoken to them anymore, for they could not endure that which was commanded.

And if so much as a beast touched the mountain, it shall be stoned or thrust through with a dart. And so terrible was the sight that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake. But ye are come, where? To Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling speak better things than that of Abel.

See, I'll tell you what. Read this, if you have King James. Read this verse, verse 25, with me, please.

See that you refused not him that speaketh, for if they escape not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven. Not just those of the Old Testament, but we under the new. He said, how do you expect? If you're not going to hear, if you're not going to obey, how do you expect to expect? How much more shall we not escape? How much more shall we not escape? I'll tell you what, I'm going to have to close.

I don't preach this long anymore. Unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation, and wrath, for there's no respect of persons with God. Now, that's Romans 2.8. Galatians 3.104, foolish Galatians, who's bewitched you that you should not obey the truth? Who's bewitched you that you And then, who hindered you that you should not obey the truth? Now, folks, before I close, I have to, I can't close this unless I tell you this.

You say, Brother Dave, I'm interested, how do I keep the restraining hand of God in my life? How many want the restraining power of the Holy Ghost in your life? I tell you, one of the valuable things in my life, I value more than anything else. All right, listen to me, please. God restrains His people from their sins and their lust.

Listen, by implanting and infusing in their hearts His holy fear. Listen to it, please. By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil.

Proverbs 14.16 A wise man feareth and then departs from evil. He fears, then he departs from evil. But the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil.

Now, listen to it. Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness, of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Folks, all my life, every victory I've won, everything I've seen God do, when the enemy come in and try to lay something on my heart and get me into a habit, it's been the fear of God implanted in my heart. And the Holy Ghost restrains by implanting His fear, His holy fear in your heart. The fear of the Lord is not in the land anymore.

The fear of God is not being preached from our pulpits anymore. This holy reverence for His word, this holy righteous fear of God, He implants it. This is how He restrains you, by the fear of God.

He said very closely, with fear and trembling. In fact, this is Paul speaking to the Corinthians. He attributed their victories, He said, because you received Titus and you heard His word with trembling and you revered Him.

You heard His word and you revered the word and you revered Titus on my message. I sent to you, you revered Him and you revered the word that you hear and you obeyed God, you obeyed

His word and that produced the fear of God. Now folks, you cannot, pray all you want for the restraining power of the Holy Ghost.

I don't know how He does it other than this, but I do know that I can't produce the fear of God in my life. I cannot pump it up. I cannot work it up.

There's nothing I know humanly that you can do to have the fear of God to bring forth this restraining power of the Holy Ghost. He works through this instrument of godly fear. And I'll tell you, any man and woman who's walking a holy life, yes, the love of God, the revelation of the mercy of God, once you have the fear of God, that becomes the most holy blessed thing in your life.

I had a young man come to me just recently. He's in Bible school. In fact, he used to sleep in a park here, and he's in Central Bible School, the young man we sent there.

He talked to me the other day. He said, Brother David, before I came to Times Square Church, I went to all churches, and I was living in sin, using drugs. He said, all I heard was that God loved me.

He said, I heard that all over the city. I walked in Times Square Church, and I heard a thundering message about sin, and I ran to the altar. I ran.

He said to me, that was the greatest mercy that God ever showed me. Everybody in the street asked him, you know, God loves me. Well, folks, we reverence, I don't think there's been any greater grace and mercy preaching that's come from this pulpit.

We have been merciful preachers that's come from all who stood in this pulpit. But I'm telling you now, listen closely, if you do not have the fear of God in you, and when, do you read the scripture and say, oh God, inflame my heart when I see it there, let it be a part of my life, let me work it into my whole body by your spirit? Do you do that? Two things. Two things.

In fact, there were three things that were required. the word of Israel. Moses said to Israel, if you want God's restraining power, if you want His blessing in your life, first of all, you will fear the Lord, and you will obey His commandments.

You will fear the Lord, you will obey His commandments, and hear His voice. Hear His voice. Now, God will speak to you, but it takes two things that are required of you.

Both prayer and study of the word. Now, folks, the fasting, what fasting does, it enhances these two things. It enhances prayer, it enhances the reading of the word.

And fasting is important, but these two things that you must have, you must have consistent, dedicated Bible reading, where you go into this and say, oh God, I'm reading this until you implant your blazing fear in my heart, that your restraining power be in my life as long as I live. And you pray against your sin. That's right, you pray the blessing of God on the world and the salvation of your family.

Pray, oh God, lay hold of me, expose everything that's unlike Jesus Christ. And folks, I'm going to tell you, I'm telling you now, if you've never heard anything I've ever preached in this pulpit, hear me now before I close, and to prove I'm closing, I'll close my Bible and I'll close this. God is absolutely, I don't know how else to explain it, but biting at the bit.

God is just wanting to overpower us with an outpouring of his spirit, and he wants to do the miraculous in our midst, something beyond anything you and I could conceive. I picture a time coming with such joy in this house, such joy because of repentance, because of the laying down of everything that hinders the flow, because once you deal with sin, all the rivers open, all the rivers, all the blessings, they begin to flow. Hallelujah.

He says, thy paths drop fatness, and he said in his rivers there is much water, there is so much water he wants to pour out on this church, so many miracles he wants to come, so many things, but he can't do it until we have clean hands and a pure heart, and that thing that you won't deal with is hidden there, God's going to bring it out because he loves you. He says, I don't want you to go that path, and the only reason he shows you a picture of a man without restraint is so that you will say, God, I want your restraints in my life. Hallelujah.

He does it by contrast, because he loves us. Will you stand, please? I can't help it. I'm back to screaming.

I can't help it anymore. Pastor Carter can help it. You get fired up, you've got to let it out.

Let's bow our heads. I don't even know what the mind of the Lord is yet on this altar call. Let's just bow our heads and wait on the Lord a minute, and while our heads are bowed, and since I don't know how to give an altar call tonight on this, I don't know.

If God's talking to you, why don't you just get out of your seat and come down here? If God's dealt with you, if the hand of the Lord's on you now, if you've been convicted by what you heard, you just get down here and say, Jesus, I know you care about me, I know you love me, but I've got to deal with this. God, I'm not going to make peace with my sin. I want you, Holy Ghost, to deliver me.

I want to walk before God righteously. I want freedom in my life. I want to be pure and righteous before Holy God.

Hallelujah. Yes, it's His righteousness, but He wants to sanctify you. That's what we're talking about, the sanctifying power.

Hallelujah. He justifies you so that He can sanctify you. Hallelujah.

Up in the balcony, just go to the stairs on either side. Lord, speak to everyone in this congregation that needs to walk down here and settle something. Lord, you put your finger on sin because you love us.

Oh, God, set your people free. Set me free. Keep me free.

Let everybody in this house be set free and kept free. Hallelujah. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Lord, take covetousness out of our hearts. Show us everything, oh Lord, that hinders the flow of the anointing. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Is the Holy Spirit dealing with you? I don't think you should come to the Spirit dealing with you, but the Spirit dealing with you, open your heart. That's all.

The Holy Spirit speaking to you, just open your heart. That's when the singing and the praising and the worship comes, because you're free. Hallelujah.

You heard two very strong messages this morning and this afternoon. Mingled with grace. You heard a strong word tonight.

Mingled with grace. That one day when you and I had gathered around the throne, it's going to take you a hundred time years just to stop hugging Brother Carter and I for bringing you truth. You won't let go.

And when we turn, you'll be saying, thank you, Pastor. Thank you, Pastor Chris. Thank you, Pastor Dave.

Thank you, Teresa. Thank you, those who stood here. Thank you.

Do you thank God for His cutting knife? Do you thank God for the mirror He holds up in front of us and says, if you yield, I bless you, if you're going to be stubborn about it, here's the price you're going to have to pay. And He tells you the price so you don't have to pay it because He wants to deliver you. Will you believe the Lord now that He loves you enough that He's going to hear your cry and above anything else there should be a commitment that you made that you make tonight.

Believe me, I am going, this year, to be a student of this book. I am going to go into this word and when I read what happens to Saul, that, oh folks, I was reading the other day the curses in Leviticus, or the numbers in Deuteronomy, the blessings and the curses, and I said, oh God, I want your blessings. And I know what will happen if I don't walk with you Lord.

Those are the curses that I have to pay. The fear of God gripped my heart. I prayed all over the, I took my Bible there, laid it out, and all of my apartment just weeping before the Lord said, thank you Jesus for your grace and mercy.

Thank you for your fear that's in my heart. Hallelujah. Glory be to God.

God means what he says. He's no respecter of persons. He wants to give you peace tonight.

If you will lay down your sin. Raise your hands. Lord, I pray for everyone to have their hands raised before you now.

Oh most holy, righteous Savior, holy, righteous God. You want to consider us and account us as righteous before the Father. You're there right now before the Father interceding.

For anyone standing with their hands raised, you're saying, Father, look upon these. They have heard the word and they want to obey. And because they want to obey, now, Holy Ghost, come, Holy Spirit, empower them.

Holy Spirit, give them hope. Give them faith now to believe that God will drive out the enemy and God's restraining power, the Holy Ghost will come right now. Hallelujah.

And give them power. Power over all the powers of darkness. Hallelujah.

Pray this from your gut right now. Oh Jesus, I know I need you. I can't do it on my own.

I give you my sins. I give you my habits. I don't want them, Lord.

I acknowledge before your presence that I have sinned against you. I want freedom. I want deliverance.

Oh, God, put a love in your heart. Put a love in my heart. For your word, that I may study it, and that I may do it as you caused me to hear it.

Oh, Jesus, cause me to tremble at your word. Now, let me pray for you again. Father, I ask you to encourage those tonight that feel, they may have heard this message and say, this seems so impossible.

Oh, Lord, it's not grievous. It's not hard. It's saying, Lord, I want you to cause me to hate my sin, and I want to turn to you with all my heart, and I ask you to empower me, empower me with your Holy Ghost.

I want you to pray this with me. Holy Spirit, come again, fresh and alive, with your restraining power in my heart from this day on. I will value it, I will hold to it, and by God's grace, I will obey you.

Hallelujah. Now, just thank him in your own words. Thank him.

Hallelujah. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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