

These Men Have Been With Jesus

by David Wilkerson

The distinguishing marks of those who have been with Jesus include a hunger and thirst for a greater measure of Christ, an insatiable appetite to get to know Him better, and a desire to grow in the fullness of Christ.

Duration: 1:08:41

Scripture: Acts 4:1, Acts 4:13

Topics: "Personal Relationship", "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher recounts a horrifying story of a parent who brutally murdered their own daughter. Despite the shock and disbelief, the Holy Spirit brought peace to the church community. The preacher emphasizes that the church members, who had a strong relationship with Jesus and were prayer warriors, were able to withstand this tragedy. The sermon also highlights the power of the name of Jesus and the resurrection of Christ, emphasizing that it is through Him that miracles and transformation occur. The preacher encourages believers to prioritize their personal relationship with Jesus and find satisfaction and joy in their secret closet, rather than seeking external sources for revival.

Transcript

My message this morning, these men have been with Jesus. These men have been with Jesus. Go to Acts the 4th chapter, please.

Acts the 4th chapter. Please, again, remember Pastor Carter and his wife as they're on vacation, resting in Canada. Pray that the Lord refresh them and give them renewed health and strength.

Acts 4, first 13 verses, 1 through 13, please. If you don't have your Bible, peek at somebody's next to you. Folks, don't be afraid to share your Bible.

We may have visitors here that didn't remember to bring theirs, so... Verses 1 through 13, and as they spake unto the people, the priest and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they had taught the people and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. They laid hands on them and put them in hold until the next day, for it was now eventide. Albeit many of them which heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand.

It came to pass on the morrow that their rulers and elders and scribes and Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander and as many as were the kindred of the high priest were gathered

together at Jerusalem. When they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power or by what name have you done this? Then Peter filled with the Holy Ghost said unto them, Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined to the good deed done to the impotent man by what means he is made whole, be it known unto you all and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him does this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught by you builders, which has become the head of the corner.

Neither is there salvation in any other, but there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. These men have been with Jesus.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the word that brings life and joy to our hearts. Heavenly Father, you have gathered a people, a particular people, a special people together, Lord, from all over the world here this morning. Those who come for the first time, you have chosen this time and this place, you've chosen the word to bring, and you know exactly what every one of us need.

Those in the overflow and annex, those that are here in the main auditorium and the balcony behind me, wherever my voice is heard, we pray Holy Spirit that you would quicken the word, make it life, make it life, speak life into us. Oh God, quicken us by your Holy Ghost. This word has no power unless the Holy Ghost ignites it.

There has to be an igniting of it by the Holy Ghost. He has to make it life to us. Holy Spirit, do so we pray.

Sanctify me to deliver it in Jesus' name. Amen. This is quite a story.

Peter and John go up to the temple and there's a man that's been there, he's been lame since birth, he's never walked a step in his life. Every day they bring him, lay him at the gate of the temple and he begs for money. Peter and John come by, you remember the story, they said, look, we don't have any money, we have no silver, no gold, but what we have we'll give you.

In the name of Jesus, get up and walk. He got up and walked, all right, and he started leaping all over the temple, up and down. Jesus healed me, Jesus healed me.

And people marveled, they all knew him. They recognized him as a decrepit, crippled man that had been at the gate for years and years. Everybody knew him, the high priest knew him, Caiaphas knew him, they all knew him.

He was a talk of, in fact, many of them, I'm sure the ruler of the synagogue would say, get him out, it looks terrible, right at God's house to have somebody begging. The priest, the captain of the temple, the Sadducees came upon the disciples being grieved. Grieved at a miracle, grieved that thousands were getting saved.

Can you imagine such backslidden preachers? They took into custody Peter and John and threw them in jail. They spent the night in prison, and the next day they bring them to trial. Here is Annas, the high priest, and Caiaphas, and Alexander and John, these are also priests, and all the relatives, and kindred, and the rulers of the synagogue, and the Sadducees.

They're all gathered together in this courtroom, and they're going to bring Peter and John, they're in custody, and bring him before them and judge them. Hmm. By what power, they said, by what name have you done this? Well, what a farce.

What a foolish question. By whose name are you doing this? Look, they had 5,000 people repenting and crying all over the city, Jesus' name. They had their own priest getting saved and admitting to everybody that they helped crucify Christ.

They had a lame man that was healed running all over Jerusalem saying, Jesus healed me, Jesus healed me, and they're saying, by what name? The ignorance, the blindness, the purposeful blindness of these high and mighty men sitting in judgment. By what power, what name is this all happening? They're afraid to even mention his name at this point as if, you know, it might strike them dead to even mention it. Peter cried out the top of his voice, his name is Jesus Christ of Nazareth, that's what's happening here.

They were stunned, the Bible said, at the boldness of Peter and John. They marveled, the scripture says, and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. Now, took knowledge in the Greek means known by a distinguishing mark.

There was something that distinguished these men from all other men who'd ever appeared in that courtroom before. There was something so different, so marked, they were marked by some influence. That's what it means, they took knowledge.

There's some power that's gotten a hold of them. These men are different, something is distinguishing them. And then they turned to one another and said, these men have been with Jesus.

These men have been with Jesus. And folks, at that very moment, these disciples were fulfilling the great commission, beginning in Jerusalem to be witnesses. They were witnessing through the presence of Christ in their lives.

This is the witness to the world in the last days. It's not going to be preaching in the last days that brings the world to its knees. Yes, he said, go out and preach the gospel.

But folks, there's a way to preach it. It must be preached verbally. But the most powerful way and the witness to the world in the last days are people who have been sighted with Jesus and full of his presence and the world takes note.

These men, these women have been with Jesus. There's a difference, there's something distinguishes them from everyone else in the world. From all Christianity, they are distinguished.

There's a mark on them. Glory be to God. Marked by the presence of Jesus.

Now, what are these distinguishing marks on those who have been with Jesus? Now, I speak only of those who spend quality time with the Lord every day. I said every day they have time. I get so discouraged when I hear Christians say, I don't have time to pray.

I don't have time to go in the secret cause and get along with Jesus. I don't have time to be with Jesus. And yet they can sit and watch that singing group called Sopranos.

Folks, I've never seen the program. Sopranos. I hear it's exalting the mafia.

No time for Jesus. But all the time they need to watch TV. To go shopping.

Oh, come on, you don't tell me you don't spend two hours in the mall. You have the time. You have time for everything else but to be alone with Jesus.

Many. Let me tell you, you can't spend quality time with Jesus without it marking you. Without distinguishing you.

There are marks. I know when people have been alone with the Lord. I know when people have been with Jesus.

And you know it. There are marks that are left by that experience. Let me talk about some of these marks that mark those who've been with Jesus.

First and predominantly, a hunger and thirst for a greater measure of Christ. Those who spend quality time in the Lord can never get enough of Jesus. You see, they're not ever satisfied with their initial measure of Christ.

When you get saved, the Bible said you're given a measure of faith. Paul said that very clearly. Given a measure of faith.

And every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Then he added, God has dealt to every man a measure of faith. He's given you enough to bring you to himself.

To get you saved, in other words. And some people, that's all they want. They want to be saved.

I'm not going to hell now. I'm saved. And they want enough of Jesus just to keep a good reputation.

Just enough Jesus, you know, to endure one hour of service on Sunday morning. Because most Christians go to churches where they're bored to death. Like one preacher said, you start 11 o'clock sharp and end 12 o'clock dull.

You see, there's some people just satisfied with that initial faith that brought them salvation. And they don't want any greater measure of Christ. But you see, the man or woman's been shut in with the Lord.

They're marked by an insatiable appetite to get to know Jesus better. They don't want to be next month where they are this month. They don't want to be tomorrow what they are today.

They want more of Jesus. And the more they get, the more they want. There's an insatiable hungering and thirsting after the Lord Himself.

Not after theology, not after new doctrines. You see, a lot of people are in what I call maintenance mode. They're just trying to maintain what they have.

They're really not interested in going to... Because they know if they get real close to Jesus, He's going to make some demands on them. He's going to call for separation from the world. He may even ask them to go to a mission field.

God forbid! They have to leave their Cadillac here and they have to give up so much. Poor Christian, if I get too close to Jesus, He's going to make me too much like Himself. Then I'm going to have to love my enemies.

My mother-in-law. My boss. Don't want to make those changes.

Too much risk getting too close to Jesus. Ephesians, the fourth chapter. Please.

Fourth chapter of Ephesians. Verses 13 through 15. It started at verse 11.

And He gave some apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Verse 13. Until we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect or mature man.

That word perfect is mature. Mature man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lay in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things which is the head even to Christ.

Now look at me please. Let me tell you something. Let me tell you why people run around looking for some new fat gospel.

Let me tell you why people are always looking somewhere else than their secret closet. It's because they are strangers to the secret closet. They are not men and women who have been shut in with Jesus because those who are shut in with Jesus, they are so satisfied in that relationship and it's growing more and more satisfying.

There's more and more joy than they've ever experienced before. And you can't get them to run off to some far off revival someplace because they know where the revival is. They know it's in the secret closet.

It's shut in with Jesus. And their relationship, their intimacy with Christ is growing. And they are satisfied because the Lord's showing them things in the word they've never seen before.

And they go to church and the pastor's preaching what Jesus already showed them and the pastor's only confirming it. I've got to quiet down a little bit. You know, I was walking into the entrance on Broadway over here and I heard somebody preaching and screaming and I went up and I said, who's that screaming? He said, it's you.

And I listened and it was me. I said, turn him down. He said, all of these pastors, evangelists and all this teaching is to get you, get us all so that we're not going to be tossed by winds and waves, adopted by the slight of men and cunning craftiness, new doctrines and being led astray by men who are making merchandise of you, that you come in unity of faith and that you grow up into a perfect, mature person and to the measure of the stature, grow up in Jesus, that you become mature in Christ.

He said, that's what this is all about. I want to tell you something, not every believer is looking for a Holy Ghost-fired church. Not at all.

Not everybody wants to sit on a convicting message that makes them uneasy in their sins and compromise. Some people who are satisfied with a very small initial measure of Christ are not going to come to a church like this for very long. Because you see, if you are going to hold on to a sin here in this church, you're not going to get just milk.

You're going to get some meat. You see, the milk, according to the Scripture, is for babies. Not just according to Scripture, according to mama.

Who knows? You see, Paul the Apostle said these initial doctrines of salvation and eternal life and the resurrection, those are basic gospel truths. They are marvelous truths, but he said, that's milk. You go to some churches, all you'll hear, there are multitudes right now, Sunday morning, all over the United States and around the world, and all they get every Sunday morning is salvation, salvation, salvation.

That's very comforting to those who've been saved for twenty, thirty years. They've been saved. But you see, if the preacher's preaching about salvation, he's not talking about that secret in their life.

He's not talking about the compromise. He's not dealing with sin in them. He's talking about the sinner.

But see, I'm saved now. He's not talking about me. Preach it, brother.

How do you grow in the fullness of Christ if you're not willing to sit under the reproof and under the correction that produces it? You can't grow. There are among people who would come and sit underneath and they'd choke on it. There are some of you choking already on what you've heard.

I've only given you one little scrap of meat because you've been living on milk. Hebrews 5. You love the word? Then follow me in it, please. Hebrews 5, verses 12 to 14.

12 to 14, fifth chapter of Hebrews. For when the time you ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God. And it become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness, for he's a babe. You see, if you don't hear gospel preaching that produces conviction leading to righteousness, you're living on milk. You don't want to look at the next verse.

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even to those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. You cannot have discernment without having the preaching that brings it forth, that brings forth repentance among believers. Repentance isn't something you do once, it's something you do all your lifetime.

That brings discernment between what is good and what is evil. And what the apostles say, Hey, look, folks, look this way for just a minute. He said, Hey, look, you've been in the church so long, you've heard from apostles, evangelists, teachers, prophets, by now you ought to be a teacher.

Well, this is some morning, I'll tell you. And he says, you ought to be teaching by now. He said, you're babies, you still want just nothing but milk.

It's all you want. You want the bottle. And that's all you want.

You don't want to meet. You don't want to grow up. You see, those who are sudden with Jesus are growing.

Every time you go along with Jesus in the secret closet and give him your faith, your confidence, your worship, your praise, you're reaching out to him and saying, More of you, Jesus. I love you. I worship you.

And you're just sudden with him. You automatically grow. There is growth.

You won't see it. You won't feel it, but you're growing. Hallelujah.

I told you before, one of the greatest complaints we get in our vast mailing list is this. We can't find a church with life. The preaching is bland and dry.

We're not growing. We thrive on your written messages, and we're so hungry. And I feel sometimes that's very flattering, but it shouldn't be that way that people would get from a written message that we preach here and get their spiritual life out of that rather than church.

Folks, we don't boast here. This is only one of many, many places God is working and bringing forth the word. We are just one, and God help us if there's any pride in that.

God help us. He'll lift his hand immediately. God forbid.

Times Square Church is only one very small factor in the work of God in these last days. Very small. We thank God for it, but we never boast of that.

And then people say, I can't find a church that brings life, and everything's so dead and dry anymore, and so many foolish things creeping into the body. And then others write and say, they tell us that they've decided, because they can't find what they're looking for, that they'll go alone with the Lord. And we get letters, and people have been shut in with the Lord for two, three, four, and five years.

And, folks, their letters, you can tell the difference. There's a mark on them. There's a distinctive mark.

They talk about Jesus with such depth. I get messages. They'll say, I've been in prayer of the Lord, asked me to share this with you.

Would you test it? And they're not trying to be revelatory. They're not trying to be very special. It's just that God, because of their familiarity with the Lord now and because of their intimacy with Christ, they're seeing and hearing marvelous truths.

They're being quickened by the Holy Spirit. And, folks, everyone that's shut in with God is prepared for any crisis that comes. Every crisis that comes, you prepare.

You can't wait until a crisis comes and then try to run to the secret closet and suddenly get a touch from God. You have to long before you get in it. Folks, I just came back from three weeks overseas and preaching to multitudes and in Moscow and Helsinki and in St. Petersburg, Russia.

And, folks, I tell you, it was months on my knees, months shut in with Jesus, asking God to put a love in my heart and asking the Lord to prepare me that I would go in the fullness of His blessing, the fullness of the gospel, the fullness of Christ, the fullness of the blessing of God Himself and the Holy Ghost. And He answered that prayer. But, folks, I couldn't just run over there and get on my knees the night before and pray, Oh, God, prepare me for this task ahead of me.

No way! You can't be shut in with Jesus and then come out and talk about anything else but Him. What's in you is going to come out of you. You bump a cup of coffee and see what comes out.

What? Not hot chocolate, no. Whatever's inside is coming out. And when the devil bumps you, what's coming out? Jesus.

All today you talk, I tell you, I know when somebody's shut in with Jesus, when they come from Christ, when they've been shut in with the Lord, and these men, these women have been with Jesus, because

that's what they talk about. They talk about something new God has said to them out of the Word of God. I was reading the Word last night.

I was in prayer, and the Lord showed me this. He showed me that. They're not trying to preach it to you.

They're just so excited about it. And it's bringing joy. It's bringing comfort.

And it's preparing from the crisis that's coming ahead in their life. Someday a telephone call, and then suddenly panic. No.

Suddenly the Holy Ghost comes with quickening power and comfort because they've been shut in with Him. Boy, right now all over the United States, between services, Saturday night they go out to eat, or Sunday after church they go out to eat, and those who are not shut in with the Lord, they're talking about the Oscars, they're talking about some guy named Tony, they're talking about football, they're talking sports, women are talking about shoes, fashion, hairstyles. Where did you get those fingernails? You may laugh, but that's what's happening.

Now, I'm not saying that's wrong, but that's all they talk about. You can sit there for half an hour and not hear one word about Jesus, not one word of revelation, nothing that comes from the heart of God, nothing that warms your heart, nothing that touches your soul. Because they're worldly-minded, they are not shut in with the Lord.

They're living on this initial experience. I got saved 15 years ago. I can tell you the time and the place.

So what? What's God said to you yesterday? What did you hear this morning? Another mark of those who've been with Jesus, a holy boldness and spiritual authority. The more a person's with Jesus, the more like Him he becomes, the purer he becomes, the cleaner he becomes, the more he's secure in the righteousness of faith. He knows it.

He's assured of it. He's come to the Lord, and the Holy Ghost has dealt with his sins. The Holy Spirit's helped him mortify his sins.

And folks, the more righteous you become, the more bold you become. The Bible says, listen to what it says, Proverbs 28.1, The wicked flee when no man's chasing him. But the righteous are bold as a lion.

Bold as a lion. Folks, I'm not talking about in-your-face, brass, condemnatory preaching or witnessing. I'm not talking about that at all.

The word bold here means secure, confident. The Bible said, the righteous are confident and secure as a lion. A lion stands up there and says, I know who I am.

Folks, a Christian says, I know who I am in Christ. He's not afraid of the devil, he's not afraid of man, because he's been shunned with Jesus, and he's been clothed in a holy boldness. This holy boldness is really something to behold, and it was beheld here by these men.

Folks, the Bible doesn't give us all the details of this trial, but there was a protocol, and it was something to behold. Just read some of the stories of how they came into court. First of all, the lower priest would come and sit on the sides, and all the relatives on another side, and all the dignitaries, and they're all in robes.

And here they come, and Peter and John, of course, have been brought in and have two seats. They're already there in the judgment hall. And all of this ceremony, and all this pomp, is designed to intimidate them.

And here comes, everybody takes their seats, and everybody, total silence. And then suddenly everybody rises, and in comes Annas and Caiaphas in their finery, and in their miters that stick way up here, and they're holding their canes, and they walk in dignity, and everybody bows, as if to say, John, Peter, look at those powerful men that stand before you. Better be careful how you speak, your tone of voice.

You're before powerful, dignified leaders. And Caiaphas and Annas wanted them to be totally intimidated. And I picture Peter turning to Paul, and he says, wait till they see King Jesus sitting on his throne.

Peter and John were not intimidated whatsoever. And suddenly the clerk says to Peter and John, will you rise? Face the judge. They rise and face Caiaphas and Annas in his dignified and toned voice.

By what power, by what authority, have you done this? In other words, we didn't give you the power, we didn't give you the permission, we're the law here. What authority did you do this? What authority did you heal this man? Can you imagine how stupid that question is? By what human authority? And I can picture Peter. You know how impetuous he is? These men are not intimidated at all.

Honestly, I was thinking about this yesterday. I was just going over it in my mind. You know, they had to bring the charges up.

This wasn't just sudden, instant kind of thing. They went through all the protocol, and then Peter and John are called up, and I know what Peter's thinking. Let's get this meeting started.

Turn me loose. I've got a word from heaven for these men. And when I read in the Scripture, then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost.

I have to stop right there. And I'm saying to myself, this is not going to be a quiet meeting. This man has just come from the upper room.

This man has just been filled with the Holy Ghost. This man, you're talking about meeting with Jesus. He just met with the resurrected Christ.

They've all been with Jesus in His resurrected form, the Holy Ghost. Jesus came back in the Holy Ghost, and He communed with them. He filled them with His Spirit.

And these men, and the Bible says, then Peter, full of the Holy Ghost. Say, let me at him. Let me loose.

And you say to yourself, this is going to be some meeting. This is not going to be a lecture. This is going to be fire from heaven.

This Jesus-possessed, Holy Ghost-filled man stands before them, and I don't believe He just stood there quietly. I believe Peter was walking up and down, and though the sermon is only four verses recorded, I think that's just the summary. It could have been an hour long.

And in essence, He said, you examine us? You put us on trial as to how this happened? And the Bible says, you priests, you rulers. There had to be a finger to that. I can't say you without pointing a finger.

You priests, you rulers, and all of Israel, listen to me. It was the name of Jesus that accomplished this. It was Jesus of Nazareth who you crucified, and God raised Him from the dead, and He's alive.

He's alive. No, folks, it's not Peter judging these men. Paul said to the Thessalonians, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel.

But then in the next few verses, he says, but we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherished the children, because you were dear to us. And you see, this man was, Peter was so assured in Christ, he had come from Christ, and he's not trying to belittle these men, and he's not, folks, there are preachers that stand in the pulpit, sound like they have power, sound like they have authority, but they're just dictators. They've not been cited with the Lord, and they make up with loudness what they lack in anointing.

It's not loudness. It's not somebody walking all over the stage and screaming at you. That's not what this is all about, because there's something in his heart.

He wanted them to know that Jesus was alive. He wanted them to repent, and that's why he gave an altar call. That's exactly what he did.

He said, there's no other name. You've got to repent. There's no other salvation other than in His name.

He wanted these men to repent, because many of the priests had already repented, and the whole city is talking about Jesus now. You see, the holy boldness of those that are set in with God is tempered with a passion for Jesus, yes, but also a love for the lost, a love for the people to whom they preach. Folks, it's going to be more and more important in these last days to be alone with Jesus and come forth in His righteousness and boldness, because there's a political correctness now.

There's a political correctness in the land, and the very name of Jesus has become anathema, cursed, and many are going to crack under the persecution that's coming. When I was in Poland a few weeks ago, a minister friend of mine told me an experience he had under the Communists. When the Communists had taken over Poland, he was working in a factory that was owned and operated by the Communists, and he was called by the foreman of the factory to visit the office, and he said, Look, we've got the Communist bosses coming here this week for a big meeting, a conference, and they've got some English-speaking foreigners coming also to do business, and we need an interpreter.

Will you interpret for us? Because my friend, Brother Chesler, speaks. He's very fluent in English, and he said, I'll do it on one condition. I'm a Christian.

I walk with Jesus, and I won't drink, because, you know, vodka is as cheap as other beverages there. Vodka just flows all through the Balkans and through Russia, especially, and Finland, but especially in Russia, vodka is very cheap. If they raised the price of vodka, they'd have a revolution on their hands.

That's the truth. I'll tell you that. And so he agreed.

He said, You come. You don't have to drink, but you interpret. So he comes, and he sits near the boss and the foreman, and the vodka starts flowing, and the alcohol, and everybody's drinking, and Brother Chesler says no.

And the foreman is getting angrier and angrier, because the big boss, the Communist boss, says, Why isn't he drinking? Is he better than us? And everybody at the table is urging him to drink. And he tells the

whole group, all the leaders, the Communist leaders, who could have killed him. He could have been jailed.

And he said, I agreed. I would come here. I will interpret, but I'll not drink with you.

I'm a Christian. I'm a follower of Jesus, and I can't do it. I'm going to take a stand.

Folks, you talk about holy boldness. This man is a praying man. He's been shutting with Jesus.

He's come to the very presence of the Lord. He prayed before he walked into the meeting. He'd been praying for a few days after the Lord helped me to take the stand.

There's no question. He wasn't afraid. I don't care if I go to jail.

I'm not going to drink with these men. He took the stand. And the foreman was raging mad.

But the next day, he was called into the foreman's office. He said to Pastor John, he said, You're a lucky man. You're very fortunate.

He said, The big boss called me this morning and said, Hey, look, if we ever have a secret mission and we need somebody we trust, I want that man. I want that man. Folks, there's a holy boldness that comes from being shut in with God, shut in with Jesus.

No fear of man. No fear of demons. No fear of false prophets.

No fear of man. And take the stand at any cost. Hallelujah.

Now, the final mark I want to talk about is a physical, visible evidence that God is with you. With them. There's a physical, visible evidence that happens all the time.

And in this incidence, the Scripture says, Beholding the man with his shield standing with them. See, Peter and John are there and they're finished preaching and they call this man to their side. They're standing right there waiting for the judgment call.

And these priests looking down at this man, beholding the man with his shield standing with them, they could say nothing against it. And they said, What shall we do with these men? For that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all that dwell in Jerusalem. And we can't deny it.

See, there was visible evidence that they had been with Jesus. Visible evidence that they had been in the presence of the Lord. What did Peter and John do as soon as they were released? The Scripture says, And being let go, they went to their own company and reported all that had happened.

They went right back to the presence of Jesus. They had come from the presence of Jesus. They immediately go back to a prayer meeting.

They share it with all the elders of the church and all the congregation. What does a congregation do? The Scripture says, They prayed, They laid hands on him and said, Lord, behold their threatenings and grant unto these thy servants, Peter and John, that with all boldness they will speak thy word by stretching forth your hand to heal and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. He says, Oh God, they prayed.

Thank you for the boldness you've given us. But that's just the beginning. Keep us bold.

Grant that we will speak with a holy boldness and that you give visible evidence that you're with us. That by the hand of this holy child Jesus and in his name you do signs and wonders and miracles that everybody can see and know that God is with us, that Jesus is with us. You know, when these men turned to one another and said, These men have been with Jesus, Peter and John had to have overheard that.

Can you imagine them winking at each other? Because you see, the priest is saying, These men have been with Jesus. They're talking about the historical Jesus. They're talking about the Jesus who walked in the streets of Jerusalem, who's now in glory.

And he said, These men, you know, months ago, this is now at least 50 days later and it could be much longer than that. And here they are saying, These men have been with Jesus. Jesus walked this earth and whatever was in his spirit has rubbed off on them.

They've been affected by his authority and his power. They couldn't speak like this because they're unlearned men. Can you imagine Peter and John thinking? If they only knew.

If they only knew. They're saying, We've been with Jesus back then. We were with him last night.

And we were with him this morning. And as soon as this stuff is all over, we're going right back to him. Have we been with Jesus? Oh, yes, we've been with Jesus.

With the resurrected Christ, we've been with him. These are the men who said, We will give ourselves to prayer. That's the presence of Jesus.

And to the study of the Word, we will give ourselves to it. Hallelujah. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

I told you that those who are with Jesus with quality time, they're prepared for every crisis. We got a letter from a couple this week. I was reading, sent in from our mailing list.

This couple are prayer warriors. You talk about two people shot in with Jesus. You can't read their letters without knowing that they've been with Jesus.

A knock came on the door. Their daughter had gone out with a girlfriend. Hadn't been gone too long.

And a madman, insane, kidnapped them. Daughter was 24. Took them out in a some lonely place.

Released the daughter's girlfriend. Then he took a knife. Slit their daughter's throat.

Stabbed her in the head five or six times. Then carved a symbol on her back. Killed her.

Murdered her. Police knocked on the door. With a sudden shock.

Hearing the gruesome story. But within an hour, they told us the Holy Spirit had come in. Holy Spirit had absolute, settled peace.

There were tears. The next day there were questions why. But those why questions soon vanished.

People, when it hit the news and everything else, people were saying, how can any parent take that? Neighbors are thinking they're going to collapse. But the people in the church, the pastor, everybody else

knew that these people would not break. Because they'd been with Jesus.

These were prayer warriors. They knew where to go. They had prepared for this moment.

God had prepared them by this very, by just being shunned with Him. They had grown in the knowledge. They knew that God wouldn't allow anything in their life unless there was a purpose to it.

They knew they understood the Word of God. And they didn't fall apart. They didn't question their faith.

They didn't look for sin in their life. Because they knew they'd been made right with God in the secret closet of prayer. And then they and the other children began to pray for the killer.

That the Lord would save him. And that the town couldn't accept. They couldn't believe.

In fact, they were on media and they'd go from church to church ever since, telling how the Lord had put desire in their heart to pray for this man that they'd forgiven. And now they're a testimony to a whole wide section of that country. A countryside testimony.

And people are saying, that's the real Jesus. That's real Christianity. These people that don't break when such a horrible gruesome thing happens in their home they still stand strong in Christ.

How can that be unless you come from Him? How can that be? I stood before twelve hundred pastors just less than two weeks ago in Moscow. Came from everywhere. I think it's... Russia has, somebody said, 89 states.

That doesn't mean the provinces are broke off, but just Russia itself. They came all the way from Siberia. And in closing, one of the closing services, I preached my heart out.

And the Holy Spirit came on me. And I said, you've been sitting here listening to me. I've been preaching to you for two days.

I said, there's been weeping, there's been rejoicing, and God's been doing a work. You've got a new burden for your families. But I said, the Holy Spirit just spoke to my heart that there are many of you here making this your last conference because you have already made up your mind to leave the ministry.

You're going to quit because you're discouraged. And I said, I know that you're here. And I said, if it's only ten or twelve, I want to pray for you.

And there was no place up at the front, only a stage much bigger than this, a huge stage. And I said, all I know, if you want me to pray for you, if you had it in your mind that this is going to be your last meeting, you're going to go home and resign the ministry. You're not going to preach anymore.

You're giving up on the ministry. I want you to come up stage here and I want to pray for you. It was a stampede.

Over 250 pastors. In fact, our bodyguards, they insisted on bodyguards because so many people are being kidnapped if they have a reputation or anything. And the guards thought they hadn't heard the whole invitation, thought people were rushing me.

And they were trying to hold me back. I said, let him go, let him go. And I had to push off the guards.

And they filled the stage. And I'm standing there talking to the Holy Spirit, an interpreter here, and I said, God, I've never seen anything like this in my life. This is supernatural.

There's no human power. I can't do this to these men. All I did was give an invitation.

God, what's going on here? And the Holy Spirit said, remember all those months you were shut up in that room and you prayed day after day that God would give you love for these men? You remember praying and asking me to move on the Spirit and to send everyone home encouraged that everyone's discouragement would be healed? He said, do you remember that? I said, I do. He said, I'm answering your prayer. You see, folks, I could have never come in and spent a day before and asking God to do this.

No way. I'd spent time and I'd wept over these men and I knew it. And the Lord said, now I'm going to honor that.

And I turned around and said, what do I do now with these men? What do I do with men and women, husbands and wives, and they're weeping and some are on their knees and pastors couldn't even get up front and pound in the altar and crying out to God. I said, what do I do? He said, just turn and pray in the name of Jesus that everyone be restored and healed and a new vision to go back and take up the cross. And I just turned.

They couldn't, they didn't even understand me because the interpreter wasn't even interpreting half of it. I said, in the name of Jesus, all discouragement, everything in this world, every distraction, go! In the name of Jesus, be restored! God came down and restored and we've heard some good news recently that there were testimonies everywhere. I'm going home to preach.

I'm going home to lift up Jesus. Renewal. Healed by the power of Jesus' name.

Visible evidence that God was with us. And the Lord said, you haven't seen anything yet. If you stay, shut in with me.

If you come to every pastor's meeting from the presence of God. If you spend time alone with me. And folks, the next day they asked to have a meeting with me.

These were the three Pentecostal denominations in Russia. Pentecostal Union, that's the old timers. Most of them had been in jail under communism.

The leader had been in jail 18 years. His wife for 5 years. And these are veterans.

And then you have the unregistered Pentecostals. And then you have the charismatic Pentecostal movement. So there's three Pentecostal groups in Russia.

They had never before in history ever worked together on a meeting. Ever. This was the first time.

And the Holy Spirit was healing. And here they are all in one room, in one table with their wives and my team. Eighteen.

The pastor had... By the way folks, after I left they had another meeting. A unity meeting. And one of the greatest things that God did was to heal the Pentecostal movement in Russia.

To heal the Pentecostal various movements. Brought them together in unity. And we trust that that will stick and that it will grow.

But at the table, this pastor had been in prison for 18 years. He said, Brother David, I want to tell you a story. Now folks, this man is godly.

You can see it in his face. This man... I've heard stories sometimes that just stretches your belief system. It's so far out.

But this man is flesh and blood. And he's standing in front of me. He's a leader of 1200 churches in Russia.

And he just emits the presence of Christ. He said, Brother David, I was in one of the rough communist prisons for 18 years. My congregation took care of my wife while I was in prison.

His wife had been in prison prior to that for five years. And he said, Yes, there were hardships, but Jesus was so real in that prison. Jesus was so real to me.

He said, More real than I've ever known him in any time. Because he had this quality time to just talk to Jesus. The revelation that he received.

And the Lord gave him the respect of the prison guards and of everybody else. But many of the prison guards were hardened communists. And many of the prisoners, very, very difficult to reach.

But they respected this man. High expectation. High respect for this man.

He said, After 18 years, the Holy Spirit came to me and said, In three days, you're going to be released. Three days. He got word to his wife and congregation somehow.

And he testified. The Lord told him to testify. So he told all the prisoners, Three days from now, God's going to release me.

They laughed at him and said, No one has ever been released from this place. You'll die here. He said, Three days from now, I'm going to be released.

Third day came. Noon came. Nobody came.

And all the prisoners are watching. The guards are laughing at him. He said, No, God told me.

I am going to be released from this prison. He said, It got dark. He said, But God told me.

And outside the prison, down the block, waits his wife and congregation with flowers. They do everything with flowers in Russia. They gave me flowers.

They gave Gwen flowers. I'm standing up there with a bunch of roses on my thing. And I said, That's a nice thing to introduce to Times Square Church.

Roses. You know, 11 o'clock. And nothing.

Just a moment after 11 o'clock, over the loudspeaker. His name was called. Reverend Soso.

I forget his name. Long Russian name. You've been released.

Come to the office immediately. And the prisoners were stunned. Everybody was stunned.

The guards. And he goes, he walks out. And all the prisoners run to the top floor of the prison where they had a cafeteria.

There was some glass. You could see out in the streets. And they stood there.

The pastor said, They had the most exciting experience I've ever had. I told them in the name of Jesus, I would be released. And it would be on this day.

He said, On that day, 11 o'clock. A little after 11 o'clock. They called my name.

No explanation. I still don't know why. I don't know how.

They called my name. Led me out the door. I walked down the street.

And he said, I got to the corner. And I looked up. And all the prisoners were in the cafeteria.

They saw me. Embraced my wife. They saw all the flowers.

And they started screaming at the top of their voices, There is God. There is a God. There is a God.

Visible evidence. Visible evidence. Folks, what could be greater visible evidence than those among us who have been saved from drugs and alcohol and a messed up mind and a messed up life.

That's visible evidence that God is with you. God is with you. And folks, what greater visible evidence that God is in a church when invitations are given and people come streaming to the altar hungry for God, wanting a change in life.

Folks, we've seen hundreds and hundreds come streaming down these aisles. We were baptized this afternoon. We had so many.

We usually be baptized. We baptized Tuesday night for about 40 minutes. We're going to be baptized this afternoon.

The rest, we couldn't handle them in one service. That's wonderful visible evidence that God is with His church. That people in this house have been with Jesus.

These men have been with Jesus. Oh, blessed be the name of the Lord. Oh, my.

Did I preach that long stand? Please. You hungry for more of Jesus? How much time did you spend with Him this last week? Alone? Nobody around? Just you and Jesus? How many were with Him yesterday? You see, this can't be just a theory. It can't just be a theology or doctrine to us.

It has to be a lifestyle. It has to be something that we finally deal with and say, Look, I've heard this preached. I've said I'd do it.

Now it's time for me to become a seeker after Christ. I'm not going to be satisfied with the measure of Christ that I have. I want a full measure of Jesus.

I want to come into the full stature and into maturity in Jesus Christ, the Lord. Heavenly Father, I pray for those that are in this house. Lord, there's so many here for the first time.

And I don't know what they think of the preaching or the service. Lord, I believe that everyone that has an honest heart has to acknowledge that the Spirit of Christ is here. That Jesus is here.

And the Holy Spirit is wooing and He's calling to a deeper life, a closer walk. Lord Jesus, some have been getting so lazy and drifting so far from what they know they ought to be in Christ. Lord, forgive us.

Oh God, forgive us. Holy Spirit, do a miracle in some hearts this morning. Do a miracle.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Let me tell you what I feel the Holy Spirit saying to my heart.

I'm going to give an invitation. I'm going to ask you to step out of your seat boldly. Forget what people think.

In all honesty, if you've been neglecting Jesus, what you've been giving Him have been what we call devotional time. You've given a little devotional time and some hurried reading of the Scriptures. Just hurriedly reading.

You know, just grabbing a Bible and opening it and reading a couple of verses and going. You don't have that quiet, set time with the Lord. And when you don't, then your life becomes marked by the things that you're giving your time to.

If you're giving your time to TV, if you're giving your time to internet, that marks you. You talk about it. It's in your mind.

You come to church with it in your mind. We need to come into God's house with nothing but Jesus on our mind. I'm convinced more and more you don't have to know all the deep doctrines.

Even Peter said some of the things that Paul said are very hard to understand. But I know one thing. You can live an overcoming life and be fully satisfied if you'll simply spend time alone with Jesus.

And by faith and trust, believe His word. It's going to mark you. Your wife, your husband will know it.

Everybody will know it. You've been a changed person. That changes you.

The very awe, the very essence of Jesus will just pour out of you. People will see it. It doesn't mean that you have an aura around you like Moses had.

There'll be something comes out your voice, out of your demeanor and out of your walk that marks you, distinguishes you as somebody wholly given to Jesus. If you are not there yet, you say, Brother David, I think I'm drifting. I'm not where I should be with Jesus.

I want you to get out of your seat and come here. Let me pray for you and let's believe God. And in the annex, I want you to go forward, not in front of the screen, but between the screens.

And I'll pray for you there. I'll pray for you while you're there. And let's believe the Lord.

I have faith in my heart that what he did among the pastors, he'll do here this morning. We're going to ask in the name of Jesus that you be revived in your spirit and the Holy Ghost begin to woo you. Now, if you're not right with the Lord, if you've been backslidden, you don't know Jesus.

Come with these that are coming up in the balcony. Go to the stairs on either side. Come down any aisle.

And in the annex, just step forward in between the screens. And I'll pray for you there. We'll pray for you in just a moment while we wait for these that are gathering.

Move in close, if you will, please. Move in tight. Make way for these that are coming.

How many of you believe that in the name of Jesus, God can do something visible and clear in your heart? Something that people can see? Something that people can see? Now, let me give you an example for you gentlemen that are here right now. You know, I was walking down the street yesterday. I was shocked at the number of men that just turned and followed every woman walking by.

Their eyes just following every woman that walked by. And you may be one of those kind of men that have roving eyes. If you're married, especially, this is quite a visible miracle that God could heal that.

And when you go to wrestle with your wife, you walk down the street, she's not seeing you going this way and that way looking at everybody around. But you have your eyes only on your wife. That's visible.

That's the evidence of a work that's being done in the heart. That you are obeying Jesus and you're drawing closer to him. Those are evidences.

I don't know, it could be your temper. Suddenly, your wife finds you friendly. She finds you not popping off at every little thing.

That's visible evidence that Jesus is with you. You've been spending time with the Lord. First people know it's going to be your family.

Your family. Those closest to you, they're going to know that you've been with Jesus. Hallelujah.

How many of you have to acknowledge right now that you have not given him the time that he wants and that you need? Raise your hand, please. Keep it up right now. And I want everybody to pray this prayer.

Jesus, you see my hand. You see my heart. And I ask you in the name of Jesus to forgive me and draw me near to you.

Put it in my heart in a way I'll never forget. That I have a time and I have a place where I will meet with you. And I will talk to you.

I'll spend time with you. Draw me to that. Oh God, print this on my heart.

Stamp it on my mind. I want to be with Jesus. I need to be with Jesus.

Touch me now. Help me to commit to this. Forgive my sins, Lord.

Blot out my transgressions. Help me, Lord, not to neglect you anymore. I can't do it unless your Holy Spirit comes and gives me power and strength.

But I believe in the name of Jesus, I am free. Now I want to pray for those in the annex, those standing between the screens. You can hear my voice at least if you don't see my face.

And here in the main auditorium, all these that have become forward father. I'm asking now to release everybody that's here in the name of Jesus. Release us from bondage to materialism.

Release us, oh God, from all the activities that have stood between us and you. Tear down the walls, I pray, in the name of Jesus. And I pray, Lord, that you send into everyone listening, everyone standing before your presence.

That you would supernaturally put this drawing into their hearts. This wooing of the Holy Spirit. Come alone, come away with me, my bride.

Come away with me, my servant. Come away with me, my son, my daughter. Come away and be with me.

Lord, draw them into your presence. And when you see them respond, Holy Spirit, in Jesus' name, I'm asking that you just fall upon them with a joy, a peace, a rest, revelation. Oh, God, make us seekers after Christ our Lord.

Seek you, you said, the day you seek me with all your heart, you will find me. Lord, we're set out to find you. Lord, cleanse us, sanctify us now and set us free.

We glorify you now in the name of Jesus. All of those in the annex that have come forward and all those that are here right now, I want you to just thank Jesus. Lift up your hands and give him thanks.

Just give him thanks. I give you thanks, Lord. I give you praise.

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