

Why the World Hates Christians

by David Wilkerson

The world hates Christians because they are fulfilling the mission of Christ to take from ungodly men that which is dearest to their heart, their self-righteousness.

Duration: 54:11

Scripture: John 15:18

Topics: "Persecution", "Lordship"

Description

This sermon delves into the reasons why Christians are hated by the world, emphasizing the inevitability of persecution as Jesus foretold. The speaker urges believers to understand the depth of surrender to Christ's lordship and the mission to call others out of the world's ways. The message highlights the importance of preaching the full gospel, including repentance, life change, and the cross, even if it leads to being despised by the world.

Transcript

...subject this morning, why the world hates Christians. Do you understand you're hated? You understand you're going to be persecuted? That's what Jesus said. We'll talk about it this morning.

Thank you, Father, for your Word. And I pray you anoint me this morning. Lord, I thank you that you put this in my heart for my own welfare, but more than that for the body of Christ.

And I pray for an unction from the Holy Spirit. God, let us hear what the Spirit has to say. In Jesus' name, amen.

Go to John 15, please. The 15th chapter of John. Let's start verse 16.

You have not chosen me, but I've chosen you and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatsoever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. These things I command you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know it hated me before it hated you.

If you were of the world, the world would love his own. But because you're not of the world, but I've chosen you out of the world, therefore, or for this reason, the world hated you. Remember the word that I said to you? The servant's not greater than his Lord.

If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they have kept my sayings, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

Now, here's what Jesus said in the commission to all of us. I've chosen you, ordained you, to go and bring forth fruit. And not only that, but he added these words, and that your fruit should remain.

In other words, that you would have lasting fruit. Fruit that would withstand the judgment day, when we're all called to an account before the throne of Christ. Now, the Bible, when it says, I sent you forth to bear fruit, I take that to mean the work in the ministry of Christ, doing his work.

We're all called to evangelize. We're all called to preach Christ. As a minister, I am called to make disciples and train them, and cause them to grow in Christ.

And I can present a chaste bride, just as Paul said, to Jesus Christ. But this is such a thing as a false conversion. You know that? There are people who are called converts, who are really not converts.

Jesus warned the Pharisees, woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites. You compass sea and land to make one proselyte. And when he's made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourself.

In other words, he said, you've gone out and you have made what you consider a convert. You've got some kind of confession from them. You've got him to attend your church, and he looks right, he says the right words, but you don't understand, because you don't have an experience yourself, that what you teach and what you preach has never had an effect, an impact, to change your life.

And you're just giving doctrine, you're giving theology, and you have impure motives, because you devour widows' house, and you're cheating widows. You're doing things in your life that are dishonest, and your motives are not right, and yet you're going out winning converts. But Jesus said, in the process, though they sit in your synagogues, in your churches, and even though you call them converts, and you add them to your numbers, you have made them a twofold child of hell.

In other words, they were going to hell before you talked to them, but now they're twice as damned as they were than when you talked to them. Now those are strong words, but they come from Christ himself. Jesus cried, hypocrisy.

You make them twofold more a child of hell, but you shall receive the greater damnation. There's going to be many, many ministers stand before the Lord, receive the greater damnation than all the drug addicts in the world put together, because they, considering they have called people converts, and I won't get into this, making it is possible for a minister of the gospel, it is possible those who evangelize to make people twice fold the devil's child, according to the scripture. He said, you shut up the kingdom of heaven, because you have no work of God in your own heart.

You have literally, though you talk about God, now these are scribes and Pharisees who were Bible scholars. They knew the Bible, they knew the Bible of that time, they knew the Torah, and they could explain it all, and they were out zealous. He said, they scoured the seas and the lands, they went everywhere trying to make even, all the plans and all the schemes to make one convert, one proselyte.

Jesus said, you are so set on numbers and building up your synagogues, you go to these extremes to make converts. You see, Christ despised the hypocrisy of shepherds, and those who evangelize, more

concerned about the count than the conversion. More concerned about the numbers than really seeing a work, a true work of conversion done into their heart.

Now I wonder what Jesus would say today when he sees this same spirit. He said, you roam sea and land for new concepts and new ideas and programs to get people into the church, and you are lost in this hypocrisy of numbers and measuring success by the number of bodies that sit in the congregation. And what a hypocrisy this is in the sight of God.

We have now in America what we call mega churches. Right now, this morning, all over the United States, there were traffic jams in many, many circles. It took you, some people, an hour just to get in the parking lot of some churches.

Thousands and thousands lined up there, police officers directing traffic in and out, and people jamming into these places. Some of the church edifices look like theme parks. I mean, they are like shopping malls.

You go to some churches, they have McDonald's in their, they have their own malls. Now folks, I'm not putting this down. Many of them, there's a number of them, I know that have Godly servants and shepherds there that are preaching the gospel, and many thousands and some of these churches are being truly converted, and I have no, I'm not putting that down and no correction for any of that.

I'm in no position for that. Times Square Church is considered a mega church. Thousands attend this, and this morning, there are people in overflow rooms, and all the overflow rooms have people in them hearing the gospel now, and I can assure you that there are a number of people that come to Times Square Church who call themselves converts who are not converted.

Did you know that? I'm not judging them, but I just know for a fact that they have created their own Christ in their mind. They've heard the word that's gone in one ear and out the other. They've not allowed it, and you can go to hell just as quick here as any other place, and you can become a twofold child of hell sitting under good Holy Ghost preaching, but I can assure you if anybody goes to hell, a twofold child of the devil out of Times Square Church, it's not going to be the fault of any preacher or the preaching from this pulpit.

It's going to be because you've hardened your heart, and you will not listen to a convicting word of the Holy Ghost. We will not stand before God with your blood on our hands. It will be not because there's been a half gospel preached here, but there'll be a true gospel preached here.

It'll be preached this morning. It's preached every time. It may not be the best of preaching, but it'll be the anointed preaching that'll touch your heart.

Where are the John the Baptist today who are unafraid to preach the gospel and lose numbers in the process of necessary? Not the purpose of it, but where are those who have preached the same message to presidents and kings as they do to the lowly people that come into their houses of worship? Where are the John the Baptist today? Not afraid to preach the gospel whether it affects the finances or not, whether it affects the crowd or not. A friend called me recently. He said, I'm going to a certain church, and I hear good concepts, but I don't hear anything that convicts.

They go right from the preaching into announcements, and there's no conviction, and I'm trying, and the pastor says, I don't know what that's all about. I don't understand that. I don't understand this concept of conviction.

I tremble to think that it's possible that I or any minister of the gospel, that a message could be softened just to please people, just to attract people, to soften or preach less than an entire gospel without seeking God with everything for a Holy Ghost anointing to drive it deep into the hearts and bring conviction. I trouble to think that it's possible that any preacher of the gospel could shut up the heaven and make converts two-fold children of hell. That's what he said to these scribes and Pharisees.

He said, you're making converts, and you're preaching your gospel, but you are actually shutting the heavens and making your people two times over children of hell. I can't shake that when I think about my responsibility here this morning in preaching the gospel to you, those that hear this on tape. You see, I don't preach to be loved.

I don't preach to be accepted. Now, my flesh wants to be loved, but I'd rather send you home if you have sin in your heart and give you sleepless nights. I would rather you walk out and say, I don't like that kind of preaching, but you are thinking about it, and the Holy Ghost is dealing with you, and you are being changed by it.

Now, don't stop loving me just because I said that. The Bible said Jesus called his disciples together, and listen to these words, and in the audience of all the people, he gave this scathing rebuke to these religious scribes, the scholars of his day. Beware of the scribes which desire to walk in long robes and love greetings in the markets and the highest seats in the synagogues and the chief rooms at feast.

In other words, beware of shepherds who love the praises of men, who love the social events to sit in high places and be recognized by leaders and by politicians and want to be accepted. I want to tell you, sir, if you're a pastor here and you're a toaster to the town, something's wrong with your preaching. The Bible says you're going to be hated.

The Bible says you're going to be despised. If you're looking for acceptance, if on the job you're looking for acceptance and you are hiding your light under a bushel because you would rather have the approval of your co-workers, you're not living according to the gospel. You're not living according to the commission that Jesus Christ has given his church.

Beware of those religious Bible people who seek the affection, the applause of the ungodly. A church accepted by the world is an oxymoron. In other words, it's a foolishness.

There's no such thing as a church that is truly preaching and working under the Holy Ghost, fulfilling the commission of the Word of God that is loved and accepted by the world. It's impossible. If you were of the world, the world would love his own.

Because you're not of the world, but I've chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hated you. If you were of the world, if you were their kind, they'd love you. I've been greatly influenced by the writings of a godly man called George Bowen.

George Bowen was a Presbyterian missionary in India from 1848 to 1879. He gave up all of his missionary support and he moved in, in India, right into a slum area and lived as the natives. He lived there for years, living just frugally and almost in poverty.

But he was one of the greatest men that I've ever read about and his writings have deeply affected my life. He warned, this is over 150 years ago, he warned of the coming of a Protestant Antichrist. He said that Antichrist is going to be the influence of society being brought into the church of Jesus Christ.

It's ways, it's methods, it's morals infiltrating the church of Jesus Christ. He called the Protestant Antichrist the spirit of mixture with the world. And he said the time is going to come when this Antichrist may take his throne and that time, you will know that time has come when the church, the Protestant church is no longer persecuted.

And it's now loved and accepted by the world. That means that this Antichrist spirit has come and Jesus is no longer Lord, but the ways and means and methods of the world have crept in. I received a letter two weeks ago from a lady so distraught.

She said I love Jesus and our church used to be so on fire, but it is backslidden now. Every Saturday night in the gym they have wrestling matches. They bring in professional wrestlers and they even have fake blood.

They have it all and the crowd goes crazy just like you see on television. And she said our church now is a wrestling match. You see the Protestant Antichrist is determined, this is the spirit of the last days, determined to so intermingle society, it's ways and means and methods with the church that it's indistinguishable from the world.

So that the world accepts it. The world is now a part of the church and the church is a part of the world. That is the Protestant Antichrist.

Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you, for so did their fathers of the false prophets. If we are preaching the word of God as it should be, then like Paul the Apostle, as a pastor of this church, I'm going to be considered by the world out there by homosexuals, by politically correct people, by leaders who are ungodly, and by the theater crowd, and all those who have rejected Christ, I'm going to be considered the off-scouring of the world. And so will you on your job.

Jesus said don't think they will persecute me. They persecuted me and if they persecuted me, they're going to persecute you. He said you're going to get it.

But most of all we're going to be hated by the backslidden religious crowd, by Bible scholars. Get New York Times today and you'll see a story in the New York Times. I read it last night before going to bed.

A story about thousands, in fact hundreds and hundreds and even thousands of young people lining up with various Christian food organizations and charitable organizations ready to go into Iraq as soon as the doors are open. They're going to distribute food and preach Christ in Iraq. And the article is so derogatory, but the worst criticism came from a Baptist Bible scholar.

I was shocked. I think it's great that this work could be used in some way to open the doors and that thousands of Muslims turn to Jesus Christ. To me that's the only way I can make sense out of this whole thing.

But to hear, it was enough to hear the world mocking it, thinking that it is a right-wing religious ploy, but to hear a Bible scholar saying let's mind our own business and to put it down is the very thing I'm talking about in this message. Go to Matthew the 5th chapter. Just turn there very quickly.

Matthew the 5th chapter. 5th chapter of Matthew starting at verse 10. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when men shall revile you, persecute you, and do what? Accept you and bless you and congratulate you? No, they shall sell manner of evil against you falsely for my sake, but should say rejoice, be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before them. Now folks, I know that some churches and some Christians are persecuted for their stupidity. They are persecuted because they have unfair dealings with their friends or in their business dealings.

Or they are adulterers, for example, or churches that are just doing foolish things and they are hated and despised for that. But I'm talking about those who have a heart for Christ. They are preaching a pure gospel and they have a heart for a lost world.

The Bible says the closer you get to the mission of Christ, the closer you get to preaching the gospel that he's ordained, the more hated and the more despised you will be by the world. Why does the world hate the church and its pastors and its parishioners? What's the cause of this hatred? Jesus said, if the world hates you, you know it hated me before it hated you. The servant is not greater than his Lord.

If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. You see, the church and every true Christian, every true believer is hated because of our mission. I want to talk to you about the mission of the church and show you why.

If you truly obeying the true mission of Christ to a lost world, you're going to be marked. You're going to be persecuted on the job. You're going to be persecuted in the church.

The time will come, the closer we get to fulfilling God's mission in New York, when you mention Times Square Church, you're going to have people see their eyebrows go up. Oh, that church? Because you see, we're going to be taking a stand against the powers of darkness as we've never taken it before. And all hell is going to get angry and everyone is walking with the enemy and the rejecter of Jesus Christ is going to be an enemy.

You're going to find enemies on the job. You're going to find enemies everywhere because you're fulfilling the mission. Now, let me talk about this mission.

And some of you are going to be a little horrified by what I'm saying. You're going to draw back and say, well, wait a minute, bro, that's too strong. But what is my mission as a pastor? What is your mission as a witness for Jesus Christ? It's more than going out and just telling people Jesus loves you.

It's more than trying to give people examples of how much you suffer so they'll have pity on you so they'll listen to your gospel. Oh, my mother just died and I'm feeling a little sad, but I want to tell you how Jesus can comfort. It's more than that.

That's fine, but it goes far beyond that. Our mission is to take from ungodly men that which is dearest to their heart, their self-righteousness. You're commissioned to go and tell men who spent a lifetime believing that they're doing good and that they're achieving something.

I'm kind to my family and I'm kind to people and they spent a lifetime building up what they believe is integrity and you come along and tell them it's filthy rags. You come to translate people out of a kingdom of darkness into a kingdom of light, that kingdom of light that they think is nothing but bondage and suffering. You're taking away from their freedom.

More than that, you've been sent to execute them, to kill them. What do you think if people come in and they hear us talk about dying to the world and dying to sin, being crucified? You say, wait a minute, isn't that our mission? Isn't this our mission to show them that you have to die to sin and to self-will and to self-independence? And you come along and they have spent their lifetime killing their conscience, searing it and silencing a voice and you come along with a voice louder than their conscience and say without Christ and say it as lovingly as you can, say it with tears in your eyes, but you are speaking a voice louder than their conscience and they have spent a lifetime achieving this false peace and you come along saying without being born again you're a rebel. To them, you're an executioner.

You've come to kill them. All this time, I've been okay. All this time, I know I've been through this and folks they have built their own tower of babble of self-confidence.

They have an idolatry of a Christ they've created in their own mind who's just like them. And you come along and talk about another kind of Christ? A Christ who demands full surrender? You come along and you speak these things to the world. Folks, you better have the Holy Ghost with you.

You better be speaking the mind of God. There are people who are praising themselves that they're not so bad. And here you come saying all your goodness is an abomination in the eyes of God that you've achieved in your own flesh and your own works.

Here comes a Christian. Here comes a pastor. They come into church.

How many people walk into this church and they have finally come to the place? Really they believe God admires them now. I'm not so bad. I'm too good for hell.

Maybe not quite ready for heaven but I'm getting there very fast. Then they come in and sit and hear a man say, unless you're born again, you can't enter the kingdom of heaven. Folks, think of what our mission is and how the world perceives that mission.

There are millions of people filling our church pews today thinking they're in God's good graces and they hear a message. They hear a message that comforts them. We come along and we preach repentance and life change.

We preach that self-made integrity is not acceptable to God. That rather than they being in God's favor, God's wrath is upon those who will not receive his loving call to surrender all to him. We come along preaching the blood of Christ and separation from the world.

We talk about submission and obedience to the word of God. And they can't conceive. You see, my job as a preacher is to convince men to love a Christ they can't even trust.

To commit themselves to a Christ they don't believe in. Some will say, well, brother, that's not the way. You may be from the church and you say, well, that's not the way to do it.

You may be a pastor hearing me and you say, well, that's not the way I approach my mission. That's not my mission. You see, I don't believe in confrontation.

In my church, I preach non-controversial messages, just love and grace. One pastor would say, I would never expect anybody to leave my church uneasy. And I would sure not like to take anybody's sleep from them by what they heard me preach.

I can't speak for other pastors. I can't speak for other churches. I'm going to speak what I know from preaching for over 50 years to some of those hardest, wickedest sinners on the face of the earth.

To drug addicts for years and alcoholics and prostitutes. And more than that, preaching to Pharisees. Those who are church people for years and years.

Not speaking about, but they've gone to church and they believe they're all right and they're hypocrites. And they're blinded to their condition. You've got them in the Baptist churches.

We've got thousands of Baptists going to hell. Pentecostals and others have been to church all their life and they're harder than anybody on the street. You can't reach them.

They're hardened to the gospel because they have an image of Christ that they've created. And they accept all of the promises of the word, but none of the commandments and none of the woes. Let me tell you, suavity and softness and half-truths are never going to break down the walls of the wicked in the world today.

You know when Christ approached Saul of Tarsus, that Christian killer? He didn't send a soft-spoken preacher to take him out to lunch and over brunch. Slip a little Jesus to him. I'm not trying to be facetious.

He didn't take a poll of this man and say, what do you think of Christ? What would it take, Saul, for you to change your mind and receive Christ and quit killing these Christians? No, no, no, no. A blinding light, a full blast of the presence of Jesus himself. That exposed his heart.

And that's what it's going to take in these last days. It's going to take John the Baptist in the pulpit with a broken heart. Who knows the fullness and the meekness of Christ.

And Jesus preached with meekness and he preached with love. And yet they killed him. I want to preach mercy, I preach grace, and I want to preach through love, and I want to preach through tears.

But folks, the walls that are up now, the only thing that's going to bring it down is a full blast of the presence of Jesus in our churches and coming out of the mouths of our pastors. There has to be a full blast of the presence of Jesus. It has to be felt in every church.

And without the holy presence, the awesome presence of Jesus, and without preaching the touch of the heart, we're going to close the heavens. And folks, there's no greater deception that I can think of that I could be guilty of than to count heads in the congregation and make me look good. And measure my success by the number of bodies in these seats.

And not be concerned about your soul, and close the heaven to you, and make you a two-fold devil of hell. That frightens my soul. We watch for your soul, the Bible says.

Jesus said, I've chosen you out of the world. And that strikes at the heart of why we are hated. He said, I've chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you for this reason, they hate you.

Because I called you out of their condition. I called you out of their fellowship. I called you out.

And not only did I call you out, I sent you to call everybody else out. And the Protestant Antichrist comes against this very thing that I'm talking about, that you don't have to call people out anymore. You can still live like the world, you can be a part of all of the morals and mores of society, and still call yourself a

Christian.

What do I mean by the world? I've called you out of the world. Now folks, when we talk about the world, we think about lust, and pornography, and drug addiction, and all these things, and call out of the world. That's a part of it, but that's not the issue.

I've called you out of the world. You see, the world in the eyes of God is an unwillingness to surrender to the lordship of Jesus Christ. That's worldliness in its fullest meaning, scripturally.

That you want to be a Christian, you want to be a follower, you want to be called a convert of Christ. But you will not come under the full lordship of Jesus Christ. Because you see, when you come under the lordship of Jesus Christ, you don't have to have a man in the pulpit screaming against your sins.

Oh, they can name them, yes they are to name them. Yes, there's to be reproved, but you see, if you come under the lordship of Jesus, you cling to Christ, you begin to love reproof. You begin to allow the Holy Spirit to speak into your life things that are unlike Jesus Christ.

And he does the work that no preacher on earth can do, because you have surrendered to the lordship of Jesus Christ. You see, you can't come under the lordship of Jesus Christ until you've brought face to face with the cross. And I'm telling you something now, and I want you to listen closely.

I see young preachers, especially good young men, pastors, wanting to build these great churches. And some of them now stand in the pulpit. They're preaching to thousands.

But I want to tell you something. There is so little preaching of the cross of Jesus Christ. There's so little of bringing them face to face with the demands that you come to Jesus Christ, and you surrender to his lordship.

You come and lay down your independence. And we've got people living independently. They're living just like the world, talking like the world, drinking like the world, sleeping around like the world, and in the house of God, calling themselves believers, and there's no conviction, and there's no coming to the cross.

And in that process, if we're not brought to this cross, if we're not brought to this absolute cry of God, and absolute demand of the cross to die to sin, and die to my ambition, and die to my way of doing things, and come to the righteousness of Jesus through the cross, then I've shut the heavens, and I've made converts a two-fold member of hell. Jesus once turned to some earthly relatives, and he said these shocking words. He said, the world can't hate you.

Now, think of that. These are brethren. Do you know what that infers? The world can't hate you because you're of the world.

Because the world does not hate its own. And this, I think, is the measurement of the church of Jesus Christ. To measure whether it's fulfilling the mission or not.

That's how you measure Times Square Church. The most damning, one of the most damning things Christ ever said. One of the most soul-destroying things Christ ever said.

That just, I can't get it out of my heart and my mind, and the conviction of it makes me tremble. I don't know what it ever said of me. The world can't hate you, David.

Jesus said, they hated me without a cause. They have no cause to hate me. You know, you would think, you see, Christians are called to be meek, gentle, kind.

And if you're a true believer, that's the way you're going. You're going in that direction. You care about people.

And on the job, you're giving your heart to people. You're doing everything you know to help. And you're meek, and you're kind, and you're gentle.

It's not natural for people to hate you for that. Is it? You ask people how they're doing on the job, and you do everything you can. Say, I pray for you.

You give. You may bring them a covered dish. You do everything.

And you do everything. You see, Christians, I would think that you would hate those who rob you and steal from you and curse you. That would seem more natural to the flesh.

But you see, when you are fulfilling the mission of Christ, you're doing, you're not going out trying to hurt anybody. Folks, we are to approach the world with patience. We're to be like a tender nurse that we're to preach with authority of the Holy Ghost.

And folks, get out of your mind once and for all wanting to be loved on your job. Loving to be applauded. Now, you should be admired for being faithful and doing a good job.

If you're lazy, you're not a good Christian. If you're stealing, you're not a Christian at all. You're to be an example.

But if you're going around walking on eggs, trying to have everybody say, he's a good Joe, she's, she's, she, oh, what a wonderful person she is. Be careful. The world can't hate you.

Why? If you're fulfilling his mission, Jesus said, they're going to hate you. And they're going to persecute you. And folks, in the chaotic days ahead, there is coming the most incredible persecution of the body of Jesus Christ in all of history.

You're going to face it everywhere. And the more you hear the gospel and live by it, the more you hunger for Jesus. And the more you speak truth out of an honest heart, you're fulfilling the divine purposes in the ministry that God has called his church to.

You're going to know what it's like for people to be so condescending to you, to look down their nose, in other words, at you. And they talk behind your back. They'll say things to you that are hurting.

There's going to be persecution more than that. Many people are going to be losing their jobs. You see, you're not hated because of your appearance.

You're not hated because of the way you dress. You're not hated because of the color of your skin. Now, that happens, but if you're a Christian, that's not why you're hated.

You are hated because you represent Jesus and you're coming against everything that they believe is right. Everything that they've tried to earn. Everything that they stand for and what they call their hope, and you're taking that hope from them.

You've got to understand that. You've got a hard mission you've been called to. But I'll tell you something else before I close.

The more you're hated by the world, the more you're loved by the body of Christ. Oh, what a wonderful thing to come in from a hectic week. Come in from a hectic week and all the things you've heard and what people have said, and what you've had to go through and all the trials sent out of hell.

I'll tell you, the devil has sent his angels with some of you in the choir and in this house, all over. The devil's actually sent angels because he sees your walk and your determination to go all the way with the Lord. And he sent angels out of hell and he sent demon emissaries and adversaries against your soul to trouble you.

I've never seen more trouble in the true Christian world than there is now. I've never seen so much suffering. Never seen it in all my years of ministry.

But I'll tell you what, he's strengthening the body of Christ. And when you come into God's house, one little hug from a brother or sister, and they know that you're just, you have the same spirit, you've been persecuted, but they say, welcome home, brother. Welcome home, sister.

Here's your house. Here's where you're loved. It's going to be more and more important to come to God's house to receive and give love.

To build up the body as it goes back out into the world to face the persecution and trials that we still face ahead. Jesus said, I warned you. If they persecuted me, they will persecute you.

Will you stand? If you're here this morning, and you're thinking to yourself, wait a minute. I know I'm a Christian, and I know I love Jesus. But I'm not being persecuted, and I don't feel that hate coming at me.

I'm rather well loved. Don't worry about it. It's coming.

Don't worry about it. And don't feel, you know, I must be one of those that the world can't hate. No.

I'm not going to put that kind of fear on you at all. But be sure that it's coming. But don't be afraid of it.

Can I say something else before I close? With Iraq, and now the troubled economy, and all the personal things that come upon us, all the suffering. I think of Gwen with 28 operations already, another coming up this week. You know, I sit in my study, and all I hear is, let not your heart be troubled.

Let not your heart be troubled. Folks, can you believe that? Can you practice that? While you're standing here right now in the presence of the Lord, can you just ask the Holy Spirit to come and bring His peace to your heart, and say, Lord Jesus, I'm not going to listen to all of this. I'm not letting it in my spirit.

Folks, if you listen to the news today, and hear all of this stuff that's coming, turn off those talk shows. If you listen to the radio, turn them off. It's going to make you angry.

It's going to get in your spirit. It's going to trouble your soul. You need to come in God's house without a troubled spirit.

You need to walk through life in hope. Let there be joy in your heart. Put on some Christian music.

Put on Pastor Carter's tape or something, and let the music fill your house. Get in your car, slip in a Christian CD. Turn everything else off.

And he said, feed your soul on the good things. What's the things of pure and honest good report? Think on these things. I'm sick of all this stuff.

I don't want it in my spirit. In fact, I was reading the New York Times last night. I only read it for about 15 minutes, especially that article.

I just shut it down and threw it on the side. I'm not even going to buy this paper anymore. I'm not going to have anything to do.

I'm sick and tired of this. It just troubles your spirit. Lord, bring peace to the house.

Bring the joy of Jesus to the house. Lord, he said all these things. If they persecute you, look up and rejoice.

Just rejoice, because you're counted worthy to suffer with Christ. Hallelujah. Blessed be the name.

Let's just praise him right now. Just give him an offering of praise. We give you praise, Lord.

We give you love. We give honor. We honor you.

Lord, give us peace. Rest in our heart. Because God is good and he's faithful.

His mercy endures forever. Hallelujah. I am led of the Holy Spirit to give an invitation for just particular needs here this morning.

Up in the balcony here and in the annex as well. Some of you, and I'm just speaking in the spirit. Some of you have your back right against the wall.

You came here this morning that way. It looks like there's no way out. I don't know what the difficulty, I don't know what the trial may be.

But you're up against something that you can't handle and you know you can't handle it. It may be a sin that you have fought with and struggled with so long and it's just discouraged you. Because you say, with all the preaching I've heard and all the teaching I've had, I guess it doesn't work for me and you're discouraged.

I'm talking to some discouraged people. I'm talking to people going through the trial of their life. It may be physical, spiritual, emotional, I don't know what it may be.

Some of you say, I'm just at the end, Brother Dave. I am at the end. My rope.

The end of my endurance. I want you to obey the Holy Spirit and walk down. I want you to pray a prayer of faith and believe God to meet your need.

That's what the house of God's about. That's what the Holy Ghost is all about. And if this is a Holy Ghost church, God's going to meet your need.

If you come with an open heart, up in the balcony go the stairs on either side. Now, if you're not right with God and you're backslidden, you walk down. Now, nobody will know who you are.

You come here right now and say, Brother Dave, I've been drifting from the Lord. My heart's not right with God. I don't want to leave this church that way.

I don't want God to touch me this morning. And up in the balcony and in the annex, in the annex, I'm going to ask you to just go forward between the screens and let me pray for you because even though I'm not in the room there, the Spirit of God's in the room and as I pray, you're going to know God's there and touching you. And you'll walk out of this place renewed.

Scripture said, without faith it's impossible to please God. They that come to him must believe that he is and he's a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. He rewards you, in other words, not because you've earned it, but out of his grace and out of his love.

If you believe him and trust him right now that he's going to meet you. Now, second thing God told me to tell you. Listen closer now, please.

You have got to believe that God, your Heavenly Father, who loves you, is interested and concerned, knows all about the simplest details in your life, everything. The hairs on your head, how you feel, what you're going through, your finances, your marriage, your home, your job, everything. Listen to me now.

There's not one thing that concerns you that doesn't concern him. Not one thing. You've got to come to that faith right now.

I believe that he's concerned. You say, well, he's so busy taking care of the universe, the stars and the moon, the sun. Ha, ha, ha.

His love is focused on you. His concern is focused on you, on all of us. He cares what you're going through.

But he said, you can cast all your care on me, but you've got to believe that I'm that way. That's what I am. And you've got to believe that I'm going to reward you now.

Faithful, he said, faithful just to forgive you, cleanse you from all unrighteousness and reward of those who diligently seek him. In other words, here's how you seek him by believing what he said. Do you believe what he said that he's interested in everything that has to do with you? Do you believe that everything that you have in your heart now that troubles you, you can take it to him right now in prayer and lay it down and give it to him and he'll start doing what he has to do.

First of all, lift you above the problem. Do you understand the first thing he does? He doesn't just take away all your troubles. He lifts you by his spirit above them so that you're here sitting in high places in Christ Jesus.

And then he said, you trust me, down here, all these things, trust me. It's not going to happen overnight, but believe that I'm behind the scenes working. I'm doing things.

I'm putting things in process that are happening. Just trust me with it now. Will you do that now? Pray this with me.

Right out of your heart. Jesus, I know you're interested in everything in my life, every detail, every problem, everything that makes me sad, everything that's come against me, everything in my life, in my job, in my home. And I bring it to you with confidence that you love me and you care about me.

And I'm giving you my faith. Forgive my unbelief. Forgive my sins.

And I come to you as a child in simple faith, saying, Lord, I believe. I ask you to reward me now with confidence that you would lift this burden from my heart. Lift it now.

Oh, Jesus, you promised you'll never fail me. And you told me I could cast all my cares on you because you said you cared for me. And I believe that.

Now let me pray. Father, in the annex for those that are standing in the screens, go there now and here in this auditorium. And I pray, Lord Jesus, that you hear me from on high because you're here now to meet us.

You're here to meet our needs. Oh, God, we're overwhelmed when we think of all the needs. When we think of all the financial problems, when we think of people that have come to the end of their rope, they don't even have any more tears left.

And I fear, Lord, that if we heard their story, we would be so shocked and overwhelmed, we would probably be cast down and say, oh, Lord, it's beyond hope. But nothing's beyond hope with you. Nothing is impossible with our God.

Nothing. Say it with me. Nothing is impossible with my God.

Again, nothing is impossible with my God. Now, Lord, let that be. Let that be what we carry away from this meeting tonight, this morning.

We walk out the door. Lord, I turn it to you because nothing is impossible to you. And I believe you to turn it around.

Do whatever you have to do. Give me strength in the meantime and give me hope and put joy in my heart and rejoicing. Hallelujah.

Thank you for it. We give you thanks, Lord Jesus. We give you thanks.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/2/SID2809.mp3>

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/N-wV-OyAhAc.mp4>

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