

The Prodigal Son

by Gerhard Du Toit

The parable of the prodigal son teaches us about the father's love and forgiveness, and the importance of spiritual rebirth through Christ.

Duration: 47:20

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 15:11-32

Topics: "Prodigal Son"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding how God feels when He looks upon our lives. He uses the story of the prodigal son to illustrate this point. The father in the story is brokenhearted when his son leaves, but when the son returns, the father runs towards him, clothes him, completes his work in his heart, and commissions him. The speaker encourages the audience to recognize that we all come to God with our own spiritual garments, but through His grace, He can transform us and give us a second chance.

Transcript

Let's pray together. Our Father God, it's been a tremendous privilege for Janice and for myself to be part of what we would call our little church here in Malford. Lord, I could not even contemplate after our weekend last year, the blessing that it was to share our hearts about the fact that God is the initiator of prayer.

That when you created Adam and Eve and put them in the Garden of Eden, and you created them body, soul, and spirit. And when Andrew Murray comes to us and he said, God has given me a body through my senses to make me conscious of my environment. God has given me a soul to make me conscious of myself.

And now I discover my identity in Christ when I became a Christian. And then how God has given me a spirit to make me conscious of himself. And now the woman at the well, Christ said to her, God is spirit and those that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

And for us this morning to know that if you are the initiator of prayer, that it's not the time that we spent with you, but oh God is for us to make time and room for God to come and spend with us. And Father, last year when we were here, you gave us a burden to pray for the church. Because you said to us in your word, be not drunk with wine, wherefore there is an excess of, but you said to us, be filled with the spirit.

And you said to us that worship will follow. When you said to us singing to yourselves in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, and we will experience spiritual worship. And you said to us, there will be spiritual submissiveness.

When you said, why submit yourselves unto your husband as unto the Lord. And when you said to us, there will be spiritual sacrifice. When you said to us that Christ loved the church and he gave himself for it, so that he might sanctify and wash it through the washing of the word.

And God, there's been a burden in our hearts to pray for Melfort, because you love a church and you gave yourself for it. And what we have seen the last 12 months in the way that God has answered prayer and to see people coming to these midweek prayer meetings. Father, God has done something to my own heart this weekend, because we know in our hearts that you do not answer prayer necessarily just because we are praying, but you answer prayer because you are a covenant keeping God.

It's your nature to answer prayer and you have sit unto us, ask and it shall be given to you, seek and you shall find, and knock and it shall be open. Because you have said to us, be careful of nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. Because you have said to us that men ought always to pray.

And if they do not pray, they are going to faint and their relationships with God. And you have said to us, this is the confidence that we have in you, that if we ask anything according to your will, that you listen to us. And if we know that you listen to us, we receive the things that we have asked in the center of the will of God and the beauty of the timing of the sovereign God.

And so Father, we are surrounded with promises that you initiate prayer, that you burden us, that you pour your Spirit upon us. And Lord, you have been stirring my heart in the hours of this weekend to begin to trust God that this morning there will be another 20 people that would say, I want to be part of the Wednesday night prayer meeting. And that this coming Wednesday that we will have 60 men and women who will come to this church and be hungry and thirsty for God, and climb underneath the burden of God for this community of Melfort, and for our young people, and for our children, and systematically agonize and prevail and persevere them through to God.

Father, we desperately need you in Canada. You say to us in your Word, if my people, which have been called by my name, shall humble themselves and pray, to seek my holy face, then will I hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin, and I will heal their land. And Father God, there are people in this service this morning that don't even know Christ.

We've got some of our young people who are here this morning, and they are in absolute total rebellion against God. And they have things in their hearts, and sinners come into their lives, and they have no desire for God. And you need to stop at these young hearts, because there is not one of them this morning who can guarantee to me at the end of this service, that if he or she died this afternoon and dropped down dead, that they would be ready to stand before God if they do not know Christ.

And my heart is burdened to this thing. And there are some of us as adults who are here this morning, and there are things in our lives, and it's preventing us from walking with God. And Father, you need to come to us in our relationships with you.

Thank you for your Word. It is so precious to us. We so love this book.

We do not want to be informed by it as such, but God we want to be inflamed. So come and do it in Jesus' name. Amen.

You know, in the New Testament, or rather in the four Gospels, will you discover that the Lord Jesus gave us approximately 38 wonderful parables. And so we need to ask ourselves, why did Christ come and give us these wonderful parables in the New Testament? Christ did that to try and explain to us the great things of the kingdom of God. And in the 15th chapter of the Gospel of Luke, is there an amazing parable that Jesus told? I think it is a parable that we all so well know, because we all refer to it about the parable of the prodigal son.

And we all know the story how this prodigal son came to the place, and he said, went to his father and said, give me the portion of my inheritance. And he wanted to go to the country and how he wasted his life in that far country. And now the Bible is saying to us, there was a moment when he came to himself and he said, I've sinned against heaven and against my father, and I have no more food as it were in this land.

I will rise up and go to my father. And I will say to my father, I've sinned against heaven before me, make me as one of my higher servants. Now our problem this Sunday morning on this service is, if you and I read that passage in Luke chapter 15, most of the time we find ourselves focusing on the life of this prodigal.

And brethren and sisters, the issue is that you and I do not realize that the Bible is not just speaking about this prodigal son, or what we would refer to as the prodigal son. I love to refer to him as the spiritual wretched son, the one just that went his own way. But you see, if you systematically study this passage of scripture, you will discover that, you know, he was not on his own.

In fact, Christ in this parable came and he told us that this prodigal, he had a brother. And we discover that he did not just had a brother, but we also discover that he had a father. So we are dealing, if we just look at the life of the prodigal, I mean we are only going to get one third of the message.

Now, if you look at the life of the prodigal, you will be absolutely amazed how you will discover the beautiful comparison of what happened in his life as it relates to the work of the Holy Spirit and the life of someone who at some point of his life found himself walking with God, or had some experience with God. You say, why do you say that? I'm saying that to you on the basis of this. The moment when this prodigal came to the place, in Luke chapter 15, where he went to his father and he said, give me the portion of my inheritance.

In the totality of scripture was the Holy Spirit of God there, whispering to him and said, you are taking steps out of the will of your father. You are departing from the will of your father. The moment when he said to his father, give me the portion of my inheritance, the Holy Spirit in the totality of teaching of scripture was saying, what you are contemplating is absolutely wrong.

When you went to the far country, you will discover that in reality, the Spirit of God was there and saying to him, you are walking away from God. And when he found himself, his life spent amongst those terrible people, and the Spirit of God was there saying to him, you need to rise up. You need to go to your father.

You need to say to your father, I sin against heaven and my sight, and I'm no more worthy to recall my son. But guess what happened? He had a brother. He said, why do you say that? Well, I'll tell you why.

I was in the land of Namibia years ago, speaking at the missionary conference, and I wanted to speak on the life of the prodigal. So there was another speaker, we were sharing the platform, and I had about 40, he had about 40 minutes to speak, and then we sang a hymn, and then there was another message, and I had to bring the next message. And you know what happened? I was ready to speak on the life of the prodigal, and this other missionary got up, and to my utter amazement, he began to speak on the prodigal son.

And I sat there and I thought, you know, this is not fair. He's all stolen my message, oh God, he's trying to say something. And as he was preaching on the prodigal, I went through this passage, and I began to discover the prodigal's brother.

I thought, well, if I can't get a shot at the prodigal, I'm going to have a shot at his brother. You see, he had a brother, brother and sister. Now, here's the problem.

His brother never went to the far country, you know. But you know what? We would say his brother sat in church every single Sunday, but his brother, brother and sister, was in a spiritual mess. You say, how do we know that? Let me explain to you.

The moment when the prodigal came back from a far country, you remember what happened to his brother? His own self-righteousness came to the surface. He turned to his father, and he said to his father, he said, you've never given, done something, because the father said, bring to my son the fatted calf. And his own self-righteousness came to the surface.

We discover that he refused to go in. And I want to tell you something this morning, and I'm speaking to myself. You can sit here Sunday morning after Sunday morning after Sunday morning, and spiritually speaking, my brother and my sister, we are nowhere with God.

You say, how do I discover that? Well, that door opened in the next five minutes, and 50 house angels would park behind this church. By that time, most of us would be running already. And they all come in here, and they said, we want to listen to the gospel.

How are you going to respond? I'm not concerned about the brother or the prodigal. You say, what are you passionate about? I'm concerned about the father. You see, this is our problem.

You and I sit here, and I'm speaking to myself. I want you to know that Janice and myself love this little fellowship. I mean, this is out here in the boonies of Boko Boko Land amongst the sticks, freezing cold for a poor African.

I don't know how that Nigerian doctor and his wife are surviving this. In fact, to be honest with you, I don't know why they haven't changed the color of his skin, because you need to be white as snow. No, I don't mean that.

But here is something. You see, we sit in the service this morning, and we are concerned about our relationships with God. Can I ask you a question this Sunday morning? How do you think God feels in his heart? It's not just the fact that as a young person and a young man, you are wasting your life on the internet, or wasting your life with hockey, or all these other things, and they seem so wonderful, and they seem so right.

It's not just that. The question that we need to ask ourselves is, what is God feeling in his heart when he looks upon your life and my life? And so you say, what happened? There were four tears in the heart of his father. You say, how do you know that? The moment when the son was walking away to the far country, I tell you, the father was pretty broken up.

The moment when that son came to the place where he said, I've wasted my life, there was a tear of compassion in the heart of the father. The moment when he was on his way back, there was a tear of yearning that he would not stop. And the moment when he came, and you know the Greek New Testament is emphatic.

We can explain it this way, that on a consistent basis, the father went to the gate, and he looked, and he was probably getting older, and not being able to see, but he would go on a consistent basis, and he looked, and he thought, is there a moment when my son is going to come back? And suddenly, you know what happened? There was a tear of joy. He said, Gerard, what happened? The son came to himself, and he said, I will arise, and I will go to my father, and I will say to my father, I sinned in heaven and against thy sight. Make me one of thy servants.

And guess what happened? And listen, young people, this is the greatness of the forgiveness of God. God is the God of the second chance. And the moment when he came to the father, the father ran towards him, and you know what the father did? He did three things to the son.

He clothed the son, he completed his work in the son's heart, and he said, Gerard, what else happened? He commissioned the son. You say, how do we know that he did that? Well, let me explain to you what the Bible is saying. When the son was coming in the distance, he came, and he ran, and the Bible said he took him, and he kissed him, and he said to his servants, bring unto my son the best rope.

That's what he did. Can I tell you something this Sunday morning? Every single one of us that are sitting in the service, you know what? You walk into this Sunday morning service, and you came in, spiritually speaking, with a garment or a rope. If God, the Holy Spirit, this morning will become real within our midst, every one of us is going to see us the way that God sees us.

And you remember the parable that the Lord Jesus told of that great wedding feast, and there was the bridegroom, and the guests were invited, and people were glad to be there. And then Christ came, and He made a statement. He said, you know, as these people were coming, suddenly there was a man came in, and he just looked like the others.

He had a similar kind of a garment on, or a rope on, and it was part of the wedding guest, and everything. But the bridegroom went up to him, and he said to him, how did you get in here? You see, no one else saw him in that fashion. But the bridegroom, who had the discernment to realize, he looked upon the garment that he was wearing, and as he was looking upon it, he realized, no, no, no, this is not real.

And he said, how did you get in here? No one else discerned that he was not really part of them. And he said, take him out of there. You see, every single one of us that came into the service this morning, we came in spiritually speaking, if you and I want to accept it or not, we came in spiritually speaking, and we were wearing a garment.

Now the Bible speaks about this thing, and the Bible speaks about it clearly. Because you remember when Satan was accusing Joshua and the presence of God, and he said Joshua had this garment on, and this

garment was just full of spots and dirt and blood, whatever it was, and here was Joshua, and he was accusing him. And brother and sister, there are some of us this morning that sit here, and you know what? You've never received Christ into your life.

You say, what are you talking about? You've never received the garment of righteousness. You say, what are you saying? I'm saying to you this morning that you need a spiritual experience of God. You say, what kind of a spiritual experience is it? You need to be born of the Spirit of God.

You say, why do I have to be born of the Spirit of God? Because the Bible said, for as by one man's sin enter into the world, and death by sin, and so death pass upon all men for all our sin. Listen, you are not born a Christian, even if you are born in a Christian home. You say, what is it that needs to happen to you? You need to come to the place with God in His Word.

You know, if I could have the privilege to sit down with you and say, can I explain to you systematically God's plan of salvation, and we go through it. Now, it's going to take time, because we're going to sit down with two open Bibles, and we're going to go to the Scriptures, and I'm going to say, let's look at man's condition. And when you look at man's condition, you know what you will discover? You will discover that we were born in sin, and in an iniquity that our mothers received us, because of the sin of Adam and Eve, and that the Bible says, the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, and that the Bible is saying to us, God has got no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but that He would turn to God, and we will sit down, and we will go to the Scriptures, and systematically, I will explain to you man's condition.

And you will read the Scriptures, we will discuss it, I will make sure that you understand it, and then we're going to go to God's provision. And you say, Gerard, what are you going to do with me? I said, I'm going to show you how Christ came to die for you on the cross. You see, there are some of us here this morning who don't know Christ.

You need to know how you can become a Christian. You say, then what will happen? We're going to go to the Scriptures, and I'm going to explain to you what's your responsibility. You say, what is my responsibility? My responsibility is to turn to God, and say, I want Christ in my life.

And you know what will happen as you do that? We go to the promise, and we discover how you can know that Christ is in your life. And you can walk out of this church this Sunday morning, being absolutely sure that if you die today, you're going to be in the presence of God. That's what God is saying.

You say, what is this going to cost me? It's going to cost you absolutely everything. You say, why is it going to cost me everything? You know why it's going to cost you everything? Because it cost God everything. So can I ask you a question? Have you made this commitment to God? He said, Gerard, as a mother of your children, you cannot be the mother to your children if you don't... the godly mother to your children, the spiritual one to your children, if you don't know Christ personally.

I just sat in a plane. You know, I spent 80 days of the year in planes. And when we came out the other day, I said to Janice, you know, I think this is about a 40-year flight to this year.

And you know, I don't like flying. I used the old King James Version, because I like to memorize it and there's many other wonderful translations. But I used this, and I found the verse one day, because I don't like flying.

And I discovered Jesus said, Lo, I am with you. It was wonderful. Flying back from Calgary, and this young woman came to sit next to me in the seat of this plane.

We just began to talk. Her husband is an engineer, and she's got three children, and she was going with a bunch of friends for four days. You know what they were doing? They were friends, and they're going to a resort or something.

And I said, what are you doing all those four days? She said, we are knitting. I thought, for goodness sake, you know. Imagine four pastors sitting in a boat knitting, you know.

And so I said, wow, that's amazing. And so we began to talk, and she said to me, what are you doing? And I don't like it when people say to me, what are you doing? I said, let me tell you who I am. Ha ha.

She said, are you someone important? I said, oh no. She said, so why do you want to tell me who you are? I said, I want to tell you who I am in Christ. Oh really? I said, absolutely.

And you know, on that flight, and she blamed her husband for putting her on a flight, because she wanted to fly with WestJet directly from Calgary to Tamarix, because WestJet stopped at Everton Hortons, if you don't know that. So she said, my husband flew me into Vancouver, now I need to fly up to Cambridge. I said, oh that's great.

She said, why? I said, I've got time to talk to you. And we talked, and we talked, and there was a moment, she just broke. I said, what is it? And she said, when I was 16 years old, I gave my life to Christ, and a Christian missionary alliance church in Alberta.

I said, oh. I said, so what happened? She said, I married a man that wasn't a Christian. And she said, I lost it.

Never forget, you know, this beautiful mother, I mean, she's a German girl, and um, and three, she's got three beautiful girls. I mean, just beneath this little family, show me a picture, and just a tear streaming down, and she said, is there a way that I can come back to God? Wow. You see, you sit with a garment here this morning.

Now, you are a Christian, and you know what has happened often to our garments? They're getting pretty messed up. When I was a little boy, you know, we were rascals, because, and I mean, we got into trouble. You know, I got, I got more spankings than food.

Oh, if this could only come back to Canada, how great would it be? You would not have a problem, you know? And, and I, the mother and father, I mean, I just, you say, why did they do that? Because I needed every single one of them, and I see a few times, the place where we stayed, there was a young boys of a hockey team in there last night, and they were running 11, 12, up and down, and she said, what are we going to do? I said, I'm going to grab my belt, and I'm going to go around, and I'm just going to let go. She said, you land up in a prison. I said, there's no one here in Melfort.

I'm okay, but you know what, brother and sister, we were terrorists when we were young, and sometimes the neighbours in those days, we don't have dryers, and those kind of things, you know, and they would hang their, their, their sheets and everything up, and we as kids would go and get some mutton, and you know, this is the problem. It only came from one direction, that it was, and so Papa would come and see. So what happened? Show us your hands, nice and clean.

Show us your hearts, full of mud. Some of us are just like that, you know, just like that. You see, you sit here with a smile upon your face, but as a father, you're not the father that God wants you to be for your children.

You sit here as a child. Yeah, we've gone through this thing. I mean, we, we have one daughter who's studying now to become a missionary.

We've gone through this thing, you know, and you try your best. You try to live for God, but we are saturated with infirmities and weaknesses, and God is working on our lives, and our children do not expect perfection, but they expect penitence. So the little girl who asked me, is your mummy a Christian? She said, absolutely.

I said, how do you know that your mummy is a Christian? She said, Uncle Gerard, this is how I know it. I know that my mummy is a Christian. When she's done something wrong, she came to me and she took me in.

She said, can I pray with you? I'm sorry. She said, that's how I know it. So can I ask you, Sir Christian, this morning, this garment, when last has it been washed in the blood? Oh, I tell you, I wish we had time.

Time is gone. We've got one of these wicked clocks here in Malford to run twice as fast as normal. You know, I wish I had a gun, and I shoot it right there at 12, and it stands still, and no one will be able to do it.

You say, oh, I hope it's not a shotgun, because you're going to kill me. Well, just be ready to stand before God. That's all.

Hey, we've got these garments, the garment of my fatherhood. You see, the father clothed his son. Listen, the father completed the work in the son's heart.

He said, Gerard, what did he do? Guess what he did? He said, his son came and said, bring unto my son the best robe. Job said, I'm clothed for the righteousness of God. And so here it is.

Now we come, and he said, bring unto my son a ring for his hand. He said, what does the ring speak of? The ring speaks of separation. When we were engaged, I was 33 or 34, Janice was 32.

We had no money in one sense, except for \$505 in the bank. And I went and passed it last week in Dallas when they saw Janice. It's so beautiful, and they saw me, and they came to her and said, how did this happen? I mean, Gerard's such an ugly duck, and you're so beautiful.

He said, did you have a ha-ha moment where you were partially blind? I said, what are you doing to me? I mean, we were laughing our heads straight about it. But you know, when we were engaged, I bought that engagement ring, and when we went to look for that ring, Janice and Monica, oh brother, they shopped till they dropped, you know? And it's just killing. But you know, I just walked together.

We saw the first ring, and I said, oh, this looks this nice. This is what I want. I'm that kind of person.

First thing that works, put it on. I mean, what's the problem? You know? You say, how do you buy shoes? I spend most of my time, most of my life in other people's shoes. 7, 9, 10, or 11.

You just make it fit. You see, we Africans, you make a hole at the front, and your toes go down. You're fine.

So you say, what happened? You know what happened? Brethren, sister, we, we, and so I said, this is the ring, and she said, oh no, can we look more? Oh man, from about nine o'clock to, I don't know, five o'clock in the afternoon, we were looking at rings. Now, I couldn't do anything because I wasn't married yet. I mean, you really need to watch it, you know? And so eventually, she said, so what are we going to do? Which one of all these ones? I said, I said, the first one.

Really? I said, yeah, that's the one she asked me to finger. Cost me \$500. We had \$500 in the bank.

I said, well, we've got five bucks left. She said, what are we going to do? Let's, let's go and have a Coke. So that's what we did.

But you know what? When I put that ring on, and it was so funny, you know, because, you know, you couldn't look at anyone else before that. But when I put that ring on, we got the Coke, so we sat here in the park in Duncan, on Vancouver Island. We sat there, and we were just looking at this, and I was just staring at her, and she said, why do you keep looking at me? Now, she didn't do it with me.

You understand that, don't you? I mean, I was just staring at you, and she said, why are you doing, why are you looking at me like that? I said, it's because I love you. And we were separated unto one another. Do you know this word in the Greek language? It's the Greek word, the, the, the, the word for the word finger is the word daktilos.

Now, the reason why we say this is separation of God is because Moses said in the place in he said, this is nothing else but the finger of God, and he was speaking about authority. Then Christ came and he said, I cast out the evil spirit by the finger of God. It's speaking of authority.

Now, the word in the Greek language is the word daktilos. So you say, so what's going on? The word in the New Testament, which is the word for ring, is the Greek word daktilos. So you say, how, how does the language came into being? You see, the word finger brought in the word ring.

If we didn't have fingers and we would be like a butcher that go to Tim Hortons to order four cups of coffee, and you say, how does he do it? Because he's a butcher. That's the way he does it. We didn't have fingers, we couldn't have rings.

And he said, bring to my son the ring. It separated him unto myself. Can I ask you this Sunday morning? Do you know what it means to be separated unto God? He commissioned his son.

Does he bring to my son shoes? The shoes are the preparation of the gospel. I mean, this is what the father does. Brethren and sisters, listen, God does not want us to have worldly friends.

You say, what are you talking about? God wants us to have friends in the world. I had some great conversations with people just this weekend, you know, Friday night, we went into this, you've got a thing called, I think it's extra food. I mean, I should be extra, extra, extra food, but they've got some food there.

And so I was speaking, I said to Janice, you know, I'm really tired. I want to go to bed, but I'm hungry. And you know, there's a chicken, a chicken, and we don't want to buy a whole chicken.

And there's a guy, he said, I said, do you want half of it? He said, why? I said, we've got a room here, because he's Korean, so they're going to steal it tomorrow. So you say, and you know, for the next 20 minutes, I was just talking to this man in his way. And you see these people, brethren and sisters, they

lust.

They don't know grace. Have you got friends? Are you praying for someone? Let me close. You know, we have this one daughter, Monica, she's just the darling of our hearts.

And, and every day we Skype and whenever she struggled, she phones me and she said, Oh, Papa, she said, will you just pray for me? And, and you know, then I just get underneath a little life, beautiful blonde. And I just prayed for her. And, you know, when, when we, when Monica was born, we cried to God and said, God, we don't want to have children if we're going to populate hell.

Please don't give us a child. If you're not going to work in that child's life. So if you are here this morning, and you are a young fellow, and your mommy and daddy is serving God, don't you think you're going to get away from Don't you think that? And the sooner you give in the better.

Because if you don't do that, the more you're going to regret that you haven't done it. And just watch it. The same sun which is softening the butter is the sun that is hardening the clay.

That morning when I was on our farm in Africa, and that horse was jumping, and I didn't have a saddle on and this thing was all over the place. I find myself between rocks and stones as he was jumping. I don't even get a fright for a snake or what, but as he was jumping and I grabbed onto his neck, tried, we were on horseback.

I mean, so many times and I grabbed and I thought this is not a problem. In fact, I thought as a 15 year old, 17 year old, this is fun. This is great.

Let me see how I can conquer this. And the next moment he threw me. And as he threw me, there was a clarity of the voice coming to say, if you stand before God this morning, there's no reason why He will allow you into your kingdom.

And I just went traveling through the air and the back of my head hit a rock. And I had a skull fracture 400 yards from a farmhouse covered with blood. Mom and Dad came back from the town and found this mess of blood on the carpet and rushed me to the hospital.

And for two and a half months, I just lied in that hospital. I want to tell you if you're a young person this morning, if you are kicking against it, I don't want to scare the life into you, but I want to tell you, don't you mess around with God. Do you know what happened to our Monica? Three and a half years old, she gave her life to Christ.

It was wonderful to lead her to the Lord Jesus. And she was in a Christian home. We tried our very best.

You say, how did you do? Not well. But there was a problem. You say, what was the problem? The problem, brother and sister, was she had a daddy that she got to know as a daddy.

But she had a daddy that when she turned 18 or 19, I saw her eight years or nine years of her life. You say, what are you talking about? I tell you what I'm talking about. Two weeks I was gone, two weeks I was home.

This is what's called the Christian ministry that sometimes takes us away from our families. And so we were great friends. But I was gone half of the time.

Do you know what happened to me? Monica went to study at Cape and Ray New Zealand. I teach at Cape and Ray schools, and she went to study at Cape and Ray New Zealand. Janice and myself were scheduled to go to Cape and Ray.

And I went to Monica and I said, my darling, daddy want to say something to you. And she said, Papa, what is it? I said, we are coming to New Zealand to lecture and to speak at conferences. I said, but I want to tell you something.

And she said, Papa, what is it? I said, you know, you're going to study at Cape and Ray while we are there. And she said, yes, I know. I said, daddy want to make a promise to you.

She said, what is it? I said, Monica, while you are studying there, I want to tell you, I have no interest to lecture at that school. And she looked at me and a little smile, you need to know her, little smile came around and she said, thank you. I said, why you say that? She said, you know, I don't mind.

But she said, you know, you're going to come with all your stuff of intimacy with God and walking with God that I so deeply respect. But she said, dad, I will not be able to make one mistake after you've been there. I said, OK.

I said, I won't go there. I said, can we visit you? Oh, yeah, as much as you want. So she was studying there and we got to know the president.

He came to me and he said, hey, Gerard, he said, could you come and speak to the students? I said, no, no. He said, why not? I said, Monica. He said, what's going on? You have a problem? I said, no.

I said, I just promised her that I'm not going to go there while she's there because she's afraid that she can't just really be herself if mom and dad has been there. And she's got this African dad who's so passionate about things. And I said, I promise.

Oh, you see, that's OK. He said, I understand. And you know what happened? The last day in New Zealand came.

And that last day, Janice flew back a few days earlier. And that last day, I was about 20, 25 minutes from the Capon Ray Bible College. And I saw Monica.

We spent some time together. It was great. And then I went to preach in Hamilton and I switched languages the Sunday morning from one to the other.

And Sunday night, I had to switch to English. I was speaking in another language. And the Sunday night, I'm in this place packed of people.

And as I sat at the back of this place, someone came from the back, brother and sister. And I just sat there, you know, in a corner waiting for the people to come. And someone came from the back and just bumped me onto my shoulder, you know.

And I just went, doof. And I thought, what New Zealander in his right mind would do this? And so I look up and here's Monica. I said, my darling.

Hi, Dad. I said, what are you doing here? Oh, it's your last night. I said, OK.

I said, so? She said, I brought the whole faculty and all the students. I said, oh, no. She said, oh, yeah, I wanted to come and hear my dad.

So, you know, you know, after 35 years of ministry, people say, you still get butterflies. I tell you, they just fly in formation. That's all that happens.

So that night I got up, you know, and here's all these students. I mean, the place, probably about 400 people. The place is packed.

It's all the faculty membership. I got up and I was so nervous, you know. And I got up and I just poured my heart out.

And brother and sister, those of us who are pastors, if you ever know how to do it, you've never learned how to do it. We came to the end of that meeting and there was a great brokenness. President came to me and he said, tomorrow morning you're speaking to the students.

I said, I can't. He said, why not? I said, Monica, turn around and grab her. And she came and she said, Papa, please do it.

We just lectured her this year. But you know what happened? Ten o'clock that night, Monica phoned me and she said, Papa? I said, yes, my darling. She said, something happened tonight.

I said, what? She said, God did something for me. That's very wonderful. I said, wow, that's great.

I said, you know, I'm speaking tomorrow morning. She said, yes. She said, I said, Monica, I asked the president if I speak tomorrow morning, if I can take you out for a date tomorrow night.

Oh, she said, I know about that. I said, I'll tell you what, I'll pick you up at six tomorrow evening. Went to speak the morning.

All the students sat there. Six o'clock that night, I went and I parked in front of the school. And here came my Monica, beautiful, white dressed.

And, you know, if you are a young man, you're going to need to spend a week with me in prayer and fasting before you meet my daughter. Maybe 40 days. Who knows? Anyway, here comes my Monica and she came, beautiful blonde hair.

And I jumped out and opened the door and she said, oh, thank you, Dad. And and she got in and closed the door and she said, so what's going to happen? And I said, I'm taking you to the best restaurant in New Zealand. She said, which one? I said, I don't know.

She said so. I said, we're going to find it. And we found it.

And that night, I mean, Janice was at home and we sat, we went and sat in a corner and we just talked and we talked and we talked and we talked. And after the meal, she looked at me. And she took those two little hands and she put it around like this, like a little table, and she dragged me closer to her.

And those two beautiful blue eyes look into my eyes and she said, Daddy, I said, yes, my darling. And the tears began to stream down her cheeks. She said, Daddy, I need to talk to you, and something inside began to break, I said, what is it? She said, you're not going to like this, in fact, she said, this is really going

to hurt you.

I said, OK. And then she brought me closer to her and she said, Daddy, by that time, I was just crying like a child. I said, Monica, don't do this to me.

What is it? And she brought me close to her little face and she said, Daddy, I never knew you. And I just crushed, you know, here's my 18 year old daughter who said, I never knew you. I said, what do you mean? She said, spiritually.

She said, two weeks you were home, two weeks you were gone. I got glimpses, but I never knew you. And then she got up.

She came around that table and she took me. And she put that little face right next to my face and tears were just streaming down her cheeks. And she said, Daddy, last night I met you, I said, OK.

And she held me tight to her and she said, Daddy, I like what I saw. I knew you. Here's the question.

Does your children know you? I missed it for 18 years. Here's the case question. Do you know God?

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