

# Five Sins Satan Uses to Destroy

by William Blackburn

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a sinless life and the dangers of compromise, worldliness, and false doctrine, and calls Christians to repent and turn to God.*

**Duration:** 34:02

**Scripture:** Revelation 2

**Topics:** "Satan"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being on fire for God and not settling for a lukewarm faith. He highlights that our actions and testimonies are being observed by others, including our family and friends, who may be influenced to choose heaven or hell based on what they see in our lives. The preacher also discusses the process of conviction, repentance, and forgiveness when we have sin in our lives, and how God may use chastisement and scourging to get our attention if we don't repent. The sermon concludes with a story about a young girl's diary, highlighting the consequences of falling into sin and the hope of redemption through repentance and returning to God.

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## Transcript

If you have your Bibles, take them please and turn to the book of Revelation, Revelation chapter 2. And I'm going to read several verses all during the message from Revelation chapter 2 and chapter 3, so you'll want to keep your Bibles open tonight and see these verses for yourself. When I was 36 years old, I became a Christian. At the time, I was teaching a Sunday school class, I was singing in the choir, I was drinking coffee with all the good old boys downstairs.

I was taking a CWT class, learning how to win other people to Christ, when God through the Holy Spirit showed me that I was not saved. And on a Thursday night, October 24th, 1983, I was born again. And I'm telling you, I got the full dose.

Man, God did something in my life that night that I can't even explain to you tonight. But when I got saved, man, I went home, I was jumping and shouting and carrying on. I got up the next morning, got me a brand new Bible.

The first thing I wanted to do was to read that Bible, learn more about Jesus. I wanted to tell everybody I knew how to be saved. Man, I began to tell folks and knock on the door and share the good news about Jesus Christ.

Man, I had never knew that life could be so exciting and so dynamic. And yet, Jesus Christ says that. He says, I've come that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly.

I had that abundant life. Things were dynamic for me. But then one day, I was so excited, I was kind of a fanatical in our church.

And one of the old deacons looked at me one day and he said, well, that's all right, William, you'll get over it. And I said, what do you mean? He said, oh, you know, you'll get over it. And I looked around and I learned something.

I learned that the average new convert, when he really gets saved, he's so excited and he's such a good Christian that he has to backslide just so he can fellowship with the rest of the folks. You see, the sad fact is that most folks in our churches today have gotten over the excitement and the joy of what God has done in their life. Now why is that? As I travel across America, I literally speak to thousands of people every year that I know have been saved.

Now I know that we have a lot of folks in our churches that are not saved. That is a major problem. Our churches have lost people in them.

But what I'm talking about tonight is I know a lot of folks who are really born again, but they live defeated and discouraged lives. They have no joy. They have no peace.

They have no power. They have no influence for the lost and dying world. Now why is that? Why is it we have so many people who are really born again and yet they don't have that abundant life that Jesus Christ promises us? Well, I believe, friend, because we live in the 20th century of America, that folks today who claim the name of Christ do not understand what the Bible says about sin.

You see, my friends, the Bible teaches this. When you come on planet Earth, you are a sinner. You have rebelled against God and that sin condemns you to a devil's hell.

Because Jesus loves you, he came, he paid your sin debt on that cross so you can come to Christ. Your sins can be forgiven. You can go to heaven one day, praise God for the shed blood of Jesus.

So once you are born again, your sin will not condemn you to hell. But the Bible teaches that sin still has consequences. And a lot of times today, Christians do not understand about sin.

Most Christians today don't see sin as the ugly thing God sees it. Most Christians have the idea, well, I'm not going to hell, so I don't really have to be that careful how I live. No, my friend, nothing could be farther from the truth than that.

No, your sin may not condemn you to hell if you're born again, but your sin can cause a lot of problems. And I'll tell you why. Number one, sin has consequences.

You see, my friends, I want to tell you, you can find forgiveness as a Christian when you sin, but that does not stop the judgment of that sin. You fornicate, you commit illegal affairs, that does not stop getting aged or having a baby out of wedlock. See, sin has consequences even when God forgives it.

But you must also understand that God has dedicated himself to judging sin. You see, my dear friends, listen to me. Why did God save you? When God saves you, he saves you for one reason, to shape you and to form you into the image of Jesus.

Every day, you should be getting more like Jesus. Every day, you should be getting stronger and bolder and more courageous and more willing to live the Christian life. Not every day you ought to be shaped and mold into the image of Jesus Christ.

Now listen to me, men. When God looks at us and we allow sin to come in our life as a Christian, God has dedicated himself to getting that sin out. What God does is this.

When you as a Christian have sin in your life, number one, God convicts you of that sin. He makes you sorrowful of it. He wants you to repent.

If you will repent, he'll forgive you and start over. If you don't, he goes to step two. That is chastisement.

That is problems in your life. You ever had a day when everything just went wrong? Many times, God, when he sees us as born-again believers living in sin, he'll reach down and turn our lives upside down trying to get our attention. If we don't repent then, God goes to step three.

That is scourging. That is physical illness. You can bring physical illness in your own body by sin and rebellion against God.

And finally, the Bible says, sir, if you are truly saved and you live in sin and rebellion against God and you will not repent, you will not get right, the Bible says there is a sin unto death. God will sign your death certificate and God will take you home because you're such a sorry testimony. That's why, friends, I'm telling you, a man who's really born again, he's not gonna live in sin.

You find an old boy who's out there living in sin and bragging about it, he doesn't know the Lord Jesus, friend, because I'm telling you, when a born-again believer has sin in his life, the Bible says God will chasten him and scourge him like a father will do his own son. You know the problem with most of you here tonight? You don't think you sin. Most of you here tonight, you don't think you sin.

You know what? You classify sin. Most of you here tonight, you look out over the world and you see all the wicked sin and you say, well, I don't murder anybody, I don't rob anybody, I don't rape anybody, I haven't sold any drugs to any little kids, I haven't really sinned. But my dear friends, let me remind you tonight that it was not murder or robbery or rape or adultery that condemned the whole world to hell.

Remember in the Garden of Eden, God told Adam, don't, but Adam did and the whole world was condemned to hell for what sin? The sin of disobedience. My friend, God hates sin and there is no little sin in the eyes of God. God hates all sin and God has dedicated himself to judge sin.

You cannot have joy, you cannot have peace, you cannot have victory as a born again believer when you are in active rebellion against a holy God. Most folks are kind of like those two brothers I heard about that grew up in a small town about the size of Laurel, Mississippi. These two brothers were the meanest, most wicked sinners in all the town.

They lied, they cheated, they stole, they committed adultery, they sold moonshine liquor. They were horrible, wicked men. One of the brothers died.

The brother who was still alive came to the local pastor. He said, pastor, I want you to preach my brother's funeral for me. He said, but listen, there's \$1,000 in it for you if during the funeral you'll call my brother a saint.

Well, the pastor thought about it for a moment, he said, okay, you've got a deal. So they had a funeral. They had the old boy in a coffin worth thousands of dollars.

Everybody was there to see what the pastor was going to say about this old reprobate who had died. The brother who was still alive was sitting on the front row about where Brother Rod is right here. And the pastor got up and he said, the man we're burying today was a horrible, wicked man.

Said he lied, he cheated, he stole, he committed adultery, he sold moonshine liquor. He was a horrible, wicked sinner. But he said, compared to his brother sitting over there, he's a saint.

You see, it just depends on who you compare yourself with, right? Now you're out there, you're comparing yourself to that old drunkard, that old prostitute, that big old mean sinner in town. You start comparing yourself to the biggest sinner in town, you might look pretty good. But the Bible says we're to compare ourselves with Jesus.

We're to compare ourselves with the word of God. And buddy, I don't care who you are. You put yourself up beside Jesus.

You put yourself up beside the perfect word of God. And I'm telling you, you'll find a lot of things in your life that God classifies sin. And I want to share with you tonight five sins that Satan is using today to destroy Christians.

Five sins that on the surface you may think are not all that bad, but sir, they are so bad that God wrote about them in the Bible. Revelation chapter two, verse one. You guys are Bible scholars, you know the book of Revelation was written by the apostle John while he was exiled on the isle of Patmos.

And while John was exiled on the isle of Patmos, the Lord Jesus Christ appears to John in a vision. And the Lord says, John, I want you to write seven letters to seven churches. And in five of these letters, the message to the church was this, church, you've got sin in your life, repent.

And these five letters, we see the five sins that Satan is using today to destroy Christians all across America. Revelation chapter two, verse one is the letter to the church at Ephesus. It says, and to the angel of the church of Ephesus writes, verse two, I know thy works and thy labor and thy patience and how thou cannot bear them which are evil and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not and has found them liars and has borne and has patience and for my name's sake has labored and has not fainted.

Now, dear friend, listen to me very carefully. Before Jesus Christ told Ephesus what their sin was, he gave them several compliments because in the eyes of the world, Ephesus was a good church. Jesus Christ said, I want to compliment you because I know your works and your labor.

Now that word labor is an interesting word. It is the word kapos. It means to labor to the point of physical exhaustion.

Now get the picture, man. This was a hard working group of people. These were the kind of folks they would get up in the morning and they would start serving God, they'd serve God all day to finally they would fall into the bed exhausted from the work they had done for God.

This was a hard working group of people. I might want to interject right here that the average church member today doesn't do enough work for God to exhaust a butterfly, but this was a hard working group of

people and Jesus said, I want to compliment you guys. I know your work and your labor.

He also said, listen, I want to, I want to compliment you on your patience and that word patience means to endure hardness. You see, it wasn't easy being a Christian in Ephesus because in Ephesus, there are thousands of false preachers that were fronting for prostitution. Religion was very corrupt in Ephesus.

It wasn't easy being a Christian in Ephesus and then Jesus said, I want to compliment you because you are strong in doctrine. He said, listen, if somebody tries to come to your church and preach something, that's not the word of God, you're so grounded in the word of God that you will not allow false doctrine. He said, I want to compliment you and then he said, I want to compliment you because you're doing it all in for my name sake.

Now friend, listen carefully. This was a good church. This was a mighty church.

This was a hardworking church. This was a church that was doing it all in the name of Jesus. So I imagine that the very next line must have come like a thunderbolt from heaven in verse four.

Jesus said, never the less, and that word nevertheless means even though you've done all these good things, I have somewhat against thee because thou has left thy first love. They had stopped loving Jesus with all their heart. You see my friend, the first step to spiritual fall is a sin you can't see.

You can't see on the outside when a person leaves their first love. This was a good church, a hardworking church going through the motions, all the programs, all the activities, spending the millions of dollars with brand new buildings and yet in their heart they had grown cold to the Lord Jesus Christ. Friends, I want to tell you, that's the first step to spiritual fall.

When you take your eyes off Jesus, when you stop praying, stop reading your Bible, stop telling other people about Christ, there's something inside your heart that just cools off. You cannot have the power of God and God calls that cooling off sin in his eyes. Now I want to ask you a question.

Was there ever a day in your life when you were more on fire for God than you are right now? Was there ever a moment in your life when you loved Jesus more than you do right now? You say, William, if I were to be honest, I'd have to say I know I'm saved and I can't lose that, but there was a day in my life when I was more on fire for God than I am now. Well my friends, if that's you, then you've got that sin. You've left your first love.

You see my friends, the Christian life is like this. Every day you should be getting stronger and bolder. Every day you should be getting more like Jesus.

Every day you should be becoming, climbing more holy, more godly, more righteous. There are only two kinds of Christians. You are either growing in grace and knowledge or else you're backsliding.

There's no standing still with the Lord Jesus Christ. And the first sin that is destroying Christians today is they're leaving their first love. And that is caused simply because they fail to read their Bible, they fail to pray, they fail to witness, and they fail to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Friend, I want to tell you, we Baptists have missed the Holy Spirit. There's more to knowing God than just being saved, son. I want to tell you, when a man will give up his life for the Lord Jesus and surrender his will to God, I'm telling you, God will fill you with an anointing and a power that you cannot even explain.

How do men go and win people to Christ? How do missionaries go to the dark African fields? It is because of the power of the Holy Spirit. When a man will give up his life to follow the Lord Jesus, God will honor that and use him for his glory. Ephesus had left their first love.

What about you? Number two is this, the church of Pergamos. In verse 12, it says, and to the angel of the church in Pergamos writes, these things saith he that hath a sharp sword with two edges, I know thy works and where thou dwellest. Even where Satan's seat is, and thou holdest fast my name and hast not denied my faith.

Even in those days where in Antipas was my fateful martyr, who was slain among you where Satan dwelt. Jesus gave Pergamos a compliment. He said, listen, I know where you're at.

I know where you're at. Now, why was that a compliment? Because Pergamos was one of the world's most wicked cities. They had their own God there in Pergamos, the God Esculapius, the God of healing, the God of healing.

You want to see what the God of healing emblem looks like today. The next time you see an emergency medical vehicle, you see that rod, that snake coiled around it. That's the God Esculapius, the God of healing.

If you worship the God Esculapius in those days, if you were sick, you would go into the temple. You would lie on the floor. They had thousands of non-poisonous snakes.

If one of those snakes slithered by and touched you, that was the spirit of the God Esculapius healing you. They had there in Pergamos the altar of Zeus. It was an altar so big that you could see it from anywhere in the city limit.

One Bible scholar said that a Christian's life was in danger 365 days a year. Jesus said, you're in a place where Satan's seat is. Now, my friends, I want to tell you, that's a dynamic group of people.

To go into the devil's headquarters and build a dynamic church, and Jesus said, I know where you're at. I want to compliment you. But then he said in verse 14, he said, but I have a few things against thee, because thou has there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

What was the sin of Pergamos? The sin of Pergamos was compromise with the world. Instead of looking to God each day and following after God's example, they were looking after the world they were following, after the world's example. Now, friends, this is the number one sin in Laurel, Mississippi today.

Compromise with the world. You look at the average church member, he looks like the world, he talks like the world, he acts like the world, and yet the Bible says what? Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If a man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

And I'm telling you, I see it all the time. I see folks walk an aisle, get saved, get on fire for God, but they stop reading the Bible, they stop praying, they stop telling people how to be saved, and automatically they start compromising with the world. And God said the world has invaded, and my spirit has departed.

And the question tonight is, have you compromised with the world? Is there any aspect of your life as a born-again believer that you've compromised in? You say, well, William, if I were to be honest, I'd say I've

compromised, but it's just a small thing. Well, this is what Jesus says, sir. Jesus says, you repent of this, or I'll come and fight against thee with the sword of my mouth.

Did you hear that? Jesus Christ said, I hate compromise so much that if you compromise and you will not repent of it, I will come personally, take the sword of my mouth, and fight against you. Now, I want to ask you, how can a Christian have joy? How can a Christian have peace? How can you have victory? How can you have an abundant life when the King of kings and the Lord of lords is standing and fighting against you? The sin of Pergamos was they had compromised with the world. And then the third sin is found in the church of Thyatira, chapter 2, verse 18.

It says unto the angel of the church in Thyatira, write, verse 19, I know thy works in charity and service and faith and thy patience and thy works in the last to be more than the first. They were a church that Jesus said, I know you by your charity, your love. Now, Thyatira was the kind of church that prided itself on being a loving church.

They said, we love everybody. They had letterhead, church letterhead said the church with a heart in the heart of the city. We love everybody, man.

We won't be judgmental. We won't be condemning. We won't be narrow-minded biggest.

We won't be intolerant, man. We live and let live. We love everybody, man.

We love everybody. And Jesus Christ addressed that. And he said in verse 20, he said, notwithstanding, that means even though you are a church of love, I have a few things against thee because thou suffers that woman, Jezebel, which called herself a prophetess to teach and to seduce my service, to commit fornication and to eat things, sacrifice and the idols.

And I gave her space to repent of her fornication. And she repented not. And here's what was going on, man, listen to me because I'm going to get real close to home here in just a second.

Here was a church that prided itself on loving everybody. They prided themselves on being the enlightened group, of being tolerant, putting up with everybody's different because we've all sinned so we can't condemn one another, you see. We love everybody.

But there was a woman in the church by the name of Jezebel. And this woman, Jezebel, a leading lady in the church was going out, committing immorality, fornication with men in the church. And while she was out here committing this fornication, everybody would say, well, you know, we don't want to be judgmental.

We don't want to be intolerant. We've all got sin. And he who was out sinning cast the first stone.

We love everybody. And Jesus said, hey, wait a minute, buddy. You've started tolerating sin.

And it's like dominoes. Remember when you'd line those dominoes up and you'd hit one that all fall down? That's the way sin is. First you lose your love for Jesus, then you compromise with the world, then you start tolerating sin.

Friend, I'm here to tell you the God that sent fire and brimstone down from heaven and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah is the same God today. God hates sin. We can laugh about it.

We can joke about it. We can paint it, put lipstick on it. It is still rebellion against a holy God.

It makes no difference who you are, whether you're a ditch digger or president of the United States. Homosexuality is a sin and rebellion against God. Abortion is the murder of little bitty babies.

I'm telling you the Ten Commandments are still in effect. God hates sin. It makes no difference who you are or what you say.

What your education is. God has given his word. He hates sin and he will judge sin.

And Thyatira, a modern day American church in the name of love was tolerating sin. I want to ask you a question tonight. Look at me.

Have you come into this building tonight with a sin in your life that you know about? You say, well, William, I do have a sin in my life, but I just can't get rid of it. Well, my friends, I love it, but you hear me tonight. You can be a good person.

You can be a moral person. You can be a Christian. But as long as you have that sin in your life that you know about, you are tolerating sin in your life and the power of God will never be on your life.

In fact, that sin puts a cloud between you and God. He will not hear your prayer. It brings the judgment of God in your life.

It hinders your family. It hinders your hope. It keeps the joy.

It keeps the abundance out of your life. And God says, even if you love other people, the Bible says when you tolerate sin, that is sin itself. And he says, repent of it and turn from it.

Thyatira, the church of love, guilty of tolerating sin. And then the fourth church is the church of Sardis. Chapter three, verse one, it says unto the angel of the church of Sardis write, these things saith he that hath the southern spirits of God and the seven stars.

I know thy works, that thou has a name that thou livest and art dead. I've been in Sardis a hundred times. Here's what Sardis looks like.

Sardis is the kind of church on Sunday morning. All the money counters show up. All the Sunday morning crowd shows up and they look around and they evaluate.

The grass has been cut. The carpeting has been cleaned. The coffee has been made.

The Sunday school class is full. The offering is sufficient to pay our bills. Another good week.

We are satisfied. Sardis had a name that they lived, but they were dead. They claimed to know Christ personally, but it did not produce the fruit of the spirit in their life.

I'm here to tell you, friend, you listen to me. The purpose of a new Testament church is only one thing. It is to win people to Jesus Christ.

It is not simply to come and show up and fellowship and spend our money and build buildings. It is to teach a lost and dying world how to be saved. And I'm telling you, every dime we spend, every program we have, every activity we take upon ourselves should have as the end result to win somebody to Jesus.

And we can claim to be a New Testament church all we want to claim it, buddy. But if our main focus, our main goal is not to win people to Christ, we have a name that we live, but we're dead in the eyes of God. Sardis had a name that he lived, but Jesus said, spiritually, you're dead.

The final church is the church of Laodicea, Laodicea chapter three, verse 14, and here's what it says about Laodicea and into the angel, the church of the Laodiceans, right? I know that works that thou art neither cold or hot. I would that thou were cold or hot. So then because thou are lukewarm and either cold or hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth.

The word Laodicea means the people's rights. Here was a church where everybody demanded to have their rights. You have been no business meeting.

We demand our rights. We've been here. We've got our rights.

Everybody was claiming to have their rights. We want our way, our rights. First you had the senior adults over here.

They said, we've got our rights. We've been here 150 years. We were here before you got here, pastor.

We'll be here when you're gone. We paid our money, paid our taxes, taught this son of a school. We built this building.

This is our place. We've got our rights. You better take care of us, pastor.

You better buy us a big fancy bus so we can go up north once those leaves turn brown when we get good and ready. We've got our rights. But over here were the teenagers and the teenagers were saying, hey, you old folks may be the past, but we're the future.

We've got our rights. You better take care of us or it'll make us mad and we'll go home. You better send us on a big old fancy ski trip to Colorado.

We'll be mad. We've got our rights. Then you had the women over here.

The women were saying, well, but us women, we've got our rights. I mean, we teach Sunday school class. We clean this church up.

We do it all. Plus we have to drag our old sorry husbands to church on Sunday morning. I mean, we've got our rights.

And the men were saying, yeah, you do have to drag us to church on Sunday morning. That's true. But you know what? We work hard six days a week.

And when you tie to that church, you're tithing out of my paycheck, man. We've got our rights. And the deacons were saying, but we've got our rights.

And four old pastors were saying, but I've got my rights. And finally, Jesus said, I know who you guys are. You're not hot.

You're not cold. You look warm. And that fact makes me want to spew you out of my mouth.

Do you think maybe that's the problem in Laurel, Mississippi today? Do you think maybe that's the problem? We're not hot. We're not cold. We're just lukewarm.

You see, hot is to be on fire for God. Cold is to be unsaved. And lukewarm is in that middle.

Now, I don't agree with everything that the great Methodist preacher, John Wesley preached on. But you know what? I know a lot about John Wesley that I like. Oh, John Wesley rode 150,000 miles on horseback just so he could preach the gospel.

He preached more than 40,000 sermons. He wrote over 400 books. He spoke 10 languages.

At the age of 86, John Wesley wrote in his daily journal that he was irritated with himself because he couldn't write for more than 15 hours without his eyes giving out on him. At the age of 86, he wrote in his daily journal he was irritated with himself because he still wanted to lay in a bed at 530. Somebody said, John Wesley, what do you have, son? Why do people want to come and hear you preach? You know, John Wesley said, well, I'm just on fire for God and people like to come and watch me blaze.

Wouldn't it be great if they said it about you? Those people are just on fire for God and I want to hang around and watch them blaze. Oh, listen to me, friend. I don't understand everything about the Bible, but Jesus Christ said, I'd rather you be cold, lost, and going to hell, or I'd rather you be hot, sold out, on fire for me rather than be in the lukewarm middle.

Did you hear that? Jesus said he'd rather you go to hell than be in the lukewarm middle and be saved. You see, cold is to be unsaved, hot is to be on fire for God, and everything else is in the middle. I heard a boy say, well, I pray a little, I give a little, I serve a little, I do a little.

Just a little. Somebody said, yeah, man, any old hypocrite can do that. I pray a little, I serve a little, I give a little, I do a little, just a little.

Cold is to be unsaved, hot is to be on fire for God, and everything else is in the middle. And I'm telling you, friend, the middle is the worst place of all to be. You see, friend, there are people all around you that are watching you.

There are people all around you that are watching your testimony to see if it's real. There are people in your family that will go to heaven or hell based upon what they see in your life. There are friends and neighbors that will go to heaven or hell based upon the fire that's in your heart, friend.

I'm telling you, everybody here tonight has somebody watching them. Somebody is watching you to see if it's real, to see if the love of Christ is there. Friend, there is a time in our lives where we need to stand up and say, God, make it real in my life.

Lord, let me get out of that lukewarm middle and let me get in that hot, fiery group for Jesus. Several years ago, I came across a little book called Go Ask Alice. Have you ever read it? This little book is a little diary of a 15-year-old girl.

Every page of this little book is simply the page that Alice writes in her diary about what happened that day. The diary opens, she's 15, they've just moved to California, and she's walking down the hallway, that first day of school. Talks about how she meets some new friends and how these friends take her to a party and how they introduce her to drugs and alcohol.

Talks about the time she loses her virginity. It's a sad story because every page of that diary is the story of a young girl crying out for hope. Her friends introduce her to drugs.

She gets hooked on drugs and they encourage her to run away from home. So she runs away from home and she lives on the street. She's taken in by a woman and sexually manipulated.

It's very pitiful. Finally, she comes to herself and she calls her dad and she said, Dad, I want to come home. I want to stop doing drugs.

I want to get my life straight. So her dad lets her come home and her old friends are so mad at her because she won't do drugs anymore. They go into a home where she's babysitting and they put some bad LSD on some candy when she doesn't know it.

She eats that candy with that bad LSD and she has a hallucinatory trip and the diary opens up and it says things like this. You know, what happened? I can't write. What's going on here? What's going on here? I can't remember.

It hurts so bad. What happened is they came home that day and they found her in the closet. She was on a bad hallucinatory trip.

She'd taken her fingernails and scratched almost all the skin off her face. She'd pulled almost all the hair out of her head. She was just totally out of it.

I mean, it was a horrifying experience. The parents of the children she was babysitting tried to have her arrested, but she was able to get out of it. And after this terrible experience, this horrifying experience, she wrote in that diary, she wrote, Where's God? What's God? And I thought to myself, I wonder if there was anybody in that school that told her.

September 21st was the last entry. She's getting ready to go back to school. Here's what she writes, the very last entry in her diary.

She writes, It's only five minutes after five and I doubt if anyone else on this block is up. But I'm so wide awake, I can hardly stand it. Frankly, I think I'm scared witless inside about going back to school.

But inside my head, I know it's going to be all right. Because I have Joel and my new super straight friends and they'll help me. Besides, I'm much stronger now than I used to be.

I know I am. I used to think I'd get another diary when you're filled or I'd keep a journal, a diary through my whole life. But now I don't think I will.

Diaries are great when you're young. In fact, you've saved my sanity 100,000 million times. But I think when a person gets older, she should be able to discuss her problems and thoughts with other people instead of just another part of herself as you've been with me.

Don't you agree? I hope so. For you are my dearest friend. And I shall thank you always for sharing my tears and heartaches and struggles and strives, my joys and happiness.

It's all been good in its own special way, I guess. See, the epilogue of this book simply said that the subject of this book, Alice, died three weeks after her decision to no longer keep a diary. Her parents came home.

They found her lying on the floor. They called the police. They called the ambulance.

But it was too late. And they don't know whether it was an accidental overdose or a premeditated overdose. And well, I guess it really doesn't matter.

What does matter is she died. And I closed that little book and I put it down. And I thought to myself, all across America, churches are just playing games and people are going to hell.

Oh, my friend, listen, if there was ever going to be a day when you were going to serve God with a hot heart, it needs to be now. If there was ever going to be a day when you were really going to get in that fiery group, it needs to be now. If there was ever going to be a day when you were going to be everything God calls you to be, it needs to be now.

If there was ever going to be a day when you were going to win a lost and dying world to Jesus, it needs to be now. It's later than you think. We need to seize the opportunity to win a lost and dying world.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/24/SID24272.mp3>

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