

# A Call to Faith

by David Wilkerson

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*David Wilkerson's sermon emphasizes the essential role of faith in the life of a believer and the dangers of doubt and unbelief.*

**Duration:** 1:01:36

**Scripture:** Psalm 121:5-8, Matthew 6:33, Mark 11:22-24, Acts 3:6, Romans 10:17, Hebrews 11:6, James 2:17

**Topics:** "Faith"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on the importance of faith and the need to challenge, commit, and obligate oneself to God. He references the story of Joshua in the Bible, where Joshua commits God to act and obligates Him to make the sun stand still in order to win a battle. The speaker emphasizes the power of committing God before others and the importance of deepening one's faith. He also mentions the story of Elijah challenging the prophets of Baal and how he committed God to answer by fire. The sermon encourages listeners to have unwavering faith and to trust in God's power to act.

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## Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing to World Challenge, P.O. Box 260, Lindale, Texas 75771 or calling 214-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to your friends. Faith. Now, in this church, here at Times Square, we've preached about holiness, we've preached purity, we've preached repentance, and we've preached love for one another, a love for the people on the streets, and we've strongly emphasized missions, righteousness, but tonight I want to talk about faith because the Lord has lovingly rebuked me that in spite of all of my call for righteousness and purity in my heart, the heart of the church here at Times Square, I personally have been reproved by the Holy Spirit that my faith is weak.

That he's calling me personally to faith and in this search for faith, I hope I've had a bit of a revelation to share with you tonight. Hebrews 11.6, don't turn there, but I just want to read this scripture and when I read it, it was like a knife this past week. I've not been able to shake it off.

But without faith, it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he's a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. Now that hit me hard. Without faith, it's impossible to

please God.

That means I can be a praying man, that means I can be a righteous man, that means I can be a loving man, give all my goods to the poor and everything else, but if I don't have faith, he said, I can't please him. Without faith, it's impossible to please God. So you say, well brother, you're going to lay another trip on us tonight.

Yes, it's a faith trip if you want to call it that. God said without faith, it's impossible to please him. I want you to go to James, first chapter of James.

If you're new converts, go to Hebrews and turn right. One more behind Hebrews. I want you to go to James, the first chapter.

I want you to begin reading with me in the sixth verse. Bob Phillips preached on this subject this morning about being double-minded. He preached about wisdom, a powerful message.

We're going right back to the scripture. James 1, verse 6. Let's start verse 5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith nothing wavering.

For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. Of course, a double-minded man is unstable in all of his ways.

But look at that. Let not that person, that wavering person, the one wavering in his faith, don't let that person believe he'll receive anything from God. That's awful heavy.

Don't let that doubting, hesitating, withdrawing Christian think he's going to move the heart of God or receive anything from God. I had a lovely couple in my office this past week. They're here tonight, and I love them very much.

And they said something that was like a knife in me, and I just wanted to go and put my arms around them. They'd been praying about something for about four years. And the dear brother looked at me, and he was just as sincere as he could be, and I loved them both so much.

They said, Bro, we know God hears the prayers of the pastors, but does God hear the prayers of ordinary people like us? And I wanted to just go and say, oh, if you only knew, if you only knew how much he wants to answer your prayer. But that seems to be the question of many. What kind of trouble do you have to be? Because my prayers are not getting through.

I don't seem to be able to touch God. My faith is not moving God. I'm not hearing from God.

In fact, I got a letter this week that really shook me. Let me read a portion of it. This brother wrote to me and said, Dear Brother David, there was a matter that I know God led me to pray about.

I asked the Lord to search my heart and to lead me as he desired. I've never prayed so long, so fervently, so consistently over any one thing in all my life. I felt that God was leading me to fast over the matter also.

So I fasted and I prayed. I cast myself completely on the Lord. But God did not deliver what I clearly sensed he had promised me.

He said the shock was horrible. I asked myself, how can I ever again ask the Lord for anything with any confidence after such a letdown? How can I trust in the Lord's leading ever again after being so disappointed? I was sure God had promised me on this matter. And it leaves me so devastated.

There seems to be so many areas in our lives where we seek deliverance and we're not seeing results. And the discouragement is overwhelming. Many of my friends have also confessed they're having similar disappointments.

And it sure does bring death to the flesh. But he said the shock of it, of being so clearly led and then not getting the answer, not having God fulfill it. And this feeling of disappointment, this feeling of being rejected by God, something you've prayed about, some kind of a failure to get things to work.

Christians are withdrawing from the warfare as if to say, well, I can't blame God, but it must be me. It must be my measure of faith or my lack of faith. So they just withdraw from the warfare and it's as if to say, well, I've just been an ordinary Christian.

I love the Lord, but I'm not going to step out in faith anymore and get disappointed. I'm not going to be disappointed anymore. I'm not going to be shocked anymore.

Why is it that God has limited himself to work according to measure of our faith? Remember Jesus said when he came into his own country, to his own people, he did not many mighty miracles there because of their unbelief. His works were limited because of their unbelief. When the disciples could not cast out the devil out of a lunatic bird, they came to Jesus and said, why couldn't we cast him out? And Jesus said, you limited God because of your unbelief.

It was because of your unbelief. In fact, God swore to the Canaanites, the fathers of Israel, he would not bring them into the promised land because of their doubt and their unbelief. With them was God grieved for 40 years.

To them swore he that they should not enter into his west. But to them that believed not. So we see they could not enter in because of unbelief.

Unbelief we know ties the hands of God, but why? Why doesn't God work unless we're in his faith to him? I don't know. Nobody else knows. We don't need to know.

God said it. That's it. Without faith it's impossible to please him.

There are all kinds of theologies. For hundreds of years theologians have been trying to figure out why God has limited himself to the prayers and the faith of his people. I don't mind.

I'm not going to try to get into that. That would be a theological discussion we could never answer. But all we know is God said that without faith it's impossible to please him and I take him at his word.

Now this matter of trusting the Lord is serious business with God. Very serious business. Sarah was at the tent door when the Lord appeared in a Christophany.

In other words, in physical form. He appeared to Abraham there sitting in the tent and the Lord said to Abraham, Sarah, your wife is going to have a son. Therefore, and Sarah's outside the tent listening.

And she's an elderly woman now, far past the age of bearing a child. And Abraham's an old man. He's a great-grandfather.

And she's outside the tent. And this was the Lord speaking. Abraham, Sarah's going to have a son.

Going to give you a son. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself. Saying, after I've become old shall I have pleasure and my Lord being old also? And the Lord said to Abraham.

She was outside the tent. Why is Sarah laughing? Is anything too hard for the Lord? Then Sarah denied saying, I didn't laugh. For she was afraid.

And the Lord said, no, but you did laugh. You did laugh. Those were the very words.

The Lord said, no, Sarah, you laughed in your heart. You laughed at me. You limited me.

You don't believe I'm able to do this. Is anything too hard for the Lord? God wasn't amused by it. Because to God, to the Lord, it wasn't an awful matter.

Zechariah, the priest, the Bible said, was a man who walked after the commandments and the ordinances of the Lord, blameless. Here's a priest. He's in Jerusalem.

And he's a blameless man. He's a praying man. He's a godly man.

And one day, he'd been praying for years for a son. And an angel appeared at the right side of the altar one day and announced this. Zechariah, thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son.

And you'll call his name John. He shall be great in the sight of the Lord. He shall turn many in Israel to the Lord.

He will make ready a people prepared for the Lord. And I can see Zechariah's big smile. And he looks at his wrinkled hands.

And he probably feels his boy elbows. And he knows how old. He's an old man too.

And you know, he said to himself, sure. Oh yes. I'm going to have a son.

He's going to be John. And he's laughing in his heart. You see, I'm an old man.

And an angel of the Lord standing right there. John, you're going to have a son. The Lord wasn't amused with his amusement.

You know what? God sent Gabriel. The Lord sent Gabriel immediately. He said, Gabriel, go to him right now and give him a message.

You know what he told him? He said, Gabriel is speaking. I've been sent to speak to thee. Behold, thou shalt be dumb and not able to speak until the day that these things shall be performed because you did not believe my words which shall be fulfilled in their season.

And when he came out, he could not speak. He was dumb. We've got a lot of dumb people in the church.

You know what I mean? God's saying, look, if you're not going to, you're not even going to speak faith. Don't speak at all. I'm just going to tie your lips.

You can't say anything. And then you read the next chapter when his wife, Elizabeth, goes and meets Mary. The baby leaps and she prays the Lord.

The Bible said she looked at her face. This man can't praise God. He sees his wife expecting now.

And this is the one thing God's able to tell everybody. I'm going to have a son. I'm going to have a son.

I'm grandpa. I've said it six times. How many of you say I've got a daughter-in-law? I mean a granddaughter.

But he couldn't speak until the child was born. Why? He said, God said, this is serious business to me. You didn't believe.

I came and gave you the word and you won't believe. You laughed in your heart. You just chuckled inside.

You see, the Bible said, Zacharias, thy prayer is heard. He'd been praying for this. And when it came time for God to bring it to pass, this holy, obedient, praying man wasn't ready.

His faith was gone. He had no faith whatsoever. A praying, holy, godly man with no faith.

Not at all. Until God had to shut his mouth. Oh, how I like that.

God's done so many miracles for us. And I've always said the hardest part of faith is the last half hour. Just before God answers.

That's when most of us give up. And we're not there when God's there to answer. We've already gone off somewhere else.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. I've got a whole lot I want to speak about tonight.

It's absolutely shocking to me how God's people doubt the Lord in spite of all the miracles they've seen. You know, the children of Israel, it's incredible, these people. Almost makes you angry.

When you read this story of the children of Israel, the Bible said, you're a holy people to me, chosen to be a special people, and to me, above all the people on the face of the earth. Deuteronomy 7, 6. Moses, speaking of the children of Israel, said, you people have known the chastisements of the Lord your God. You have seen his greatness.

You have seen his mighty hand, and his outstretched arms, and his miracles, and his mighty acts, which he did in the midst of Egypt. You saw God, you saw him throw Pharaoh and his army into the sea. You saw God destroy them.

And what he did to you in the wilderness, how the earth opened up from Martha and swallowed up Dathan and Biram, and all their household. In other words, he said, you've seen actually the earth swallow up a whole tribe. You've seen the sea open up.

You've seen miracles. You've seen the cloud by day, the fire by night. You've seen a man strike a rock and water comes out.

You've seen manna fall from heaven. You've seen all of these things. Your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord, which he did.

Deuteronomy 11 to 7. Your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord, which he did. No other people have seen such miracles. Never seen such a display of power.

But you know what the testimony of these people was at the end? Moses said to them, of the rock that begets you, you've become unmindful. You've forgotten God that formed you. When the Lord saw it, he abhorred you because you pervert him.

And he said, I will hide my face from you, for you are a very perverse generation in whom is no faith. In whom is no faith. That's Deuteronomy 32, 18 to 20.

He said, you've angered me because of all the things I've done for you. I've given you 40 years of miracle in here. And you end up now, after 40 years, with no faith in me whatsoever.

No faith. Do you know what they did? There are many Christians, by the way. How many of us, it has to be said of us, your eyes have seen all the great acts of the Lord.

Your eyes have seen it. But we forget what the Lord has done. Listen to this scripture.

It's shocking. Yea, they spake against God. And they said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness? Behold, he did smite the rock.

And the waters did come gushing out. And the stream did overflow. But can he bring bread also? Can he provide flesh for his people? Can he? They're questioning.

You know, it's incredible. They're just describing one of the greatest miracles a human being could ever see. A man smiting a rock.

And not just a little trickle. But he said it came gushing out to a mighty stream. And that Agra came out of that rock.

They said, now we saw God do that. Oh, we know he did that. He had power for that.

Oh, but can he send bread? Can he send meat? We're hungry and there ain't no meat. God gave us water. Can he give us meat? Forget the children of Israel.

Forget them. You and I are just as guilty. We're just as guilty.

You and I have seen miracle after miracle. God saved you out of the pits of hell. God delivered you in the greatest miracles that can ever be described by human flesh.

He has answered prayer. You sit here now, redeemed by the blood of Jesus. Miracle after miracle.

And then you face another crisis and say, can God do it? I know he did it back then. I have a whole list of things God did for me, but all this is different. This is harder.

This is going to take a little more power. And the Lord says, is anything too hard for your Lord? Is anything too hard? If I were to ask tonight, how many of you have faith? Most of you here would say, yes, I do. But it's probably little faith.

You've heard of mustard seed faith? Well, I've heard preaching all my life. I'm glad I didn't preach on it yet. But I'm going to preach it the right way, hopefully.

I've heard people say, all God wants is little faith the size of a grain of mustard seed. And here's where they get it from Matthew 17, 20. If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place, it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Now, according to Jesus, in another verse, he said, indeed, the mustard seed is the smallest or least of all the seeds. And so people get the idea that all we need is a little bit of faith, and God would be satisfied. A little bit of faith implies a whole lot of doubt.

It didn't say if you had faith the size of a mustard seed. He's talking as. He said as.

It's a term. He's describing a life form. Now, if you go on, you'll read very clear that when it is grown, it's the greatest or biggest among herbs and becomes a tree so that the birds in the air come and land in the branches thereof.

And here's the key. When it is grown, he's talking about a seed that grows. He's saying it's a kind of seed.

He said if you have faith as a mustard seed, in other words, with that seed of life in it. It is a pure seed, and it has something in it that grows and grows and grows, and it provides shelter. He said, I'm asking you to have.

In fact, you go off to the script, you'll find Jesus rebuking little faith. You don't believe it. Well, let me give it to you.

How many times did he say, Oh, you have little faith? He said it. Matthew 630. So God not called you.

Oh, you have little faith. Matthew 826. When the boat was covered with the waves and they said, Master, don't you care? We're going to perish.

Lord, Lord, save us. They cried. We perish.

And he said unto them, Why are you fearful? Oh, ye of little faith. Matthew 1431. Peter had been walking on the water, and he got his eyes on the water and began to sink.

Jesus said, Peter, thou of little faith, why did you doubt? And you'll find in Matthew 16.8. When the five thousand needed food, and they couldn't. They said, How could it be done, Jesus? Oh, ye of little faith. Why do you reason among yourself? Oh, we're never going to get out of here in any time.

Oh, ye of little faith. No, no, little faith. No.

That's not scriptural. Now, you may have a small measure of faith, but that small measure of faith has to be of a pure kind. It believes that nothing is impossible with God.

And talking about the size of it or the measure of faith that we receive has to do with the releasing power that God has given to us. How we release it. Some people have not yet entered into the truth.

It has to do with revelation. What you receive of the revelation of His truth. About faith.

Some of you have a little revelation. He's going to open it wide tonight. I'm praying God open all of our minds for revelation of what faith is tonight.

Hallelujah. Well, let's go on. When it is grown, it becomes a mighty tree.

Hallelujah. Mustard seed faith is that kind that's always growing. These last days, listen closely.

I believe God is calling for witnesses to the absolute faithfulness of Jesus Christ today. Jesus does not need witnesses to His hysterical power. We've got churches all over New York preaching something that happened years and years ago.

The Lord wants an up-to-date 1988 or 1989 witness to the faithfulness of a holy God. Right now, this city needs witnesses to a present day Christ with all power and all authority. We're heading, folks, into a storm.

If you don't know it. An incredible storm, political, economic, spiritual. Everything can be shaken.

The Bible said it's going to be shaken. And I believe that judgment. You've heard me preach it here.

It's already begun. But there's going to appear in the church of Jesus Christ, in the midst of all these frightful things that are happening. When men's hearts are failing them for fear.

God is going to have our people with a deep-rooted faith. We're going to have this mustard seed faith. It's going to grow and grow.

Before Jesus comes, that tree will spread its branches. Hallelujah. And the fowls of the air, they're all over this city, can come and find refuge.

Hallelujah. Now, in preparing this message, I decided, by God's grace, that I'd not even try to define what faith is. We have faith churches.

We've got faith movements, faith theology. And, brother, sister, most of it really turns me off. Because it seems to me like many of them are preaching that Jesus is Santa Claus.

And you get the right buttons and you push him and all the goodies come out. You get a certain measure or quantity of faith and then God's going to, he's obligated, you just speak the creative words and you have it. You want a Mercedes? You speak Mercedes into being.

Now, I'm not mocking. It's just that, by the way, why don't you go for rolls while you're at it? I'm not trying to be facetious. I just think that the church has wallowed in that long enough.

And, God, thank God, I believe that's coming out. Oh, it's going to take a little bit of hard times and economic squeeze. Now, that gospel is going to grow.

It's going to grow very, very fast. But you see, there's a measure of truth in what is being said. There's a measure of truth, but it has to do with your heart, how your heart is before the Lord.

Your heart has to be righteous and walking in holiness before that can even begin to work. You see, to me, faith is simply resting in the faithfulness of God. It's affirming the faithfulness of God.

It's not whether I am able to give him what he wants in fullness at this point. It's that I'm convinced that he's faithful. He's a faithful God and I affirm that to the Lord.

And I'll tell you a little bit later about how that's applied. But, you know, I got to thinking, when I lived in Texas, we had a big woods, a big wooded area near our house. There were trappers back in those woods.

They're old traps from years ago. And I got to thinking, if one of my grandsons happened to be walking in those woods and he got caught in an old trap, and he screams, Dad, Grandpa, help! Help! And I come up to him and I see him laying there bleeding. I don't analyze his faith.

I don't say, does he really believe I'm up from that bear trap? I don't analyze. I don't ask if he has a quality or quantity of faith. I don't stand there and say, do you really believe me? Do you trust? No, I'm his father.

He's my son and I up that trap because I love him. I heard his cry. He said, cry unto the Lord and you'll answer.

It has nothing to do with the quality or quantity of faith. It has to do with the loving heart of a father. Beloved, our father loves his children and he used to cry.

And if you can't figure out faith, cry. Just cry. First Corinthians 1-9, God is faithful.

By whom you were called. Under the fellowship of your son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Hallelujah.

Now unto him that's able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding great joy. I'm talking to you right now about your lust, about your habit. My God says that he is able, he's faithful to keep us from falling.

Tell that to the devil. Tell that to your own flesh next time you're trembling in the presence of the devil or in the presence of some temptation. My Bible says, I will fear no evil.

But then if you read the next verse, he said, flee fornication. Do you believe this verse? Now unto him that's able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding great joy. Do you believe this? That he that keepeth thee will never slumber.

He will never sleep. The Lord is your keeper. The Lord is your shade upon the right hand.

The Lord shall preserve your soul. The Lord shall preserve your going in and your coming out. From this time forward and forevermore.

The Lord said, I'm your keeper. We serve a faithful God, hallelujah. Now, I'm going to get to the heart of my message now.

I'm not going to preach a long message, but here's where the Lord brought me. I told you this morning, about one o'clock this morning, I was praying, Lord, I feel that you're saying something to me. I've read all the books about faith.

I've heard tapes. I've heard sermons. But Lord, to me, what are you saying? You call me to faith.

You've made it clear that my faith is lacking. And God began to speak to my heart about one o'clock this morning. And just, God gave me three words.

Challenge, commit, and obligate. And boy, God began to open it up and I went to the word. And just let me share my heart.

I don't even know if I can get it up intelligently, but it's burning in my heart. You see, God's power is not being released in these last days as it should be because of the timidness of God's people. We're afraid to obligate and commit God's power.

And boy, God began to deal with me that this is where he wanted me to go and where he wants to lead this church and many of us. God took me through the word last night and all afternoon. He showed me, he said, David, I dare you to find any place in the Bible where I acted on the behalf of a human being unless they committed me.

Unless they obligated. They made me obligated to act. They went out on a limb and they put me to the test.

Now, we don't tempt God, but he said, prove me. Well, I began to look at it. The Lord referred me first to Joshua.

Remember, he's fighting five kings of Jibreel and they're winning the battle, but the day is passing away and the battle's only half won. And this man Joshua stands up in front of all the people and he commits God. He obligates God to act.

And if God didn't act, both he and God would look like fools. Because he's standing there, you know what he said? Then said Joshua to the Lord before all the people of Israel. He's committing God before all the people.

Son, stand still upon Gibeon and thou moon. And the sun stood still and the moon stayed until the people avenged themselves upon their enemies and the sun hastened not to go down for about a whole day. And there was no day like that day before or after that the Lord listened to the voice of a man.

Can you hear? Can you see the soldiers? I see two men over here. They're fighting. And someone stops and says, What did you say? Did I hear him right? The sun? The moon? How many men have said this? I've got to see.

Joshua committed God. He obligated God. And the Bible, you know, one of the first things I want to ask Jesus when I get there, Lord, what was your attitude? What was your first impression when you heard a human being said, Son, stand still.

I believe a smile broke out on our master's face and said, Finally, somebody's committed me. Helen here. Elijah.

He obligated God. He challenged the devil. He said, You bring all of those false prophets up to Mount Carmel.

He said, You build your honor. He said, The God that answers by fire is going to be the God. And I'll tell you, that's what faith is.

It challenges everything the devil puts in front of you. There is nothing. You and I as a church of Jesus Christ are not to resign or surrender or lay down or give an inch to the devil in any area of our life or ministry.

No way. But there has to be somebody standing to make the challenge. And he challenged.

He said, I have come from standing before the Lord. And he said, I want you to bring all of your men up there. He said, Lay your sacrifice down.

And they danced all day and cut themselves and nothing happened. But this man of God committed God to act. He obligated Him.

He said, The God that answers by fire, let Him be God. And so he takes twelve stones, builds the altar, and he tells his associates, Now there's four barrels. Now go get four barrels of water.

Pour the water on the sacrifice. He's committing God more and more. He's getting God in deeper and deeper.

I mean, by the time they emptied the four barrels, he said, Now go get four more barrels. And so they bring four more barrels. And now eight barrels of water.

And there's a little ditch filling up with water. And you see, there's not going to be any matches. There's not going to be any man touch the fire.

It has to fall right out of heaven. And I wonder how many people who still love Jehovah said, Boy, is he out on a limb. If that fire doesn't fall, they'll kill him.

They would have. They would have killed him on the spot. But this man, he wasn't just acting on his own.

God had told him what to do. He's a man of prayer. He's walking in righteousness, and God had told him how to challenge the devil.

He said, Now go get three more. And they pour the last of those twelve barrels of water on that. He stands back, and he commits almighty God.

This is what faith is. Hear me, O Lord, he said, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God. Hear me.

Send fire. Suddenly you can hear a crackle. Poof.

I mean, everybody was screaming and falling down and crying out. The Lord, he's God, he's God. They're still on their knees, and Elijah takes those false prophets down by the brook, kid runs and kills them all, slays them.

And then he comes back and commits God again. He says to Ahab, there's been a famine for three years, and it's dry. And he says, I hear the sound of abundance of rain.

He committed God to stop the famine. He committed God to send not rain, but an abundance of rain, and another cloud in the sky. He's committing God.

God has to act. He said, Well, God, this is your business. You set me.

I just did what you told me to do. I'm sure he didn't say, Lord, if you will look foolish in the eyes of the people. But I'll tell you, I know a prophet that would look foolish in the eyes of the people.

Talk about Jezebel killing a prophet. Remember Elisha? He challenged the poisoned pot of soup. The school of prophets went out, and there was a famine in the land, and they were gathering all these wild gourds and making gourd soup.

And they were feeding the poor, because it takes a lot of... You see it in the context that they were feeding others. They said, Feed the people. And we're probably feeding the poor as well.

And they had this big pot, and suddenly, someone cries, Oh, man of God, there's death in the pot. There's death in the pot, O thou man of God. There's death in the pot, and they could not eat it.

Elisha commits God. He said, Bring some meal. Some ground meal.

Cast it in the pot, and they cast it in the pot. You know what he says? The point is, he committed God here, and if God doesn't act here, everybody's going to die of poison. Including the prophet.

Boy, you talk about committing God. You talk about obligating God. God has to come down, or all these people are going to die.

You know what he says? And he said, Elisha said, Pour it out for the people, that they may all eat. And I see them pouring it out. I don't think Elisha's sitting around saying, Oh, God.

Oh, God. Hallelujah. He's the first one in the soup.

Committed God. Hallelujah. God wants to be obligated.

Put me to the test. Make me work. Make it so that if I don't, you and I are going to be looking awful.

I'm saying that with respect. I'm saying that with every bit of respect in my heart. You commit God to the point that if God doesn't work, we're all going to look very foolish.

I'll tell you, we could look awful foolish here, saying we're going to move into the Mark Gallagher. You and I could have gone on for five years like cats. But I'll tell you what, there was a challenge to the enemy right here.

And it was made public, and this church obligated God, and God loved it. I'll tell you something else. I think God loved every minute of it as much as I do.

Ha, ha, ha. Ha, ha. Glory.

God says, oh, remember when we prayed, Lord, don't let the critics like it? Lord says, oh, I'll tell you what, I'll make it the worst thing ever hit Broadway. Ha, ha, ha. It's called committing God.

Obligating God. You beginning to see it? How many of you are beginning to see a little bit of what we're talking about here? All right, let's go on and see if we can see it a little clearer. Glory be to Jesus.

Peter. He's walking into the temple one day, and there's a man that's been lame, and he's sitting there. Well, you talk about obligating God.

He looks him in the eye and says, servant of God, have I men? But such as I have given, rise up and walk in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Rise up and walk. You see all these people around here, son? They're watching you, son.

And I don't know if any other believers were there and not say, oh, I hope he rises. I hope he rises. Otherwise, you might as well throw a Pentecost out of Jerusalem.

Might as well shut the church down. Because here's a man standing there committing, almighty God, committing all the glory of Jesus. Hallelujah.

In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he leaped up and stood, and he walked, and entered into the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. Hallelujah.

Do you remember when Ananias and Sapphira came? Ananias lies to the Holy Ghost, and he falls dead. They take him out. Here comes Sapphira, his wife, and she lies to the Holy Ghost.

And here's Peter committing the Lord again. He's saying, behold, the men that carried your husband are at the door. They're going to carry you out now.

She drops dead. He committed. He committed before it happened.

There was no evidence or anything. He committed God. He obligated God.

Boy, I tell you what, I'm going to keep going until you get it. Or until I get it, at least. You know, you can go to what is called, don't tell them, you can go to the 11th chapter of Hebrews, and you can go right down that list of all the heroes of faith, and you'll see every one of them committing God, obligating God.

Jacob blesses his children, leaning on the staff. And do you know what he's doing? He's obligating God all the way down the rest of time. He's obligating God.

He obligated him to our very day. He obligated God. He's blessing his children.

He doesn't go live to see many of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren born, and by faith he's blessing them and committing God all the way down through time. Noah builds an ark and lets God shut him in. Can you see Noah inside that ark? God shut the door.

There's nothing happening yet. You talk about committing God. The whole world has heard him preach for 120 years.

He preached he was going to reign, and he's all locked up in that. He committed God. By building the ark, he committed God.

And he shot in, and the waves came because here's a man who committed, obligated God to keep his word of judgment. Moses stood before the great red sea, and he stretches out his rod and says, Open sea! Committed God. Mothers looked death in the eye and committed God, and those children were raised from the dead.

Ezekiel goes to a valley of giant bones, and God speaks to his heart to commit, and he speaks to the wind, Oh, breath of God, come and breathe on these bones, and they begin to rattle and shake and roll. And life began to come because one man committed God. One man obligated God.

You ever heard of Isaiah? Listen to it closely. Found in Isaiah 45.11. God said to Isaiah, Concerning the work of my hands, command ye me. And boy, I got excited when I looked up the Hebrew.

You know what it says? You know what that means? Command ye me? Put me under obligation, make me liable. Make me liable. You know what? In fact, I found it, and I started to shout this afternoon.

And it went on, it said, It's the opposite of wavering. Remember the Bible said, If any man waver, don't let him think to receive anything of God. You know what wavering is? It's a person who's afraid to obligate God.

It's afraid to commit God. Afraid of despair or shame. Afraid that God won't do it.

And this timidity to obligate God. Well, we don't have that authority. Listen, if we don't obligate God, if we don't call His power down on this wickedness around here, who's going to do it? When will it ever be done? The Lord raised up this church.

He raised up this people to stand before, to answer to the devil and commit a holy good. With all made in power, He said, All weapons are mighty to the putting down of strongholds. Commit that power.

Commit that power. Commit that mighty glory. Commit it.

Obligate me. Make me liable to work. God said, I'll look for a man to stand in the gap before me, that I should not destroy him.

But I've found none. Therefore, I have poured out my indignation. And if you follow that logic through, God's saying, if I could have found somebody, if I'd have found somebody that would have interceded, if I'd have found somebody that would have committed, somebody that would obligate me on this matter, I believe God said, I would have spared.

But He said, there's nobody. And we've got a mossy church in America with a lot of mossy Christians afraid to commit good. And I have to admit that I have not been strong in this matter of committing God.

But by His grace, that's changing in my heart. Now, I'm going to warn you. The Holy Spirit told me to warn you.

Don't you dare try to commit or obligate God. If you've got sin in your mind, you're double-minded, like Bob preached this morning. You know why Elijah could obligate God? Because he said, He spoke to me.

And God spoke to him because he was in a place he could hear God. Not some far-off voice, not some kooky voice. He heard God.

He's walking in righteousness. I'll tell you what. Here's the warning.

The seven sons of Sceva. There were a group of pseudo-prophets that came down and they were trying to cast out demons. And Sceva had seven sons who were not walking in righteousness.

Seven sons who just wanted attention. And they go up to a man who's possessed with an evil spirit and said, Be gone! And the devil laughed. You know what the devil said? And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know.

Paul I know. Who are you? And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them and overcame them and they ran out of the house naked and wounded. One demon-possessed man stripped seven men and threw them out in the streets.

Don't you dare try to abdicate God. Don't try to commit God unless you know you can look the Holy Ghost in the eye and the whole world in the eye and say, Lord you've cleansed and purged me. Brother, sister,

I'm going to call you soon.

We're at war. We're at war. And God's going to have to have a people that are not afraid to commit Him.

I've got to tell you a story I read yesterday. I got to laughing. It seems to be, and this is a true story.

There was a college president in the Midwest, in his second year of college. And he'd open his first week of classes. He loved to get the freshmen in to mock Christians.

He was a Christian baiter. And he especially mocked prayer. And his speech would go something like this.

Now, all the preachers have told you that God answers prayer. Your parents have taught you. But I want you to know that no such thing, any intelligent young person cannot believe such garbage now.

And he said, I'll tell you what. I want to prove it. And he had a little flask of water.

A very frail flask of water. He said, I'm going to drop this on the floor. Now, if you believe God answers prayer, it's time to pray.

Pray that it won't break. Pow! And it would always break. And everybody would laugh.

And it became a big thing on campus. Everybody waited for that opening week. This is the end of side one.

You may now turn the tape over to side two. He loved it. And it was the talk of the campus.

One day, God sent a freshman in. No! No! No! No! No! No! No! No! And he went to this professor. And he said, I know it's coming.

He'd heard all about it. And he said, I was praying. God told me to challenge him.

God told me to challenge. He said, this can't go on. Just a young believer.

And the professor said, oh, my heart's ache. This boy's going to go in. That man's going to drop that thing.

And they prayed all night. Went to class the next day. And the professor goes into his little spirit.

It's all self-assured and cocky. He said, now in this matter of prayer, foolishness. And he grabs his little flask of water.

And he holds it up. And he said, if there's anyone here who wants to challenge me on this, now's the time. Pray that God won't break this bottle.

That young man got up. And the class looked. He said, professor, I want to pray.

He said, this is not on far enough. And the professor said, whoa, finally, we have one. Pray, brother.

With just a little quiet voice, he said, oh, Jesus. You told me to do this honor your name. There's been enough mockery.

And he just stopped and said, hey, man, sit down. And everybody's snickering. And so the professor says, are you done? Yes.

And he says, watch this. And he lets it go. And somehow God broke the trajectory of it.

And it fell on his soft toe on his shoe and just rolled over and didn't break. The class went crazy. I mean, they clapped and laughed.

The professor never did it again, ever. I got to thinking about that. I said, oh, God, that's what I want.

I want to commit you. I want to obligate you. I want that kind of faith that says my God is able.

You don't run around just saying, oh, I've got power. I've got a big daddy behind me and just go out throwing arrows around. No, you get along with God.

You feel his burden. Listen, we felt his burden on that clinic up on 68th, that abortion hell hole. And God told us to commit him.

And we've committed God. We've cursed that place. Now, they put it off until the 23rd.

It comes up. They haven't paid the rent in four months. God's cutting off the rent money, cutting off all the money.

It's been cursed because we committed God. Now, I'm going to ask you about a commitment in your life and in your home. Are you living with somebody that's not saved? Are you going to just resign yourself while that's not going to change? Are you going to rise by faith and go to that person in love and say, my Bible says I'm going to be saved in my house.

And I'm telling you now, I'm going to pray you on a conviction. And you commit it. And you commit the Holy Ghost.

You commit God. Say, this is going to be a Christian home. You stand up and announce a commitment because the Word's behind you.

That lust that's in you or that battle that you've been losing, you remind. You stand up and challenge the devil on that by the Word of God. You say, I challenge you.

My Bible said no temptation has taken us but what has come to all men. And with the temptation, God will make a way of escape. And you stand and you commit God on that.

Commit God on that. Obligate God to keep that to you. You want that way of escape? By the way, you know why you're sitting here in this church? Hearing messages that provoke you to righteousness? That's one of those ways of escape.

God's already answered your prayer. Hallelujah. You know who we're at war with? We're at war with all the principalities and powers of darkness that rule this city.

We are at war with all the drug lords. We're at war against all those evil spirits that control the molestation of children. And by God's grace, in the prayer meetings in this church from now on, we are committing God to all of these matters.

We are in a war. And God, in the last days before Jesus comes, is going to have a glorious church, not only without spot and wrinkle, but it's going to be a church that commits more power, more of his authority, than all of the men in this Bible. God is going to be committed.

He's going to be obligated by a praying people that walk in holiness. Hallelujah. Let's stand, please.

Let's stand. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Lord, you're going to help us to commit your power and your authority in this last days. We're going to commit your power. We're going to go out and commit your authority, Lord Jesus.

Hallelujah. Lord, come and touch us tonight in a special, special way. Come and touch us, Lord.

Let's pray. Our Lord Jesus, we don't want this to be just human excitement. We want the word.

Oh, God, we see everywhere that you work for men, that you are so anxious to be used. You're anxious for men and women to stand up and commit you to this generation, to commit your might and power and your strong arm. Lord Jesus, there are men in this auditorium tonight, in the balcony, here on the main floor, who need to come by faith and say, Jesus, I've been hassled by the devil long enough.

I've been whipped. I've been beaten by the devil. I've been discouraged long enough.

God, I want to rise out of this ass-keeping walk in faith. If you feel tonight the Holy Ghost pulling at your heart, and you're saying, Brother David, right now, even while you preached, I've felt faith rise in my heart, and I want to challenge the enemy that's coming against my life. I want to stand up by faith and say, that's enough.

God's going to keep me. Many of you have a battle that's going on in your heart yet. Get it settled.

Some of you for the first time, you need to walk down this aisle tonight and stand here. I'd like to pray with you that God will deliver you, will set you free. Listen, the Holy Spirit, I believe with all my heart.

The Holy Spirit's here. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for doing your work in this house tonight. Don't let anybody walk out, loaded down with fear, bondage, discouragement.

Break the chains that bind tonight. Break them. Lord, we commit you to work right now.

We commit you, in Jesus' name, to work in this service. God can break your habit. He can break the power of Satan in your life.

He can do it right now. Get out of your seat, up in the balcony. Go to the middle exits and come down either side, down the aisles.

You need to remain faithful. Follow these that are coming. Just stand here in the front.

We're going to believe God for a miracle in your life tonight. Wherever you're at, all over the building, if you feel the tug, come on in, let's get it settled right now. Up in the balcony, that's it.

The middle section, up there in the balcony, you're on the main floor. God bless you. Only believe.

Only believe. All things are possible when I believe. Only believe.

Only believe. All things are possible. All things are possible.

All things are possible. Only believe. You've been bound long enough, haven't you? Huh? Is this your first time here? You've been afraid of X, you're losing your mind.

How long have you had this? Three years. Let's pray. Are you ready to commit to God right now? Lord Jesus, we take absolute authority over every lying spirit, every demonic spirit in Jesus' name.

Break this, Father, in Jesus' name. We commit you, Lord, to total deliverance of this man's spirit and his mind. Call out to him right now.

Jesus, deliver him. Set me free. Say it right now, Lord.

Set me free. Tonight, right now. In the glory of God.

Every one of you standing here now, listen. To me, it's life and death. I don't know about you, but to me, when you come up over here, it's life and death.

God wants it said. How long? You been praying about something? I pray all the time. Absolutely.

I feel very, very happy. I feel very, very blessed. All right.

God bless you. I'm going to ask the Lord to break, absolutely break, the enemy's work in your life. Just to break it.

Break it now. Father, do it because you promised to do it. It has to be done.

It's needed. Lord, we commit you to it in Jesus' name. Your Lord is faithful.

Sins shall not have dominion over you. Sins shall not have dominion over you. Lord, we commit to that word.

We obligate you to it in Jesus' name. You in the capitol, raise both hands. Raise both hands.

You that are in the aisles and hear the name. That's it. God bless you.

Call on him right now. Say, Jesus set me free. Lord, forgive me and cleanse me.

Call on his name right now. Jesus set me free. That's it.

Call on his name right now. Call on his name. Lord, we call on you.

Audience, let's call on the name of the Lord to set these all free. Drugs and alcohol, whatever it may be. Sin, walk on.

Lord, bring deliverance tonight from AIDS. Heal from AIDS. Lord, I believe you tonight.

I believe you with all my heart. We trust you, Jesus. Glory to God.

Glory to Jesus. Pray this with me right out of your heart. Pray it loud and clear.

Jesus, I need you. I'm coming right to you with my faith. I know you can do it.

Break the pile of sins. Every habit. Draw me closer.

Let me walk with you with peace and the joy of the Holy Ghost with a new mind and a new heart right now. Lord, I thank you for that. Lord, I thank you for that, Jesus.

I thank you for that, Jesus. I thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, Jesus. Break every chain of violence. Break every chain.

Praise you, Jesus. I'm going to ask a question. If all of you came forth, how many of you are up here tonight for the first time in this church? You've never been up here before.

Raise your hand, please. Raise your hand. Your first time.

All the way back. We'd like you to come up these steps, or those steps, backstage. You don't join anything, but we've got counselors ready to pray with you and believe God for a miracle in your life.

You have your hand up. Work your way through the crowd here, please. That's it.

Come right up these steps on this side, and over on this side of the theater also. That's it. And all the way in the back now, make your way through the crowd.

Make your way right through these people. Please let them through. Thank you, sir.

Lord bless you. God bless you, son. God bless you, brother.

Amen. Amen. Lord bless you.

Is this your first time? Come on back. We'll pray with you. Don't be afraid.

You're among friends. Lord bless you. Is this your first time? Where are you from? Ohio.

Ohio. God bless you. Are you from Ohio also? Yes.

God bless you. You know, we've had literally hundreds come to these altars in this past year and three months, and this church has been open from all over the world, all over the world. Many, many here from New York City.

Isn't it wonderful what God's doing? God is doing in hearts. Do you believe He's faithful to you also? Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Sing it again, Steve. You that are up here, will you just raise your hands as we sing it? Right now, only believe, only believe. Will you believe Him with us right now? Lord, I believe.

Lord, I believe. That all things are possible, Lord, I believe. Lord, I believe.

Lord, I believe. All things are possible, Lord, I believe. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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