

# Be Ye Ready Is No Joking Matter

by David Wilkerson

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of being ready for the Lord's coming, and the need for spiritual revival and personal preparation.*

**Duration:** 1:00:08

**Scripture:** James 5:8

**Topics:** "Readiness"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by reading from Matthew 24:42-51, emphasizing the importance of being ready for the coming of the Lord. He urges the congregation to turn their hearts to God and confess their sins, as the day of grace is coming to an end. The preacher shares a personal experience of a vision where he saw people waving and trying to get attention as the Lord's coming was imminent. He concludes by urging the listeners to seek the Lord with all their hearts and make things right with Him.

---

## Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, P.O. Box 260, Lindale, Texas, 75771 or calling 903-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted, and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. Be ye ready is no joking matter, is my message. I want you to go to Matthew 24, please.

Matthew, the 24th chapter. Be ye ready is no joking matter. I'm going to show you where I got this message in a few moments.

I'll show you how it came about. Matthew 24. Let's begin to read verse 42.

Beginning to read at verse 42. Watch therefore for you know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good men of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, would have not suffered his house to be broken in.

Therefore be ye also ready. Would you repeat that line with me, please? Therefore be ye also ready, all right? For in such an hour as you think not, the Son of Man cometh, who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler of his household to give them meat in due season. Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

Heavenly Father, I believe that you're sending your angel soon to gather your elect from the four winds. The coming of the Lord is drawing nigh. Lord, you spoke so clear to me this past week in a dream.

And I'm going to share that dream in just a moment. And I pray, Lord Jesus, that you awaken our hearts. You awakened me in a new way.

And you told me to preach this this afternoon. And I obey you. I don't know who you sent here.

I don't know why you sent them. Lord, this is for many that attend this church. And I pray, Holy Spirit, you awaken us.

You love us. You're our Heavenly Father. But, Lord, you mean business.

Your word is no joke. It's not a laughing matter. Lord, you are not delaying your coming.

You're coming, you said, as a thief in the night. But that night is not to overtake us. We're to be wide awake.

So, Holy Ghost, come now upon me. Let the Spirit of the Lord rest upon me. That every word I speak be to the glory and honor of God.

Oh, Holy Spirit, quicken my message, I pray. Quicken this word. Give us ears to hear what the Spirit has to say.

Lord, those who are not ready, prepare them. God, convict them. Lord, if you have to shake them.

Lord, I don't care if you have to let them slink down in their seats. Whatever you have to do, do it, Lord. Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.

In Jesus' name, amen. Now, let me tell you why I'm preaching this particular message at this time. I had an unusual dream last Tuesday night.

Now, the Bible does say in Acts 2.17, In the last days your old men shall dream dreams. I qualify. In all seriousness, I qualify.

I don't get many dreams. And I don't preach on my dreams because I'm a Bible preacher. And you know that we've taught you here that anything that does not conform to the word of God is to be rejected outright.

And I'm telling you right now, my dream has nothing to do with theology. It has nothing to do with some great biblical truth as far as amplifying it, other than to make it clear what Jesus is saying. And I'm just telling you how God awakened my soul.

How he awakened my spirit. That I should preach this more often. And I'm going to share that with you in just a moment.

But before I do, I want you to know that this is not doctrine. It's not some new revelation. It's simply the Holy Spirit.

It was the Spirit of God prompting me and speaking to me about His coming. Don't want to build any doctrine about it? Remember that. I don't have much confidence in dreams.

And any dream, vision, or so-called revelation has to absolutely be framed in the Scripture. We are Bible believers in this church. Now having said that, let me share with you, without trying to talk about a doctrine or anything else, just the Holy Ghost speaking to me.

In my dream, I was suddenly awakened by the knowledge that I had been snatched. I had been caught up. And I was in some kind of a conveyance.

I don't know whether it was a chariot. I didn't see the conveyance. But I knew that there were others in this and that there was an angel of the Lord.

There was a sense of just racing swiftly through streets and into houses. This conveyance knew no barriers. And I had a sense that I'm on my way home.

I'm saved. The Lord has come. I am being gathered by the angel of the Lord.

The chariots of the Lord are thousands upon thousands. The coming of the Lord as lightning is from the east and to the west. And there was a sense of swiftness.

But it's almost though I would see it in slow motion. This lightning coming, I was seeing it in slow motion. I didn't see a driver.

I didn't see an angel. I didn't see the conveyance. I just had a sense.

I knew I was being carried and taken. And it was moving swiftly. And people were being snatched from homes and from the streets.

And I remember specifically going into a particular home. And we were moving swiftly. And there were three people that I recognized.

Two were friends and one was a family member. And we went right by. And there was a sense, a sudden sense, oh God, they're being left behind.

And the Lord allowed me to, for a few fleeting moments, to sense the terror of what it would be like to be left behind when the angels of the Lord go and gather His elect from the four winds. The sense, I was made to know at that time that even though those who called themselves Christians, and were really not Christians, who despised the grace of God, misused and flagrantly flaunted the grace of God, went out and sinned and said, I can easily confess, and never did forsake their sins. There was a sense that even though they were sleeping, they were aware.

There was an awareness that they, that Lord has, is coming. And there's a sudden moment, because I saw hands being raised, people reaching out and waving. In fact, as we kept moving on, there were people that were waving, hey, and trying to get attention to this driver and this conveyance.

And I was screaming and yelling, get out in the open, get out in the open. And people were trying to get away from the crowd. I said, get away from the crowd, get out.

As if, I thought if they were out in the open, they could be seen and caught up. But we, it went swiftly on. But there was a sense that I have never experienced in my life, even though all my lifetime, my father taught on the coming Lord, my grandfather taught about it.

The Bible says we shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, suddenly. We're going to be changed, the Bible says. This corrupt body shall put on an incorrupt body, just like his.

And the Bible says that we're to be prepared and ready and expecting. He said he's coming for those who look for his appearing. And those who are expecting, even though they sleep, they're going to be caught if it's in the middle of the night.

Now, I'm not going to get into the doctrine of the rapture. I'm not going to get into when this happens before the tribulation, mid-tribulation, or after the tribulation. I am just telling you that I had a sense of the horror it's going to be for those who knew the gospel, who had one appeal after another, who knew the grace and the mercy of God.

And they were not ready. They were not taken. They were not gathered in this.

And I remember the swiftness of moving, and I was thinking, if you were, surely on this street or going down this street, if you could just rush over here, and I see people racing, trying to get where they were visible in this conveyance, just passing by in this terrible sense, Lord, I know I'm saved, I know I'm redeemed, I'm going home. But those three, those two friends and that member of my family, and there was a terror. Two shall be sleeping in the bed.

One shall be taken, the other left. Two shall be grinding at the mill. One shall be taken, the other left.

Watch therefore. You never know. He's coming as a thief in the night.

He's coming. Folks, there was no sense of speed. There's no sense of travel.

Nothing at all. But suddenly, it was like coming out of a cloud. And suddenly, I was stepping with everyone around me.

We were stepping as out of a cloud, out of a fog, out of time into eternity. Suddenly, there was no sense of being carried out into a cosmos or anywhere else. Suddenly, we were home.

We were in eternity. And there was, I remember the sense that I have, the absolute serenity. As we stepped out into eternity through this cloud, there was a sense of peace.

And all I could see around me, people were feeling their bodies. They were feeling their hands. And they were caressing their faces, looking at their hands.

There was no shouting. I didn't see Jesus anywhere. It was just a sense.

It happened so quickly. It seemed to be a gathering place. I was going to gather his elect from the four winds.

And suddenly, I looked, and there were my two friends and my loved one coming through the cloud into eternity. Nobody was looking at each other. There was no embracing.

There was nothing. There was just a peace, an incredible peace. And I experienced it for a moment.

I am home. That earth that I was on is gone. I'm beyond the reach of Satan.

There is no sin. There is no possibility of ever being lost. I am eternally his.

He did what he said he would do. There was a sense he said he would come with his angels. He came with his angels.

He did everything I preached, everything I said. It's true. He's all sufficient.

He's everything that we need. There was a peace and a serenity beyond anything I could imagine. And people were just awed.

Silence. There was an awe. There was a peace that was absolutely indescribable and a sense of this is a new body.

Nobody was looking at anybody else's body. I was not going to any loved one, a relative, or anything else. It was a sense.

It was just that sense. It's all over. It's all over.

It was all true. That sense of reality and truth, that was not the real world. This is the real world.

This is eternity. That's all passed away. It was just a dream like.

It was just grass. That's what the Bible said. Flesh is just grass.

It comes up and it withers and it's gone. It said, Lord, the world was created. Time was just a little piece.

Eternity is a great big round cord, so to speak. God cut a little piece out called time and he gave it to man with his grace and mercy. And he said, here is my mercy, my glory, my grace.

He gives you space and time to repent and trust in him. But then I remember in this serenity, I said, but God, wait a minute. All of those who didn't come, all of those who were left behind, who thought they were prepared and thought they were ready.

They are not here. What about them, Lord? They're lost. There was a sense in me.

Now, folks, that will not be there. But I believe God was letting me feel the sense of this lostness of those who were gone. Suddenly, as I was thinking about all those who had not been gathered, I woke up.

I sat right up and I said, this is the most incredible dream I've ever had in my life. And these words were like silent thunder in my head. David, be ready.

There's no joking matter. And I laid back in the pillow and God said, David, my people are not taking it seriously. They are not taking, they talk about it, but they're not taking it seriously.

The way they're living, they are not taking it seriously. And many, many are going to be left behind. They are not ready.

I said, but Lord, what about all this grace I've been preaching, all this mercy I've been preaching about your glory? I've been telling everybody that your glory is your grace, your mercy, your tenderness, your long suffering. And Lord said, I am love, I am grace, I'm mercy, I'm tenderhearted, I'm long suffering. But David, the day of grace is about to end.

It's all going to end. I gave grace, mercy, and tenderness to bring men to the realization that I am bringing them into a new world. There's a new world coming.

We're not living for this world. There has to be an awakening. God calls his grace all-sufficient.

But when he says all-sufficient, he doesn't mean all-sufficient just to let you egg your way through life. It's not just to keep you from having a nervous breakdown. It's not so you can just cope with life.

His grace is all-sufficient that he prepares you for an eternal home with him. His grace is to take you not just through life, but through eternity. But there has to be a preparation for that time.

Now, I'm not the judge of the Lord's church. I'm not the judge of his church. But I honestly believe that God looks down on a church that's fast asleep.

He's looking down right now on a church that is unconcerned about his soon coming. Jesus himself said, while the bridegroom carried, they all slumbered and slept. They all slumbered.

All the virgins slumbered and slept. You go to any town in America, any city, go to almost any church of any denomination, any Sunday morning and take a look at the crowd. The crowd is bored.

They're counting the minutes on their watch till the man is finished so they can get back to their football games or back to their pleasure or back to their vacation homes. There's nothing of God. There's nothing of expectancy.

Nothing about the coming of the Lord. Not a thought in the majority of churches in America today. And why is it that so many of our people are hard now? Empty.

Unexcited about going to church. I've heard Christians, read letters from Christians, said the worst thing in the world is to get up every Sunday morning and dread going to church. Just dread going to church.

Now that's not in Times Square Church, I can assure you. But why are so many people mixed up in their morals? So lacking in discernment that they buy any doctrine that comes down a turnpike. So complacent, earthbound.

Why is their love for Jesus growing cold? Why is it? It's because the pastors, first of all, and the shepherds themselves are asleep. That's what the Bible says. The shepherds are asleep.

You go to any mountaintop, you go to any grazing place where sheep are grazing, you show me a shepherd that's sleeping in the natural, you show me an unconcerned shepherd, one who's always slumbering, sleeping, and I'll show you one, I'll show you a flock that's scattered everywhere, going its own way, and a prey to every wolf and every wild animal with insight. I want you to go to Isaiah 56. The Bible says what's happening in our churches today is because of sleeping pastors.

I'll get to the congregation before I'm finished. Isaiah 56. Let's look at verse 9, beginning to read, All ye beasts of the field come to devour all ye beasts in the forest.

Now look at me, folks. Here's an invitation to every wild beast, every demon power. Here's an absolute invitation.

Come on in. Take advantage of the sheep. Come on in.

Take advantage of the flock. Go anywhere, do anything, because there's no shepherd on guard. Read the next one.

Because his shepherds, his watchmen are blind. They're ignorant, dumb dogs. They cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

They're greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they're shepherds that cannot understand. They all look to their own way. Every one to his gain from his own quarter.

Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink, and tomorrow shall be as this day and much more abundant. Listen to it. Blind watchmen with no messes, no urgency, no heart cry.

Sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Shepherds that cannot understand. Folks, when you have shepherds of a congregation that come to the pulpit without a word from God and feeding the people straw and not grass, not milk.

There's nothing. They've not heard from God. The Bible said they're blind.

They're asleep. They're sitting in front of their TV sets, many of them. They have no life.

They have no power, and they stand there because it's a job. They're a hireling, the Bible says. Folks, this is so widespread, and that's why we have a backslidden nation.

That's why we have churches that are closing their doors, because there is not a shepherd in the pulpit. There's not a man of God that's been on his knees and stands broken before the people knowing they're going to hell, knowing that Jesus is coming. They themselves are blind to have no word from heaven.

The Bible said they're slumbering. They're interested only in their own gain. All I hear from many pastors today, I can't wait until I'm 65 to retire.

I want five acres, and I want a little place out in the country, and I've had it. And they'll sit many in front of their TV sets and waste away and lose any anointing they once had. And what a sad, sad thing.

Every prophet in the Bible prophesies against it. However, in spite of blind, sleeping pastors, in spite of dead, dry, slumbering churches, the Bible said we as individuals are going to have to answer to God. You will not be able on the judgment day to blame a dead, dry church.

You will not be able to blame some slumbering pastor who's spiritually blind. No, because you own a Bible. It's in your house.

You have every opportunity to get into this Word and get to know Jesus. You have the Holy Spirit dealing with you. You have heard the gospel.

You've heard it time and time again. So the Bible says that we are without excuse, without excuse. In Revelation, the 19th chapter, don't turn there, but Revelation 19, 7. Listen to this.

Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife hath made herself ready. This is the body of Christ. The bride of Christ has made herself ready.

In verse 9, blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. These are those who are going to be called and gathered. The angels are going to gather this elect to go to the marriage supper

of the Lamb.

And He's not coming for a bride that's asleep. He's not coming for one of those. He's not coming for a bride that's careless.

He's not coming for a bride spotted and wrinkled in garment. He's coming for those who are looking, anticipating, fully prepared, not surprised, and not having to be shaken out of a deep slumber. Therefore, let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober.

Those are the words of the Lord. Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation. Unto them that look for Him.

Now, if you truly love Jesus this afternoon, this has to be the cry of your heart. Lord, what does the Scripture tell me to do to get ready? What do I have to do to know that I am ready? First of all, I'm going to go over just three things. There are many, many things, but three things that the Holy Spirit laid in my heart as I lay on that bed on Tuesday night.

First of all, go to Colossians 3. Third chapter of Colossians. Boy, how clear this is. There's no question about it.

No ifs, ands, and buts about it. Folks, before we go into Colossians, the third chapter of Colossians, let me tell you what it is. You've got to get your eyes focused on Jesus and get your eyes off everything that's in this world.

You have got to absolutely focus your time, your attention on Jesus and His eternal purposes. Verse 1 to 3, If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth.

For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. You know what he's saying? Look at me.

If when Jesus comes, He's your life, you're going to go with Him. Is He your life? Not your career, not your job. Now my Bible makes it clear that if you don't provide for your own household, you're worse than an infidel.

My Bible tells me if you don't work, you don't eat. My Bible tells me that God loves to bless those who are sincere and dedicated in their work, their ministry, their call. Whatever your job is, whatever your career, whatever your work, God's called you to do it with diligence.

You're to lay in store for your children. In fact, the Bible, it's all outlined clearly. That's not what we're talking about.

We're talking about the things that consume your time. That is your life. Whatever consumes your time.

Some of you can't even know. Some of you men can't even quote me the chapter. You can't even name the books in the Bible, but you know every basketball player, you know every football player, his weight and his height and what team he's in, how much he makes.

You tell me Jesus is your life? You tell me Christ is your life? When you have time for friends, for family, for relatives, you have no time to dig into the Word of God. You have no time to pray and seek the face of

God. And you tell me Christ is your life? If Christ is your life, when he appears, you will also appear with him.

The Bible says, though, that it is very possible and very likely that when you are prospered, that you will want things bigger, better, larger, and more. Jezreel waxed fat and forgot God. Jerusalem, Israel was prospered and blessed and forgot God.

If you're here now in this building and you're being blessed and God is prospering you, it's a time to humble yourself before God. It's a time to say, God, this is my most vulnerable time. Because the enemy will use this.

He will try to come in and try to drive me deeper into debt. Folks, I'm going to tell you something. Listen to this pastor.

I've been on my knees and I know there's a storm coming. And I'm telling you now, stay out of debt. If you don't hear anything else I'm saying, stay out of debt.

Don't go into debt unless you're willing to lose it. Stay out of debt. The Bible talks about the deceitfulness of riches coming to choke out the Word and you become unfruitful.

You were fruitful. You were doing well, the Bible suggests. And then suddenly the deceitfulness of riches, the desire for more and better, and that spirit of covetousness set in, and things began to take your mind and possess and began to rule your thinking, the desire for things.

That's why the Lord says, Don't set your heart on the things of this world, but set your heart on me, Jesus said. I will be your life. If when the trumpet of God sounds, I am your focus.

Yes, you may be busy. But night, every waking hour, it doesn't matter where you're at, you can be in a conference. You can be on the subway.

You can be at your computer. But Jesus is always on the mind. Jesus is always on the mind.

And there's a thought that says, Oh, Lord, one of these days, this is all going to burn. This is not my life here, Lord. Thank you for this piece of furniture.

Thank you for my car. Thank you for the finances you're supplying. But, oh, God, it's all going up in smoke very soon, Lord.

You're my life. There are Christians all over the city who once attended this church. Some rich, some very rich, some not so rich.

They used to be so on fire, they'd sit on the edge of the seat when I preached. They would come back and hug me. Man, they'd go back and they'd buy every tape I had, and they couldn't get enough.

They'd listen to their tapes on their way to work, or wherever it was, and they were so excited about Jesus' witness, they never missed a service. They're not here now. They'd go one service a week to a church that's dead and doesn't convict them of anything at all, and now they're wrapped up in their jobs, wrapped up in making money, and they're fast asleep.

Fast asleep. They see me on the street, and they go the other way because they look into my eyes and get convicted just saying hello. If you are risen with Christ, if you are His, seek Him who sits on the right hand of God, then shall you appear with Him in glory.

Now, the heart affection of the bride of Christ is described in Song of Solomon, but Song of Solomon 3, 1 and 2. By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loved. Now, I'm telling you, I'm talking about the kind of people that are going to be ready when Jesus comes. It's going to be those with the heart affection for Him.

When it says looking for Him, it's looking for the one that is my life, the one that I love with everything in me. She said, By night on my bed I sought Him whom my soul loveth. I sought Him, but I found Him not.

I will rise now. I'll go about the city and in the streets and in broadways. Oh, Broadway, right outside the door.

I will seek Him whom my soul loveth. Oh, here's a seeking, searching heart that will not let go. It says, I will not let you go, Lord, until you possess me.

If thou so seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find Him if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. If you seek Him, He will be found of you. Seek the Lord in His strength.

Seek His face continually, not just occasionally, but continually. I'll tell you now, and I'll tell you with a broken spirit, this afternoon from this pulpit, some of you that are hearing me right now, you believe you're going to go and be in the bride, but according to Colossians 3, 1, I've just read, it's not possible because He is not your life. Because if Jesus Christ were your life, you would not miss a single day in this book.

This is the end of Psalm. It says, I went out and sought Him. Here's how we seek Him, right here in this book.

You seek Him. He is here. This is Christ, the living Word, and you seek Him.

How can you say you're ready to be, to go with the Lord? Now, I'm not talking about missing a day or two, but your heart is set, and when you miss a day, you miss it and say, Lord, you know I just, I couldn't do it today, but oh God, even if you just open it and say, Lord, I need a precious word from you before I go to sleep, and I open it, Lord, there's something here. I need you. How can you tell me that you love Him and you're ready to go and you neglect Him day after day after day? Don't tell me you're going.

You're not going. You're going to be left behind. You don't love Him.

You say, Brother Wilkinson, where is that mercy and grace? This is grace. This is mercy. Because we as pastors stand one day before a holy God.

I stand before a judge. No man on earth can give me money and pay me to do what I'm doing. I stand one day and have to give an account, and I can look you in the eye and tell you with a broken heart and in the grace and love of mercy of God, if you neglect this blessed Savior, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? That's the Word of God.

That's your pastor. It's the Word of God. I had no horror of knowing what you're going to go through.

Paul said, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men. The Bible says you're to meet often because in those last days men are going to forsake the gathering of themselves together. Have you become just a Sunday morning person? No, evidently not because of your Sunday afternoon, but beware.

I don't ever want to have anything to do with a Sunday morning church. Never. Where are you on Tuesday nights? Where are you on Sunday nights? If you're parked in front of a television set, now listen to what he said.

Don't forsake the assembling of yourselves together. And what he's saying, if you're going to be gathered together by the elect, with the elect, when the angels come together from the four winds, better get acquainted with those who are going. Better stay together and the whole Bible teaches that.

Stay together where the flock is. I got to move on. Number two, listen closely.

You cannot be prepared until you settle every grudge, every single hurt, every seed of bitterness. And that was confirmed this morning so clearly here powerfully. I want you to go to James, please.

Fifth chapter. Hebrews, and then turn right, and you're into James. For the new converts, please.

For a lot of the older converts. Now, folks, listen to me, please. I told you that being prepared is no joking matter.

I'm going to ask. I'm not trying to be facetious. I'm asking you to hear this, pastor, like you've never heard any preacher in your life now.

Because many of your souls depend on it right now. I'm about to wash my hands, if any, further obligation on the behalf of some of you. And I want you to listen very, very closely.

James 5, 8 and 9. Let's start with verse 7. Be ye patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth and hath long patience for it until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient.

Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the judge standeth before the door.

James is saying, look, Jesus is coming soon. Get your heart right, better settle all your grudges soon, lest you be condemned, lest you be cast out of the bridehood. And the judge is standing at the door right now waiting your decision, lest you be condemned.

Now, folks, listen to me. This word grudge here, as used in Greek, is taken from a root word that means narrow because of obstacles standing between. Now, here's the picture.

Now, I want you to get this, please. This is so important. It's a picture of one, of a person who's holding a grudge, a root of bitterness.

He's allowed it to go so deep into the soul that the one who has grudged this person or the one who this person feels has done them wrong, there's no possibility that the person, should they be convicted, when God speaks to this person and says, You have done them wrong. You have caused this person hurt. This person, under the anointing of the Holy Ghost, goes to this individual and says, Look, I've done you wrong.

There's no possibility of getting near that heart because this person has put up obstacles and made the road to reconciliation so narrow it can't be passed. That's exactly what the Greek word means. Setting up a barrier, obstacles, making the road so impossible, so narrow, that the one who wants to be reconciled, the one who would want to come and say, I'm sorry, and confess and bring healing, it's impossible because this person is holding a grudge.

He's erected, see, he has erected these obstacles. And these obstacles, well, I can't forgive you because I don't think you really feel sorry. I'll forgive you after I pray about it.

I'll forgive you, perhaps, but you've got to let me know that you know what you did to me is so wrong. And we set up our own ways of reconciliation, not God's ways, our own parameters for reconciliation. Now I'm telling you, and hear it, we hear a lot of psychological jargon and garbage now, blaming it on some past.

No, no, no, God says, you have the obstacle, you erected it, get it down quick before Jesus comes. God says, listen to me please, enough of your childish pride, enough of holding on to your grudges. God is saying, if there are any obstacles between you and anyone that you are holding a grudge against, if you have any way hindered them from getting to you for reconciliation, you had better get down all the obstacles, remove them, remove them quickly, and make things right.

Do you reject the word of God that says forbearing one another, forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do you. Jesus said, I forgave you, I forgave you, now you forgive even as I forgive you. And then if you will not, let me show you, you know the consequences, we're going to go very quickly to Mark, 11th chapter, I could quote it to you, but I want you to see it again in black and white, or red, it's in red, just go to Mark please, 11th chapter, this should be underlined in your Bible, 11th chapter, verse 25, and when you stand praying, forgive, if you have ought against any, that your Father also, which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses.

Everybody has a King James, read aloud with me, verse 26, but if you do not forgive, neither will your Father, which is in heaven, forgive your trespasses. Now you tell me, you tell me, look at me please, you tell me that you want to be ready when Jesus comes. Look at me now, you want to be gathered by the angels of God when he comes together, he's electing the four winds.

I don't care what your theology is, I don't care how you excuse it, I don't care what kind of grace you'd like to cover over that, you can't. He said if you're not forgiving, your sins are not forgiven, you're totally unforgiven, you're going to die on your sins, you're going to die on your sins. Forget about being ready to go, you're going to die on your sins.

If you will not forgive those who have hurt you, wounded you, grieved you, I don't care what they've done, he says forgive. This is absolute proof that Christians who are unforgiving, who hold grudges, who stew in their bitterness, can never ever be saved. Now it gets even stronger.

Go to Matthew 24, please. 24th chapter of Matthew, please. Number three, no smiters are going.

No smiters are going. Verse 48, beginning to read, Matthew 24, But if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord, Deliah is coming. Now folks, I want you to notice, this is a servant that has developed an evil heart, he says, My Lord.

See, a type of a Christian, supposed to be a Christian, because he says, My Lord. Deliah is coming, shall begin to smite his fellow servants and to eat and drink with the drunken. The Lord of that servant shall

come in a day when he looketh not for him and in an hour that he is not aware of, shall cut him asunder and appoint him with his portion.

With the hypocrites there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Now folks, look at me, please. To smite here means to inflict, listen closely, to inflict repeated blows.

It's not just one slap on the face. Now we're talking about using words. These are verbal hits, verbal slaps.

Someone with a stick verbally beating, tongue lashing. This is smiting. Folks, this, this, please, this is a householder.

In other words, this has to be a husband or a wife, a pastor or a boss. It has to be somebody that has others under them. And there's a drunken stupor that has gotten a hold of this individual.

This individual has been hurt. This individual has a grudge. This individual has bitterness.

And this individual gets home a telephone and eats and drinks with the drunken by eating the poison, drinking the poison, sharing it. That's eating and drinking with the drunken, intoxicated and sodded in mind and spirit by their bitterness. And it's gone so deep it can be a husband who's bitter against a wife or a wife against a husband.

He comes home from work. It starts in the morning. It starts all day long.

The smiting, the lashing. It goes on and on and on and the children are suffering. It's till late at night.

And there are some of you sitting here right now, husbands and wives, you've been smiting one another. There's been something that he or she did. You've not forgiven.

You're still holding it. You've been smiting in constant inflicting blow after blow after blow. It could be a mother, a daughter, son, relative.

It could be a boss who's hurt you. And if you're a leader, if you're a boss, and there's anybody under you and there's somebody that you've taken a dislike to and you just keep applying the rod to them and verbally you lash them. This is the lashing.

And then it's going out and talking about it, going out and drinking it and eating it. A drunkenness and intoxication. A poison that's hardened.

A poison that's set on punishing and punishing and punishing and never satisfying. I'm speaking to somebody now prophetically, either here in this building or on tape. And you will not forgive when you have determined that somebody's going to pay.

They're going to be punished. And you won't stop. You're going on and on and on and you're beating it down and it's so gripped you.

And let me tell you what the Bible says. The Bible is so clear in Proverbs 13, 18. And here's what the Lord is saying.

Look, you only do that because you don't believe the Lord is coming. He said you have this concept that the Lord is delayed. He's coming.

You couldn't possibly be a smiter. You would have been convicted. You would have been afraid to go to sleep one night lest the Lord come and you be in that smiting spirit.

You wouldn't do that. Other than you believe that you're not going to be held accountable. But the Lord says if you will not hear the eternal call, then let me tell you what's going to happen to you here on earth.

Listen to Proverbs 13, 18. This is to the smiter. Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction, but he that regardeth or receiveth reproof shall be honored.

The Lord said you hear my word and you repent and make it right. I will honor you. I'll give you all the grace and mercy.

I'll send a Holy Ghost to empower you. I'll heal your family. I'll heal your finances.

I'll heal everything about you. But if you go on your smiting way, He said I promise you you're going into poverty and you're going into shame. And I have seen this even in the ministry.

I've seen ministers who've held grudges against the congregation for putting them out or voting them out. Absolute bitterness. A wife wrote to us not too long ago.

Her husband has gone out. He smokes. He drinks.

He curses. He's mad at God now. He smites everybody and everything in sight.

He's lost his job. They've lost everything. And a family's taken in the wife and kids.

And I tell you, I tell you, smiter, unless you get rid of it, you are headed for poverty. You'll lose your husband. Your wife will lose your job.

You'll lose your finances. You'll lose your car. You'll lose everything.

The Bible says you go to poverty. You go to shame. He said you won't be induced by the warning of my coming.

You won't, you believe that I've delayed my coming. All right, let me tell you. Poverty and shame.

Folks, it's time to take the word of God seriously. God means what he says. He's a God of love.

He's a God of mercy. But he also said I'm a consuming God. I will consume that which mocks my grace.

That which frustrates and despises my grace. Folks, there's not a church in America that's had as much or more grace than has been preached from this pulpit. We will preach grace.

We will preach mercy. But folks, I want you to know something. God says the day of grace is about to end.

The day of grace is coming to an end. Time shall be no more. And while there's grace, while there's time, Jesus waits for you with love.

He weeps over you. He's ready to rush in right now with every bit of strength that you need. And all you have to say is oh God, I don't want this burden anymore.

It's destroying my soul. It's eating my life. It's made me a mean-faced creature that hates to wake up in the morning.

There's a mean streak in me. There's something in me I despise. Oh God.

Folks, turn to the Lord with all your heart. Folks, if anybody, if you know of anybody, you pray and seek the Lord. I told you how He named people over 15 or so that I had to make things right.

And I did. And I thank God for it. And if God shows me tonight before I go to bed, I'll get on the phone if I have to wake him up in the middle of the night.

I'll write a letter. I'll do anything because I am not going to be left behind. I am going to be prepared.

Hallelujah. I'm going to be prepared for His coming. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. This is not a message to make you shout, but to save your soul. I want everybody within the sound of my voice to examine your heart right now before the Holy Ghost.

Number one, is Christ your life more than sports? I'm not saying sports in itself is evil. I'm saying if it's consuming you, it can keep you out of heaven. Are you feasting your eyes on filth when He wants to cleanse your eyes? He's come for those of the pure heart.

Are you involved in adultery, fornication? And God's been dealing with you for a long time. And you've heard of His mercy and grace. You have just used that.

You say, well, thank God He loves me. And one of these days, no, now, now. Do it now.

Make it right. That's what His mercy is all about. That the grace of God would lead you to repentance.

To all godliness. That the grace of God would lead you to all godliness and holiness. Have you neglected His word? Do you neglect Him day after day? And you don't seek His face? Then what you do now is repent.

You repent before the Holy Ghost. You repent before the Lamb of God. Say, Lord, that's me.

I'm not going to put it aside. I'm not going to cast it aside. I receive it from my pastor.

Lord, I've failed you. I've not been awake. I've been slothful.

I've been lazy about your things. Lord, I'm sorry. Forgive me.

If you're here up in the balcony, on the main floor, and you know as you're sitting here right now, Brother Dave, I am not right with God. I have just flaunted the grace of God. I have not been walking with the Lord at all.

But I want, I want Him. I need Him. I want to get rid of this burden.

I want you to get up out of your seat. Folks, just stay seated, but I want you to get up out of your seat. And if people let you out of the aisle, we usually have everybody stand so you can get out, but up in the balcony, up in the main floor here, we'd better stand, folks.

We'd better stand because it's almost impossible to get out of those seats. Now listen to me, please. A message like this brings heaviness until the Holy Ghost has completed His work.

And then the joy of the Lord breaks out spontaneously because we have obeyed His Holy Word. Hallelujah. Up in the balcony, main floor, if the Holy Ghost has convicted you by this message, if you have been convicted by the Word of the Lord, I want you to get out of your seat and come and make it right with the Lord right now.

Lord Jesus, I have been slothful, I have been lazy about You, the things of God, and I want You, Lord Jesus, to awaken my spirit and my soul. I repent before You, Lord. I come to Your grace.

All He's faithful and just will forgive you immediately. He'll forgive you instantly. Move in close, please.

And as soon as you come, turn to the Lord with your heart. Just turn to Him right now and in your own words, tell Him exactly what's in your heart. Tell Him exactly what's in your heart.

Let the Holy Spirit put His searchlight into your heart right now. Let the searchlight be turned right on to your heart right now. We pastors stand before God and give an account.

We know everyone has to give their own account. I have to give an account for being a shepherd who obeys His voice and preaches His truth. I'm responsible for preaching truth come what may.

Now, my natural inclination is to just say a quick prayer and everybody get happy and let's clap our hands and have a good time. But here's what the Holy Ghost is saying to me, and I want you to listen closely. The Holy Ghost has said very clearly in my heart that He's already told you a few times in the past already about some things you need to make right.

You're going to do it, but you didn't do it. You justified it. You justified it.

And the Lord said, No, now I want everybody in this house to hear me. Everybody. And this includes me.

This is not a joke. This is your eternal salvation. Don't come to me with some doctrinal excuse.

Yes, we're secure in the Lord. But He said, If you absolutely disobey brazenly my word, you're despising my grace. Yes, He'll forgive you.

He'll forgive you instantly. He's ready to forgive. He's ready to heal.

But He's waiting for you. He will not do what you have to do. He'll not do that which is your part, mine.

I'm asking you now. You make up your mind. Here in the presence of God today, you don't have to go searching down the crossroads or inroads of your mind.

The Holy Ghost will put it right in front of you. The name, the person. Now, if you've already done that, this message should only encourage you.

If you've already made your wrongs right, this should only bless you. The Holy Ghost is so faithful. He's so faithful that He will bring to your attention.

He'll not play games with you. He'll tell you outright. Make it right.

He'll name the people. If you have a grudge, I don't care if it's 30 years old. Make it right.

I don't care if the person you go to turns you down and mocks you and says you're crazy. You've done your part. Move on.

Just pray for them. Doesn't mean you have to walk in their shoes. Doesn't mean that you have to walk around embracing them forever saying, I'm sorry.

Just say it and mean it and pray for them and go your way. But there's some of you in this church. You need to get some others in this church because you've been smiting somebody.

You just keep going and going and going and going and you won't give up. You hold it and hold it. Some of you have been in this church five or six years and you're still holding it on somebody.

Don't tell me you're going to heaven. Don't tell me you will be saved. No way.

Everything you do, the Bible says it's not going to work. And some of you are having a mess in your life because you're just not getting it. You're not understanding how simple this is.

The Lord says, if you will take this reproof, I'll honor you. I will honor you. I will bless you.

That's promise. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Lord, I can't do this. I am totally inadequate. Lord, I know you put this on my heart.

I know you're coming soon. I know, Lord, when I woke up, you told me, be ye ready is no joking matter. It's no joke.

It's time to get serious about the things of God, about this book, about walking in faith, about being too busy and neglecting Him. Lord, we're not to just give you words. We're to give you all of our heart.

I want everybody that came forward, everybody in the house that loves Jesus, raise your hands, and I want you to pray this prayer with me right now. Jesus, forgive me for my slothfulness. Awaken me.

Forgive me, Jesus. I've neglected you. Now help me, by your Holy Spirit, to have removed from me every grudge, every hurt feeling, all root of bitterness.

Lord, I want to be free. Forgive me. Cleanse me.

Send your Holy Ghost and help me now to obey you. I love you, Jesus. Now I want you to raise your hand and just love Him.

Just worship Him now and tell Him, Lord, tell the Lord right now, I'm sorry, Lord. I've neglected you. I give you my heart.

I give you my time. Draw me back, Lord, to your first love. Draw me back that I may go out seeking after you with all my heart.

You're coming for those who seek you with all their heart, all their soul, all their mind, and all their strength. Lord, you're not coming for a church that's asleep. So wake us up, O God.

Wake us up to prayer. Wake us up to seeking your face. In the name of the Lord Jesus.

This is the conclusion of the tape.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/4/SID4241.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-wilkerson/be-ye-ready-is-no-joking-matter/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**