

Beware of a Satanic Set-Up

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon warns Christians to be vigilant against the traps set by the devil, especially during prosperous times, using biblical examples to illustrate the dangers of complacency and sin.

Duration: 59:49

Scripture: Deuteronomy 17:17, Psalm 141:9-10, Romans 13:12-14, 1 Timothy 3:7, 1 Peter 5:8

Topics: "Satan"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by emphasizing the urgency of the times, stating that the night is far spent and the day is at hand. He urges the listeners to cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. The preacher warns against engaging in sinful behaviors such as rioting, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, strife, and envy. He encourages the audience to resist the devil and remain steadfast in their faith. The sermon also includes a personal anecdote about the preacher's wife and a mention of a fallen evangelist who is in need of prayer and support.

Transcript

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None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to your friends. Now I'll be taking you through various scriptures, but just hold your Bible ready to follow me. But in 1 and 2 Timothy, two times Paul warns of the danger of falling into a satanic snare or trap.

In fact, Paul understood this concept of the devil setting people up to make them fall. It's a setup, a satanic setup. It's a sting operation right out of hell.

I'm going to read you two verses. You don't have to turn there, but it's 1 Timothy 3, 7. Lest ye fall, lest ye fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. He's introducing a concept here.

A trap by the devil. It's repeated in 2 Timothy 2, 26. And that they may recover themselves out of the snare or the trap of the devil who are taken captive by him at his will.

Now, Paul is introducing here the possibility of falling into and escaping a trap or a setup by the devil himself against the people of God. In fact, the Greek word used in both occasions here, it's a stratagem,

it's a setup, a preparation of a noose for the neck. A noose for the neck.

That's exactly in the Greek. Get your concordance out and you'll find it right there very clearly. The devil is preparing a noose for your neck.

He's building a gallows to hang you. In fact, the scripture I read to you, turn to Psalms 140, verse 5. The proud, and that's the devil himself, has set a trap for me, setting up snares, setting up traps. The devil's going around right now setting up traps.

And the closer you get to Jesus, the more determined he is to set a trap for you. That's what we're going to talk about tonight. Friday, the front page of the New York Times had one of the most pitiful pictures I think I've ever seen.

The picture of a very well-known American evangelist who had fallen, and he's on trial. And the picture showed him in chains, chained behind his back and being led into a waiting car. His eyes were puffed and he was weeping.

And they were taking him to a federal psychiatric prison for psychiatric evaluation. And he said he pictured the crowd as animals out to get him. Friday night here at the prayer meeting, God moved on us and we wept and we prayed for that man and his family.

As I said then and as I said this morning, it's not a time for judgment, it's not a time for revenge or anything else, it's a time to weep and a time to pray. A time to pray for that dear brother. But I looked at that and I thought, Oh God, this is what, the very thing that you're talking to me about.

Somewhere along the line, the devil set a trap. A trap was set. And a dear brother walked into the trap.

Last night, I was on the telephone for a good part of three quarters of an hour talking to a minister friend of mine who has just resigned two weeks ago from a very large church. And he has been accused of moral indiscretions. And I got his number because he's a friend of this ministry and we love him, we're going to stick with him.

And I called him not to condemn him but to tell him we're praying for him. And he was weeping and you can tell by the trembling in his voice how moved he was. And he said, David, I just saw, they were at a motel.

He said, I just saw the news and I saw a picture, I saw the account of the evangelist. And he named him, he said, being carried off by these men chained and stressed out and broken. And he said, well David, I wept like a baby.

And he cried out, he said, Oh God, don't let me end up like that. God, don't let that happen to me. And the cry of his heart was not so much his own sin, but I don't want to have, I don't want to fall into some kind of a trap now of justifying anything.

I don't want any kind of a trap because that would be worse than the indiscretion. I hear Christians asking, how could a man of God so mightily used by the Holy Spirit do such horrible things? How could there be such a fall when a man is so touched by God and so used? But I want you to know these dear servants of God were set up by the devil. He set up a trap.

It was well-conceived. It was a well-placed snare and they walked right into the devil's noose. And he pulled the trap door and he hung them.

He hung them. Now we're going to find out why men and women of God walk into these traps. Now I don't care who you are, how holy and pure you may believe you are.

I don't care how young or how old you are, how long you've walked with God. I don't care what experience you've had with God, how deep it may be. No matter how you insist that you could never do anything as evil, beware the devil's out to trap you too.

The thief cometh not, Jesus said, but to steal and to kill and to destroy. You know that all of us have within us the capacity to fall just as low, just as far into horrible sin. We all have that capacity within us.

When I saw that fallen evangelist's picture on the front page of the New York Times, I didn't ask, oh God, how could he do such a thing or why such foolishness was allowed to bring down that ministry. I didn't say that at all. I wept and within my heart, I remember saying to the Holy Spirit, Lord, that could have been me or should have been me.

It should have been many of us because we've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Lord, if my past sins and all our past sins, all of our motives that were impure, I thank God I'm going to be, I'll quote you some scriptures, I can see where God in my own particular life has many times exposed that trap and got my neck out before it could be pulled. And that's what the purpose of this message is, that God can expose the way the devil works and you can see it coming and you can do something about it.

You don't have to be trapped by the devil. And I said, oh God, that could have been any of us. And he put his holy fear in my heart.

But you know, it's an amazing thing in the past two years with all of this in the front pages. Many ministers, the minister I just mentioned, this has happened all in his life since that. There was no hearing, there was no seeing as Brother Bob was preaching this morning.

It's almost as if I can't be trapped. Looking back now, I see many, many times the Lord exposed the devil's trap trying to destroy my own life and my ministry. And I can say here tonight, the wicked, that Satan laid a snare for me, yet I cried, I cried, I erred not from thy precepts.

The wicked or Satan laid a snare or trap for me, but I erred not from your precepts. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the trap of the hunter. The snare is broken and we are escaped.

Oh, hallelujah, I thank God. I can stand here tonight and say, I've seen that happen many, many times in my life, how he's helped us escape. It's not good enough though to look back and say, well, I escaped this trap here, I escaped it here, and just relax and say, I've made it.

We need to be on guard and warned and awake. What is out in front of us? Now, I'll tell you something, if you're going to go all the way with God, and you're going to be sincere, and you've set your heart on being totally obedient to the Lord, and you're not playing games with God anymore, you have set your heart like a flint. You're going on with God.

You mark it down. There's a trap set. There is a trap set.

Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, is a wrong line, walks about seeking who he may devour. Now, how does Satan set up and trap God's people? We're not to be ignorant of his devices. Now, I don't believe we have all the answers.

We can't begin to know all the tricks and devices. They're so subtle, they're so devious. And we're not giving him credit for more power than God has permitted.

He's the God only of this world. He cannot touch that spiritual world where you're siding with Jesus. You see, he can come at you when you're high, he can come at you when you're low, he can come at you in your good times and your bad times.

There's no real set pattern. But there are certain characteristics of how the devil has worked in the past, and we can learn from those lessons. We learn most of all from David's life.

Brother Phillips touched on it this morning in a very powerful way. David was set up by the devil, walked right into the devil's noose and got hung. It's been said if a person can't learn from the sins of David, he doesn't want to know.

And I read that and I said, Oh God, there's no other man's life that has so affected me as reading David's life. I've wept and cried, David and Joseph. Those are the two favorite characters in the Bible other than Christ.

I've personally been broken more and more. I've learned more from this. And if you can't learn tonight from what David went through, you just don't want to know.

If you want to know something about the devices of Satan tonight, keep your ear, your spiritual ear open. First of all, the devil set up David during the happiest, most prosperous, spiritual time of his life. We fight against the devil in high places.

This was the most prosperous time in David's life when the trap was sprung. David's not hiding in a cave now. He's not a fugitive running around penniless.

He's not having to pray in his food. He's not in a pit of discouragement. He's not depressed.

He's not burdened down with any cares. He's on top of the world now. He's prosperous.

He's greatly loved by his people, greatly feared by his enemies. No man on earth was more blessed at this particular time than was David. He was at the peak of his prosperity, of his ministry.

And David had been also on the front lines of warfare. He was fighting a good fight of faith. And the Bible said no enemy could stand before him.

What a life he was walking. What a path this man was walking. Now, the wars of Israel are recorded usually in one verse.

It says, and they went out to war and 18,000 were killed. One verse. See, God doesn't want us to get focused on the details.

He's focusing on his power to deliver. But, you know, these were mighty wars. There are seven that are mentioned in the three chapters prior to David's fall.

Seven major wars where thousands were killed, multiplied, prisoners were taken. And these were incredible wars. Much strategy involved.

And David was involved in all of this spiritual warfare. And the Bible says the Lord gave David victory with us wherever he went. Everything he did was successful.

Everything was turning out right. The Syrians became servants to David and brought gifts. And the Syrians, this was an empire at the time, and David defeated the Syrian empire.

And they brought gifts to David. And David was preserved wherever he went. And David got a name for himself.

He became famous, in other words, when he returned from smiting the Syrians. Famous all over the world then. The known world.

What a wonderful place to be in, isn't it? Where you're blessed, you're enjoying guidance and victory. And a good name before all men. And it says God was with him.

His family was enjoying great blessings. The scripture said David's sons were the chief rulers or the princes. You remember after David's sin, his family disintegrated.

I've heard people say, well, it's easy to forgive. Look, God forgave David and Bathsheba. She becomes the queen.

And they have a son, Solomon, who becomes the type of Christ. Folks, that's not it. Because after David's sin, you hardly hear a whimper from this man anymore.

There was a cloud over this man from that time on. That family that was so tightly knit and blessed and prospered. First of all, his son Ammon rapes Tamar.

Right after that, you'll find it in the very next second or third chapter after this. And after that, after David's sin, you go right into the picture of David's son raping Tamar. Then you find the death then of Absalom, his favorite son.

And he weeps, finding, my son, my son, my son, don't tell me that sin doesn't cost. You find the rebellion of his son Absalom. You find the death of his oldest son Adonijah.

And finally, the apostasy after David dies of the great Solomon. But before he sinned, David's family was united. He was enjoying the blessing of God.

His family was under control. He's walking in covenant with God. In fact, at the very moment that God was blessing him, he loved his church and he sat under good shepherds.

Faithful shepherds. The scripture says, and Zadok and Ahimelech were the priests. The Zadok ministry at that time, the Zadok priesthood represented men after God's own heart.

They ministered, the Bible said, unto the Lord and not unto man. This man went to church where he heard a strong, pure word of God. He sat under prophetic message.

It was pure and the words didn't fall to the ground. Nathan loved him, yet Nathan never spared a word. You couldn't buy Nathan for any money in the world.

And David sat on a ministry that couldn't be bought. He sat under a ministry where the straight word of God came forward and he loved it. He was not sitting under a false gospel.

There was no backslidden shepherd in his pulpit. There was no polluted gospel touched his ears. David was also at the peak of his generosity.

He was not wallowing in his luxury. He was a wealthy man at this time, collecting materials to build a... He had, even at the very beginning, David had this in his mind from the very beginning. And David is so generous of heart.

He sits around scheming and dreaming ways to give to hurting people. And one day David said, Is there yet anyone left in the house of Saul that I may show kindness for Jonathan's sake? And he said, I just want to do something. And he reaches out in generosity.

He takes Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son. And the scripture says, And he did eat continually at the king's table and was lame at both his feet. Now, here's the picture.

David is prospering. His family is under control. He's going to a church that's blessed his heart.

There's a pure word coming forward. And he's a generous, giving man. But, folks, watch out.

When the blessings are falling like rain on all sides, watch out. We're more vulnerable in our times of prosperity than we are in our times of poverty. Prosperity is a much bigger temptation to apostasy.

Now, when did Satan set up the trap for these men of God that are falling left and right? When was the trap set? It was set at the most prosperous time. When all the money was flowing in. When it looked like there was no end to it.

You see, we mistake the blessings of God for God's approval. Did you hear what I said? We mistake the blessings of God as His approval. Now, God does bless those He approves many, many times.

But by the same token, there are many He approves who suffer and go about the hills naked and blind. Read in Hebrews. You'll hear the story of those who wandered over the hills and slept in caves.

Their heads were cut off. They were sawn in sunder. And the Bible said they died in faith and the world wasn't worthy of them.

God approved, yet they suffered. There are millions of Christians suffering while we sit here in Times Square tonight. Millions all over the world suffering.

And they've been approved by God. But you see, we have this idea, I must be doing something right because look how I'm being blessed. I heard in Evangelist who said, David, that was the whole thing.

There were blessings were flowing. I thought, God couldn't be too mad at me. It's almost as though God has winked at it.

I've come to a place in God that He knows my weakness. And I've had so many ministers, when they confess these things, they've said, I thought God understood my weaknesses. God understood.

A young pastor told me how Satan held him for five years in a trap of adultery. And then everything fell apart. He said, I'll never forget.

He's just a young pastor. He said, brother David, I thought, during this time I was involved in this adulterous affair. I wept more than I've ever wept.

And I cried. And he said, I had such a loving heart for the people because of my own hurt. I thought I could relate to them more now.

And he said, I'll tell you what. My church grew. The money came in and all the blessings.

And I couldn't understand it. And the idea came to give a planet in my heart. God must be really understanding.

It couldn't be too bad or the Lord would judge me. Well, God did finally. But he's a patient, loving father.

And Bob brought it out this morning. He'll prosper you, hoping that it leads you to repentance, that the goodness of God would lead us to repentance. See, we've got here in David this misconception that because I am blessed and I am prospered and my family is okay and I'm okay and I've got my health.

Don't have to deal with this black stone in my heart. Don't have to. And you see, the devil doesn't read minds.

You see, God looks in the heart, but the devil reads our actions. He reads our actions. He sees, hears what we say, and then he watches what we do.

And I'm going to tell you, if you're living that kind of a devil life, he's going to say, there's a man, there's a woman, there's a Christian ready to be trapped. Set it up. Secondly, David had a deep-seated lust that had not been crucified.

Oh, for years David had a lust. I'm going to show it to you. David had been compromising for years in certain sins that his society winked at, but that were contrary to the Word of God.

Now, David's society winked at polygamy, many wives. And I'll tell you, you read the story of David and here's what you get. And he took himself another wife and he took himself another wife and he was always gathering wives to himself.

Now, I want you to listen very closely. Some people say, well, God winked in those days at men like David. He overlooked it.

And they use the Scripture, Jesus said, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives. But from the beginning it was not so. And then he went on saying, I say unto you.

The Lord made it even tighter. You see, we get the idea, well, God winked. God never winked at His commandments.

If God didn't honor His commandments, why would He ask us to honor them? His Word wouldn't be good. The Lord says, well, I winked at that time. No, here's what the Word says.

Here's what David's, here's the Word of God for David. Neither shall, speaking of the kings, when a king comes to power. Deuteronomy 17, 17, don't turn, listen.

Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, lest his heart turn, that his heart turn not away. Do you remember when Samuel anointed Saul? The Bible said he communed with him on the rooftop. He spent

hours with him, telling him these very things.

You're not to go down to Egypt and buy horses. You're not to add wives. Saul obeyed at that point.

He had one wife and one concubine. But he said, you're not to hoard silver and gold. And I tell you, there's no way that this man, this prophet Samuel, didn't sit down with hours with David.

And go over all of this. David knew it. That was written in his heart.

But you see, David, if the prophet Nathan would have gone and said, David, don't you hear what we're preaching? Don't you hear what Samuel said? Don't you hear what Jadoc is saying? Forget what some of the priests are doing. Forget what society is saying. Forget what the church is saying here that's backslidden.

The Word says you will not add wives. If you'd have told David that, he'd have said, well, no, wait a minute, I know it's in the Word. I know it's in the Word.

But you see, I don't quite see it that way. Now, I love God. But you see, God seems to set a seal of approval on what I'm doing.

Nathan, tell me of one defeat we've had. Look around. Look around the city.

Look at all the trade. Look at the people, all the women dressed in silks now. Look at the gold that's flowing.

Tell me I'm living in sin. You see, David seems to be... You know, listen to the wives. Ahinoahem, Tiliab, Abigail, Meaca, Hagath, Abita, Eglah.

There were two more beside these. You see, David used the tolerance of his society for extra wives to satisfy a growing lust in his heart. He had a deep-rooted sensuality.

And I get amused at reading the commentaries. And they say, well, David was a sensitive soul. How could he write all these choruses and all of these psalms if he wasn't sensitive? And a sensitive man, you have to give him some allowance, give him some room.

He was a sensitive soul. Oh, that's the garbage the devil sells to a lot of preachers and others. He's sensitive.

He's vulnerable. That's garbage. But you see, he kept taking on one attractive wife after another because there was a disorderly lust that was in his heart.

And rather than satisfied and say, that's enough, it becomes more greedy. This lust becomes lawless, and he begins to pamper his lust. He disobeys the Word of God, and he's blind to what's happening to him.

Satan's setup, listen, is always designed to appeal to your weakness. This is David's weakness. Why? So what's the bait the devil uses? A wife.

A married wife. He's got a weakness for more wives. I can just see the devil setting this up.

If you could have listened to the satanic inner council, they would say, David has a weakness. Let's go after him. Let's set the trap.

Now, David loves God. He has a heart for God, but he's got this thing in him. He's got to have another wife all the time.

He's got a lust in him. You've seen it. We've seen it here in hell.

Now, let's arrange a trap. And I want to tell you, look at the timing that's involved. He's got to get David, for the first time, to stay away from the fight.

He's got to put him on a rooftop at a certain hour. He's got to bring a woman, a very attractive woman, and put her right in the next courtyard, and he's got to put her in a compromising position so it tantalizes David. It's not an accident.

Those things didn't just happen. It's a trap. It's an intricate trap, very subtle, but every step is being planned, and Satan knows it's going to work with David because he knows he's never dealt with that lust.

It's been there for years. Oh, the timing that was involved. You see, at this point, also, the devil knew that David was two-faced about the Word of God.

You listen to David talk about how he loves the Word, and here's what you hear. Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, O Lord, a light to my path. Well, it sure wasn't that day.

David says, I swore and I will obey it. Thy words to me are very pure. Therefore, thy servant loveth the Word.

Oh, I hear that. We pastors hear that. Oh, we love the Word that's coming forth from the pulpit.

Preach it hard and preach it straight. We love the Word. But Nathan came to David after his sin and said, Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord to do evil in his sight? I'm sure David loved the Word.

He came back to that love. But there was something that was in David that's in many Christians today. With the mouth is this confession.

I love God's Word. I've set my heart to obey it. Except when it goes contrary to the one thing we want.

That thing, that obsession, that one thing that's got a hold of our heart. We'll accept anything except that which crosses that idol. And we become two-faced about the Word of God.

We can go about saying I love the Word. We can read it, but we won't obey it. And when something comes that convicts and crosses our will, then we get to this point that David reached where the Bible said he despised the Word of God.

That means he didn't value it. There was no high esteem for the Word of God. In fact, if you really look at that Word, he trampled it.

He trampled the very Word that he heard. You see, the devil knew David. He knew he would justify his sin.

He knew he would rationalize it. Because, you see, David had something in him that hated sin in others but couldn't see it in himself. He hated sin in others.

Brother Bob brought it up this morning when Nathan came to him and had this parable he brought of a rich man who had many lambs. But when a visitor came, he didn't touch his flock. He went to his neighbor who had one little lamb that was a pet.

He took that pet lamb and killed it and served it. And David said, where is he? I'll kill him. I'll kill him.

So help me. He's dead. He's dead.

He's me. The anger rises up. Just like it did when some of these evangelists fell.

How could they do it? We had the whole church in America and around the world. I mean, it's a good thing judgment's not in our hands. They would have been burning now.

I'm that same man. I have a tendency to see clearly the sins of others, yet blind and excusing of my own. And I didn't know that so deeply until this past week.

Gwen, forgive me. I've got to tell this on us. Because I don't know any other way to illustrate this.

Then I'm not going to embarrass my wife at all. She'd just come through a miracle. They did a mammogram and found no cancer.

And we're just excited to the Lord. But when I do something to offend my wife, she doesn't scream and yell. She just goes to the room and shuts the door and says things under her breath that I can't hear.

The end of side one. You may now turn the tape over to side two. I came home a few weeks ago and I was tired and weary.

And she'd been going through a terrible, terrible struggle. Tired and just absolutely, with the fear of this thing, it hit her. And we went home and I said something that upset her.

Gwen and I love each other, but occasionally we have a little... I don't know how to explain it. A little chit-chat. Now, I know you don't.

You've got a perfect marriage, don't you? Yours is all perfect. You never have a quarrel. You never have any... Certainly you don't fight.

Yeah, and I got some swampland in Arizona for sale, too. She went into her room and shut the door and started mumbling. And I opened that door and I rushed in with this holy indignation of mine.

And I said, Gwen, I am tired. I'm God's servant. I've just given out everything in me.

That's demonic. I'm not having it. I'm the high priest.

I bring that now. And I gathered up my holy soldiers and I walked down the hall. Gwen closes the door.

I go to my office. And I go down the elevator. And I tell you what I heard.

It is clear as I've ever heard anything in my life from the Holy Ghost. You know what I heard, David? Why is it that with Gwen it's demonic, but with you it's holy indignation? God said, you are of the same spirit. You are both in the flesh.

In the flesh. You see, I could see what I considered sin in her. I couldn't see it in me.

I was angry. I was mad. And I covered it up with this thing.

You know, people who are, I don't call them pinch pennies, but thrifty. But we, you know, you say, I'm thrifty, but he's a pinch penny. And others who kind of come around and say, ask questions, and you say, I'm just trying to help, but anyone else, he's a gossip, she's a gossip.

You call it concern, but a neighbor, you call it nosiness. You call your sin a slip-up. It's apostasy in everybody else.

We have this tendency, David had this anger against sin in others, but he couldn't see that he was the man. Oh, I want to learn that. I was reading something last night, about six o'clock.

I was sitting on the chair, and I was reading this about David's bribery and his cover-up, trying to bribe Uriah to go home and get him drunk. And I said, this is a man of God, one of the best known men of his day, a holy man of God, a man after God's own heart. He's bribing this man.

He's covering up, and then he's going to murder him. He's going to have him murdered. And I said, God, what's happening, Lord? He said, I'm talking to you.

And I'll tell you what, the fear of God hit me. That word came to me and said, David, there are the seeds of that same thing in you. And he showed me little things, little things, little things, that if I told you, you might laugh.

But I saw in them the seeds that could grow and be of this very spirit. And I broke before God, and the fear of God hit me. And I know out of it have to come some changes.

You see, David didn't fall on the rooftop that one night of lust, no. David walked into that trap unprepared. He had a long history of a lust, a greed in him that had not been dealt with.

You know, there are Christian husbands and wives who are not satisfied with their mates because they're not spiritual enough. Boy, you talk about a trap. I had a pastor confide.

He said, David, it was a very spiritual woman that got to me, destroyed my home. My wife and I were in two different worlds. She didn't understand the deep things of God, and I wanted the Lord.

She wanted just her house and drapes and materialism. He said, this woman in the church was so on fire. She was so interested in what God was doing in my life, where we'd sit and just talk for hours.

And we were attracted by what we thought was the Jesus in each other. Now, listen. This is one of the most subtle traps that could possibly be.

Some woman who has a heart for God, hungry, thirsty for God. And over here, a husband who is either in sin and doesn't understand, and all she wants is a spiritual union. It could be a man, and he wants a spiritual marriage.

There's no one to talk to, no one to touch the depths of his soul. And he looks around, and he says, why can't I have a spiritual mate? Why isn't there somebody who truly understands me? Boy, is that a trap. And almost everyone who falls into the trap says, well, my wife didn't understand.

My husband didn't understand. We're in two different worlds. Nobody understood me.

Poor little child. He said, we fell as low as any adulteress could fall. We fell into degradation and sin.

If you'd have told David at this point, David, you're two-faced about the word of God. You have a history of weakness for wives, attractive women. You're rich and increased with goods and think you have needed nothing, not knowing that you're wretched and poor and blind.

And you don't know your spiritual condition. You're walking into a setup. The devil's about to put a noose around your neck.

He would have denied it all. He would have tried to correct you. He'd have said, no, that's not true.

Three things have to go into a satanic setup, and I'm going to get to number three in just a moment. My closing remarks. First of all, we talked about mistaking God's blessings for approval.

And secondly, an ongoing lust that's not been crucified. Oh, by the way, can I stop for just a minute and digress? If you've got that in you, your husband or your wife is not saved, or your husband or wife giving you problems and they're not spiritual, and you come to church, you start unloading on a brother or sister, you start building some kind of what you call a spiritual relationship, you watch out. That's a trap.

That's a trap. I want to tell you something. If you're in trouble in your marriage, lady, sister, don't you go to a man and get counseling, unless it's a pastor, somebody that has a controlled environment.

Don't you unload on another, somebody of the opposite sex. You find another brother in Christ, brother, or another sister in Christ, and you share a bin. Don't get involved in that trap.

By the time you get on the telephone, you're halfway to hell. You trade numbers and you're halfway to hell. I don't know why I'm on that.

But receive it from the Lord. Now, finally, you see, there are three springs on this devil's trap, and he's got to have them all prying first before it can spring. And first of all, I'll say it again, this mistaking of God's blessing for approval, an ongoing lust has not been crucified.

And finally, and here's the most important of all, a weariness of the warfare. A weariness of the warfare. I want you to go, please, to Samuel, 2 Samuel, and I'm going to close in about five, ten minutes here, but I want you to see it, 11th chapter, 2 Samuel.

And if you want to go home tonight, get your hearts started reading it, 2 Samuel 11th chapter. Go from 10, 11, and 12, and you'll get this whole message again. 2 Samuel 11th chapter, verse 1. Alright? And it came to pass, after the year was expired, at the time when kings go forth to battle, that simply means before winter came, that David sent Joab and his servants with him, and all Israel, and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Reba, but David tarried still at Jerusalem.

Now, won't you look at that. David tarried still at Jerusalem. Now, look at me, please.

The day was going to come when David would not be permitted to go out with his troops and fight. And this happened, in fact, years later, in a war with the Philistines. The Bible said in the war, David waxed faint.

And there was a giant poised right over David, ready to kill him. And Abishaiah came and delivered him, rescued David from the giant. And here's what the army said.

Joab and his army said, Then the men of David swore to him, saying, You shall go no more out with us to battle, that you quench not the light of Israel. There's a time he was going to be delivered from the battle. But you see, at this point, where David tarried still at Jerusalem, he's at the peak of his strength, the peak of his prosperity.

He is not depressed. He is not weary. He is not waxing faint.

He's just ready to relax. You see, he says, I've reached the point where this warfare is getting so intense. This battle is getting to me.

I just don't think I can go on. And I see him calling Joab, and he said he gathered all of Israel. This is a major battle against Ammon.

In fact, he should have been there. Ammon is the grandson of Lot, an incestuous relationship. Ammon was to be wiped out.

If any battle David should have been in, he should have been in this. And I see David saluting his army as they pass by. They're on their way to the battle.

And there's this great army, and I wonder if David felt any guilt. Any at all. He's saluting and he's saying, Be strong in the Lord.

Go forth to battle. As for me, just a little tired of it all. But he said, I'm not going to put a guilt chip on myself.

I've earned it. I tell you, I've been fasting and praying and seeking God. This spiritual warfare is too hard.

We have people sitting here right now that have decided to relax. You say, I can't take this anymore. We've had people tell us that the Word of the Lord is too strong.

It's too intense. You people are too sober. I want to tell you something.

We have probably more joy in this church than I've seen in any church. I'm sure churches have great joy. I've just not been in many of them and had the joy that we see and experience here.

Great joy. But that joy is produced out of repentance. Out of obedience.

Out of trust and confidence in the finished work of the cross. But we have people just like David saying, I can't go on. I'm about to lose my mind.

So help me. People have said that. I can't take it.

Now listen, I'm not talking about the natural realm. It's good to take a vacation. There's nothing wrong with hunting and fishing and golfing and all of these sports.

There's nothing wrong with that at all unless it has your heart. I'm not talking about the natural realm. This is something going on in David's heart.

This is spiritual. David is saying, I'm not going to backslide. I'm going on with God.

I'm not going to fight. I'm tired. Do you know that spiritual awareness come on you once in a while and say I just can't go? So help me.

There are going to be people here tonight that thought this was going to be your church home. You say, I finally found a message that stirs my heart, convicts my soul and provokes me to righteousness. And one of these days, because there is an intensity.

One of these days, the enemy is going to come and plant that in your heart. Tonight I'm staying home. And you'll find yourself parked in front of Dynasty or Dallas.

And you'll put your feet up and say I'm not backsliding. I love the Lord, but I can't go that way. And you'll go find a gospel that will suit you.

I say that lovingly, but that happens so many, many times. I don't know. We must have 2,000 people walk through here and stayed a month and left.

I couldn't put a figure on it, but it's got to be very, very high. Thank God for you that are not afraid of the Word. And you not only love it, but you practice what you hear.

Hallelujah. Praise the Lord. But you see, this is the problem right now.

I'll tell you. Go to Romans. Before you go to Romans, look this way again.

If you've decided to relax, your timing couldn't be worse. You're going on vacation from the spiritual warfare at the end of everything. The end of all things has come.

It's come. And you say, I'm going to relax. Well, I want to show it to you.

Romans. Romans, the 13th chapter. And we're just about finished.

Romans 13. Beginning with verse 11. Romans 13, verse 11.

For all of you who have the devil whispering to you, you can't go on like this. It's too much of a strain on you. Listen to it.

Verse 11. And that knowing the time, that now it's high time to relax. It's high time to awake out of sleep.

For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent. Hey, listen.

This was written hundreds of years ago. If the night was far spent and the day at hand dead, how much closer is it now? The night is far spent. The day is at hand.

Let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness. Let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness or in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envy, and put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lust thereof.

It's... Listen to 1 Peter 5.8. Be sober. Be vigilant. Because your adversary, the devil, is roaring, lying, walking about, seeking to make you desire.

Remember, he's just steadfast in the faith. Steadfast. Look at me, please.

Close your Bible. Before I close, I want to give you one verse. I'd like to just take four or five minutes and just go on and tell you all the good things that God does in delivering people.

But I want to give you one verse the Lord gave me. You don't have to turn. I'm just going to read it to you.

You can mark it down if you want. Psalms 141, 9 and 10. Let me read it to you.

Hear it in the Spirit now. You can escape every snare and trap of the devil. And you know how you do it? It's through prayer and the reading and the hearing of this Word.

Brother Bob talked about opening your mouth wide. Saying, Lord, I want to hear it, not with my ears. I want to hear it in the inner man.

And I want to hear it to the point that it drives me to my knees. It strikes the fear of God in my heart. Let me give you the verse.

It's through prayer. And we're going into teaching on prayer. And we're going to be doing a lot of praying in the months to come.

But it's also through prayer and trusting, absolutely trusting that God will expose every trap that's set for you. And if the first sign of the trap, the first sign of temptation, you draw back. Say, oh no.

No, that's not pretty. That's not beautiful. That's a noose for my neck.

That's a noose. And devil, you're not going to hang me. You run to Jesus.

You run to the secret closet. You run to His arms. Here's the Scripture.

Keep me from the snares which they have set for me and the traps of the workers of iniquity. Let the wicked fall into their own nets while I walk away. I walk away.

I walk away. Hallelujah. I escape.

You say, that's not it. Yes, it is. It's there.

Go home tonight and read it. Psalms 141, 9 and 10. Let the wicked fall into their own nets while I escape.

In the Hebrew it says, while I walk away. There's the devil. He's got the trap.

He's about to spring it. And the Holy Ghost turns on the light. And there you sit.

Oh, thank you, Jesus. I almost walked into that. Hallelujah.

I tell you, God is faithful. If you love Him, you walk with Him in peace. Seek Him with all your heart.

There's nothing hidden. God's not going to let you stumble on a trap. He's not going to let you fall.

You're going to have the light right before you to the right and to the left. You're going to have a floodlight, a Holy Ghost floodlight just following you everywhere you go. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Stand, please. Will you stand? Some of you may have a sense tonight.

The Holy Spirit may have already shown you. Maybe there was something said tonight. Was it like a knife cutting in? Did it touch a nerve in your spirit? Then it's the Holy Ghost speaking to you.

If you were here this morning and you're here again tonight, you've heard it twice now. The Holy Spirit's trying to say something to us. Hear it.

Obey Him. I stand here tonight, trembling yet thankful. I can look back and see all the snares, the traps, the Holy Ghost delivered me from.

And how close. How close. Have you been there? People always think of Dorothy.

That's probably not near the potential for disaster. It's some of the things that you and I take lightly. Such as not reading and hearing this book.

Going for days at a time. How many times did the pastor of this church have to beg and plead for this body to get into this world and absorb it because it is the lamp. This is what exposes the tricks and the traps of the devil.

And then to be driven by it to our knees. To walk with Him. Hallelujah.

I tell you, God's going to keep His people in these last days. We don't have to fear. He said, I've not given you the spirit of fear, but love and power and a sound mind.

Let the devil set traps all around you. Let the devil put traps all around you. Everywhere it's a minefield.

And if you just went one step out of this realm of the spirit, there's traps all over. But I'll tell you what. The Lord will just pick you up.

Carry you in His hands. And I'll tell you that no way when you're in the Father's hands the devil is going to trap you when you're there. No way.

He'll just carry you. Carry you right above it all. Hallelujah.

If the enemy's been trying to trap you, destroy you, and has brought fear and anxiety to your heart, or maybe there's something in your heart you've not dealt with yet, it's been there just like David. It's been there. It's time to deal with it.

And I'll tell you the thing that deals with it is the light. The light. Where you open up and say, Lord, turn on the lights.

I don't want anything hidden. If you hate it, tonight, with all your heart, say, Lord, I'm not going to flirt with it. I hate it.

You bring it to Jesus tonight. There's deliverance. Whatever it may be.

A secret. It may be the Holy Ghost just spoke to your heart about something that you have to do. I want you... Please don't come unless the spirit draws you.

But up in the balcony, you can come down both sides, down any exit, down any aisle. And come forward. We'd like to pray with you.

You see, coming forward. We do this in every service. Coming forward is simply saying, Lord, I step out of the condition I'm in.

It's symptomatic of stepping out. It's a symbol of stepping out of your oppressing condition. I'm stepping out of this, making a move.

I just want to make a move out of this. That itself won't do it, but you're making a statement. I want to move from this place.

I want to go on with Jesus. That's in your heart. You come.

Let us pray with you. And ask God for deliverance. Father, we don't want to just see a lot of people standing up here.

We want to see people that come and say, Lord, I want to go on with you and I want this thing settled in my heart. I don't want to be in a devil's trap. I don't want to open myself to this kind of thing.

I don't want to open my heart to a trap of Satan. Lord, deliver tonight. And those that have something deep in their heart, bring it out, Lord Jesus.

And those who are going on with the Lord and they've sensed the devil's trying to get to them. The devil's been trying lately to trip them up. The devil's trying everything in his power to get them to be discouraged or to set them up in a trap.

Lord, let us take that stand for you tonight in Jesus' name. Amen. Wherever you're at, we'll wait for you up in the balcony here on the main floor.

Come and stand here now and say, Jesus, I'm making a move towards you right now. I mean it with all my heart. Mike, would you look this way please? I was asking the Holy Spirit what I should say to you and here's what I believe the Holy Spirit is saying to my heart for you that are standing here right now.

God doesn't waste words. He's not glib like we are, just outing words. He'll say it.

It's up to us to receive it. Now, He'll repeat it if necessary. He said He sent His prophets time and time again.

But God doesn't waste words. He'll speak and the Holy Ghost will touch you. And then it's up to you and I to respond.

You don't need another sermonette. You just need to open your heart right now. And say, Jesus, I heard you.

And I answer you. You don't have to tell me again. I heard it.

Most of you up here, you know what God's told you. You don't have to have it repeated to you. God said, obey me now.

Lay it down. God said, you're headed for a trap. Turn around.

Run to me. Do it. He said, you've been neglecting my word.

You've been neglecting your life of prayer. You don't have a life of prayer? Do it. That's all.

And God's not going to... He's not going to hang around and just wait for you to get an encyclopedia of words from Him. He's saying, I said it. Now, just obey me.

And in obedience, there's victory. There's victory when you set your heart. Will you set your heart right now to obey the Lord? How many of you that are up here, God's already told you what you had to do.

Raise your hand, please. You know what God's... Has God told you what to do? Put your hand up. Hold it up.

Hold it up. If you don't know what to do, just raise your hand also. Let's just raise our hands.

The Bible says, I will never lift holy hands. Keep your hands raised to Jesus as we pray right now. Jesus.

Pray this, pray. Again, Jesus. I heard you.

And I want to obey you. I surrender my sins and myself and my pride and my stubbornness. Oh, God.

Take that stubbornness from me. Help me to yield and give in to you and to your will and to do it your way. Help me to obey you.

Cleanse me and send the Holy Ghost to put fire in my heart and I'll thank him right now. Jesus, I thank you. I thank you, Lord, that we can obey you.

Look at me. If they were about to tow your car away and it was parked right out in front and I stood up here and said, somebody with a green Chevrolet 1985, they're towing your car, go out. Would you just stand there? Would you go out and move your car? I wouldn't have to stand here.

You wouldn't stand there and say, well, I don't know whether I should do that or not. I don't know if it's my car. You wouldn't stand there waiting for a whole other message.

It's there. It's black and white. Do it.

We can obey God. We can obey the Lord. Set your heart right now.

I guess being evangelist, I prefer to see people weeping on their knees and slain and everything else and feel good. Well, maybe we got through. But the Word's gotten through.

If you stand here right now in the power of the Holy Ghost and you're setting your heart, I'm going to obey God. I am going to obey the Holy Ghost. He'll speak to your heart.

Hallelujah. If you're determined to do that, would you just raise your hand. Commit it right now.

Commit yourself to it. Keep your hand raised and walk straight along. Jesus, take this commitment.

Drive it deep into their hearts and let it be finished. Let it be a finished work in Jesus' name. Hallelujah.

You can put your hands down. I'd like to know how many of you are up here tonight. You've come forward in this church for the first time.

You're up here for the first time in this church. Would you raise your hand, please? Your first visit up here. We'd like to pray with you.

Don't join anything. We'd like you to follow right here. The officers go down in the prayer room.

We'd like to meet you there and pray individually with you. Would you come this way, please? Make your way right through. Everyone, for the first time, right through this exit, right here backstage and down in the prayer room.

The Lord bless you so much. The Lord's here in a precious way to meet every need of every one of you that are here tonight. The Lord is faithful.

Very faithful. God bless you, brother. Right this way.

Make a way for these that are coming through, please. Hallelujah. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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