

# Christless Pentecost - Part 1

by David Wilkerson

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*David Wilkerson warns that the charismatic movement has neglected the word of God and the secret closet of prayer, leading to a lack of power and a phony Christianity.*

**Duration:** 29:00

**Scripture:** Luke 6:46, Luke 9:58, John 4:23-24, Ephesians 5:27, Colossians 3:2, Revelation 3:16-17

**Topics:** "Pentecost"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of prayer in the lives of believers. He challenges the audience to prioritize seeking Christ in prayer, suggesting that even dedicating one day a month or one hour a day to prayer can have a transformative impact. The preacher highlights the example of Jesus, who despite having the responsibility of caring for the entire universe, still made time to pray for his followers. He urges the audience to break free from the distractions and busyness of the world and commit to a deep and intimate prayer life, recognizing that it is through prayer that God can use them to make a powerful impact in the world.

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## Transcript

Christ be glorified, be glorified tonight. Amen. In Mark the 5th chapter, Jesus demonstrated his power over death and the devil.

You see him cast the legion of demons out of the Gadarene who'd lived among the tombs. In the same chapter, he raises the daughter of Jairus from the dead, while a whole household of people laugh at him. He astonished the crowds, men marveled at his power.

You see him in the 5th chapter, spreading his fame far and near. In the 6th chapter of Mark, we find Christ coming to his own country, Nazareth, to visit his own people. These are his friends, his family, his relatives, and those who know him best.

But he came to his own, and his own received him not. They were offended by him. The man who had just demonstrated all power over death and the devil could do no miracles in their midst, and he marveled at their unbelief.

Christ was incredulous, unbelief had tied his hands. But it was in Nazareth that Jesus spoke these very profound and prophetic words. And hear it, a prophet has no honor in his own country, among his own kin,

and in his own house.

He said that to Jews, who all their lifetime had prayed and yearned for Messiah, but when he came, they cast him aside. John the Baptist, the prophet who baptized him, later had doubts about him. His own brothers and sisters didn't believe in him.

God's chosen people became his greatest enemy. And how true that scripture, a man's foes will be they of his own household. You know, today, we marvel at the blindness of these people.

How could they not know the Son of God? How could the Savior of mankind walk among the men of this world and be a stranger? But we're no different. The words of Christ were so prophetic. It's possible for Jesus to get less honor in his own house, among his own people, than anywhere in the world.

Because the worst kind of rejection comes from those who are supposed to love us the most. And Christ keeps coming to his own again and again, and his own receiving not again and again. And so it is at this present time.

Because I believe that Christ often, in own services, walks as a stranger among us, as soon as he walked among the Jews, ignored and cast aside. And all they used him, they brought to him their sick and afflicted to be healed. They came for the loaves and the fishes.

They brought their children to be blessed. They wanted their water turned to wine, and then they discarded him. They put him to an open shame.

They killed him. His own people did it. And we're still putting Christ afresh to an open shame.

We still ignore him. We still discard him. And I tell you that it's possible to gather thousands of spirit-filled people in one place, praising and lifting up their hands, and still have Christ walking among us as a stranger.

Now he said where two or three are gathered, my name there am I in the midst. But he can be in our midst as a stranger, ignored, unrecognized, even by those. The Jews did the same.

They gathered every Sabbath in the synagogue. They spoke of his name. They prophesied of his coming.

They praised the Father who promised to send him. They spoke his name with awe and reverence. Then when he came, when he walked among them, he was unrecognized.

He was a stranger. Could it be possible that in the midst of a spirit-filled congregation, Christ walks as a stranger? To those who speak his name? To those who worship the Father who sent him? A stranger to those who sing his hosanna and call him Lord, yes, absolutely. And it's happening today.

And let me share with you from my heart three ways that we so-called spirit-filled people, and I don't like the term, it suggests that others are not. But let me tell you how charismatic people often are guilty of making stranger of Christ in our midst. First of all, we make Christ a stranger by giving the Holy Spirit preeminence over him.

Christ and Christ alone must be the center of all our life and our worship. This has been God's plan from the foundation of the world. He loved his own son, then he gave him his fullness even before the foundation of the world, before we were ever created.

That they may behold my glory, he said, which thou hast given me, O God, for thou hast loved, thou lovest me before the foundation of the world. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the preeminence. For I plead the Father that in him all fullness should dwell, that in all things Christ might have the preeminence.

That means he's distinguished and spoken of above all others, having first place, that not even the Holy Ghost be exalted before his name. The upper room must never overshadow the cross. The blessed Holy Spirit is not the Lord, he shows us the Lord, he brings us to the Lord.

And I believe he's desperately trying to get all Pentecostals back to the cross, to the cross. You see, the Holy Spirit did come down upon Christ in the baptismal waters and he came as a dove. And the dove said, this is God's beloved Son in whom he is well, please hear ye him.

Now, the attention was not on the dove but the Lamb. The dove came to exalt the Lamb. Christ told his disciples that Pentecost was coming.

The Spirit would be outpoured but for a single purpose, to give power to men and women to witness to the resurrection and the atonement of Jesus Christ. To give power to those who would witness to it. It was to be a power given to all who would lift up the name of Jesus.

And I resent power being turned in any other phrase, in any other way but to give glory to Christ. But ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you. Ye shall be witnesses unto me to the uttermost parts of the world.

And Jesus made it very clear, when the Spirit comes, he will not draw attention to himself, but he will focus on my words, he will exalt me. When he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he shall not speak of himself, he shall glorify me. For he shall receive of mine and he will show it unto you.

All things that the Father hath are mine. Therefore say to you that he shall take of mine and he will reveal it to you. He will show you my glory, my power, my kingdom.

He will remind you of all my words. The primary work of the Holy Spirit is not fellowship. It is not ecstasy.

It's not to teach you an unlearned tongue. The Spirit has come to exalt Christ, to bring all mankind to the truth, the Spirit did not bleed and die. If you tell me the Holy Ghost is your advocate, you are wrong.

It's not enough to say that the Spirit is bringing us closer to each other. He's got to bring us closer to Christ. And we often speak of the Holy Ghost ten times to one over Christ.

We talk about a baptism above an atonement. Now there's nothing wrong in trying to get people, quote, baptized with the Holy Ghost. But we better understand what we're promoting.

We are promoting Jesus Christ through the power of the Spirit, because a baptism is a baptism of Christ's fullness. And anybody who speaks with tongues has got to know it's a gift simply to help us glorify. He didn't come just to make us better buddies.

He sent the Holy Ghost to fire our souls over lost humanity, to get us out in the highways and hedges to the unsaved, to shake up our lazy lifestyles and get us back to doing His work. And I believe the Holy Spirit will withdraw even from charismatics the moment men try to exalt me above the Son of God. He will not permit His power to be abused by those who want only the gift and not Christ to give up.

The Holy Ghost is given by Christ. What is a truly Holy Ghost meeting? I refuse. We went to a Holy Ghost meeting tonight.

Is that where everybody speaks with tongues? Is that where people are being simply healed or where saints are jumping for joy, where the people are prophesying? Or more, much more than that, folks. It's where Christ is being exalted, where His holiness is piercing the soul, where many women fall. The moving of the Holy Spirit is a moving closer to Christ.

It's a deepening in Christ. It's a greater submission to His Lordship. And if you're going to speak of the Spirit, it's what you say, be exalted, O Lord Jesus.

Secondly, Christ is made a stranger when people praise Him but will not pray to Him. We praise a Christ to whom we will not pray. We praise a Christ to whom we will not pray.

We become a praising people but not a praying people. For many of God's people, charismatic people included, the prayer closet's a relic of the past. Why ask God for what He's already given? Why ask God for what He's already promised? We don't want Christ anymore.

We want only what He offers us. We want escape from pain and suffering. We want our troubles to vanish.

We're so caught up in our escape from pain, we need the true meaning of the cross. This is a generation to refuse crosses and losses. We don't want Gethsemane.

We don't want to sweat drops of blood. We don't want any nights of agony. We don't even know the suffering Jesus anymore.

We don't know Him. The church once confessed its sins. Now it confesses its rights.

How many of us would serve Jesus, would love Him and serve Him, if He offered us nothing but Himself? No healing, no success, no prosperity. What if once again we had to take joyfully the sporting of our goods? Our house is bankrupt. What if instead of the clear sailing and problem-free living we so desire, we face shipwreck, fears within and fightings without? What if instead of painless living, we suffer cruel mocking, stoning, bloodshed, being sawn asunder? What if instead of our beautiful homes and cars, we had to wander about in deserts and sheepskins, hiding in kandems and caves? What if like Stephen we had to be stoned? And like James had to be killed? Like Paul shipwrecked? And what if instead of prosperity, we were destitute, afflicted and tormented, and the only better thing offered for us was Christ? You know, the Lord Himself said it's possible to do many mighty works in His name, to cast out demons, to heal the sick and still not know Him? It doesn't matter how much you pray in the formula in the name of Jesus.

It doesn't matter how many people you heal in His name. It matters not how many demons you can scatter in the authority of His name. It matters not how many great things you accomplish in His name.

What really matters is do you really know Him? Very few of God's people pray anymore. We're too busy working for Jesus to talk to Him. Ministers especially, and all this is the grief of my heart and my travels.

Ministers are becoming too busy to do kingdom, they're so busy doing kingdom work, there's no time left to pray. You see Christ coming to the shadows, standing outside the office door and He says to the pastor, man of God, can I have an hour please? Not now Lord, I've got a counseling session, I've got to try to save

a marriage. Again the Spirit calls, man of God, may I have an hour with you? Not now Lord, I'm meeting with my architect and building committee for your new church, we'll be busy till midnight.

Again the Lord calls, what about tomorrow, may I have even one day with you now? Not now Lord, I have no time, I'm leaving for South Africa for a missions conference. Very soon Lord, not just now, souls are dying, I need it in Africa. And oh there you have it, I had a minister tell me recently, who has time to pray? A minister of a great church two weeks ago said, David I haven't prayed in two years, or rather one year, I've had meditation, I've had devotion, but I haven't prayed.

And that's why I became a frustrated building contractor. We have time to visit, to build, to travel, to vacation, to attend meetings for recreation, reading, counseling, visitation, but no time to pray. Preachers who do not pray become promoters.

When they lose touch with God, they lose touch with their people and their needs. Preachers who don't pray have egos that spin out of control. They want their own way, they substitute sweat for unction.

They get whipped up like a circus horse running in circles. Evangelists who do not pray become stars, storytellers. They lack humility, so they manipulate the crowds through emotional gimmicks.

Their preaching becomes a contradiction at the center of their hearts. Preachers who don't pray don't even know what the times are saying. They preach the headlines, but they don't preach the mind of the Holy Ghost.

Preachers who do not pray have no power over the rulers of darkness. They don't even know that this battle is going on. They're on the sidelines playing with some earthly pet project.

They're not in the Holy Ghost battle, because only praying men touch God. I'll tell you, there'll be less and less clapping as I go on. How many pastors have cried this? Oh, I've heard it all over the country.

How many pastors cry this? Oh God, where can I find an evangelist who doesn't care about money? One who's not promoting something? One who can bring heaven down and make Christ real? Oh God, give me at least one man, one praying man to bring my congregation to its knees. God, give us one evangelist. God is not obligated to keep the unction on anyone who doesn't pray.

The shame of this generation is that we have too many talented men and only a few who touch God in prayer. And there's even less praying in the congregation. Now, I'm 100% for getting prayer back in our public schools, 100%.

But that's not the problem, not at all. That's not God's problem. His problem is to get prayer back in our homes, preachers to pray, to get Christians to pray, his own chosen people to pray.

And I say you're phony. You're a phony. If you fight for school prayers and you neglect your secret closet of prayer, you can go all over the country promoting it.

But unless you have a dynamic prayer with Jesus Christ, it's nothing but sandy grass and tinkling cymbals, it means nothing. Do we pray? Oh yes, we pray when we need something. And we've got this formula down pat in the name of Jesus.

Folks, all we seem to need Jesus for is to countersign a petition check before the throne of God. Just countersign a check in the name of Jesus. You know, I'm weary of hearing people say, this is such a busy,

fast-paced generation, we don't have time to pray today.

No, it's not a lack of time, it's a lack of desire. You'll make time for what you really want to do. Look at those Christian brothers on the racquetball court.

Sweating, concentrating, serious, hours and hours on the racquetball court. There's a nobody who's got a Coke in hand and he's got sandwiches, probably going to watch three hours of cowboy time. These are the men who tell me they have no time to pray.

And here's the dear lady, she spends her time at Tupperware. She's got baby showers going. Tomorrow she goes shopping, the afternoon she's got to see what's going to happen to Laura on TV.

And she tells me she has no time to pray. Look at the young people in America, wasting their time playing Pac-Man, Galaxy War, goofing off, bored, restless, looking for action. No time to pray.

All right, teenager, I want you to listen to it. And I have the mind of God now. Instead of playing around and goofing off, if you would spend even one day seeking Christ in prayer out of the month, if you'd spend just one hour a day seeking the face of Jesus, your life would become a powerful force for Christ.

He would begin to show you a dying world. He could even lay a nation on your heart. He could raise you up and make your life really count.

He could take you out of this restlessness of this world. He could set your soul on fire and use you. He could use you, but you don't pray.

You don't talk to him. How can he get through to you? Oh, God, somehow get this generation on its knees. Break it, not just the Lord's prayer, but a Holy Ghost communion.

You say you have no time to pray, yet the very Son of God who has the care of all the multiplied universes, he has the time to pray for you. He takes the time to intercede before the throne of God. He prays.

You say you have no time. He does. We're working so feverishly for Christ we ignore.

We'll go anywhere. We'll do anything in his name, but we will not pray. We'll sing and cry, but we won't pray.

We'll visit the sick and the prisoners, but we won't pray. We will counsel the hurt and need. We'll stay up all night to comfort a friend.

We won't pray. We'll fight corruption, but we won't pray. We can sit here for two hours praising God, but we won't go home and pray.

We'll attend crusades and seminars, go from meeting to meeting, lift our hands and sing, and proudly because we don't believe it works. Prayer's not just a bunch of words running out of our mouth. It's not just a bunch of words.

I'm so chicken tired of people just saying words. No wonder the devil is sapping the spiritual strength of this generation because prayer is a bloody battleground. Prayer is a bloody battleground.

It's where the victories really won. It's where you die. It's a part of the final conflict of the ages.

Now God doesn't need prayer. You can't get God any more interested in us than he already is. You don't have to extract God like he was some miser waiting for the highest bidder.

No, he said he's more willing to give than we are to receive. I think the perverted view of prayer, it's pagan to think that we have to wring something out of God. No, folks, the only man who tried to wrestle with God ended up crippled the rest of his life.

We don't wrestle with God. We wrestle with the giant on ourselves. We wrestle with self.

No wonder the devil fights you when you go to pray. The Holy Ghost waits until the glamour is gone. He waits until the half-heartedness is gone, until the pride is gone, until you quit demanding selfishly, until you're ready to lay down that secret sin in your life.

And that's where our wrestling comes in. I believe God will throw, the devil will throw hell at any man who says, I'm going to pray and seek the face of God. The devil's not afraid of power-hungry saints, but he trembles at the sound of a praying saint.

He knows when a man or woman has touched God. I believe the devil fears a praying man or woman more than all the religious activities in the world combined. And because we neglect prayer, we neglect his word.

We wear our Bibles like a hat or a purse. It's a nice leather accessory to bring to the crusade. We wear it.

There was a time God's people didn't need a parent church army of psychiatrists and psychologists and family counselors. We didn't need that. I'm not against it, but there was a time we didn't need it because people were students of the Bible.

They had the sword in their hands and no demon or devil could withstand their power. They were into the word. There was a time God's people had no tapes, no library of self-help books, no retreats, no specialized seminars, but they had the word hidden in their heart, and the word was the lamp to their feet.

Now we have all these special effects. We've got the specialists, and yet we've got more despair and depression and fear and anxiety than in all of history. Why? Because through our neglected prayer and the word of God, we're lost.

We've become spiritual sluggers, unwilling to go into the secret closet and dig out the solution, dig out the truth. We want some teacher to hand it out and spoon it out to us. And if there's anything needed in the charismatic movement, I didn't come here to set anybody straight.

I'm preaching to myself these who think God's been dealing with me, and I tell you we need a revival, a Bible study. Honest to goodness, Bible study. Ten years ago, I had a millionaire friend who went bankrupt.

He lost his mansion, and in a way, he got mad at me, and I don't know why. He began to talk about me, and I lost touch with him for ten years. Two weeks ago, he showed up at my front porch.

Big man, put a bear hug around me, said, David, I love you. I'm sorry God has touched me. Oh, he was just filled with the Spirit of God, and I said, who was the preacher, and where was the revival? He said, David, no preacher, no revival.

Three months ago, I got so desperate, I'd lost everything. God told me if I'd get into the Word, I'd find the answer. For the past three months, I have been nothing but reading the Word of God.

God has restored my spirit and soul. I'm making all my wrongs right. You know, the last one I have to see, it was through the Word of God.

Thirdly, Christ has made a stranger in our midst when we want his power more than his purity. We want his power more than his purity. Reader Harris was a friend of Brother Ravenhill.

He was Englishman and director of the Pentecostal League of Prayer, and at one time, he challenged a large congregation on this matter of purity and power. He said, I want everybody that wants power to line up to my right, and everybody that wants purity line up to my left. They lined up ten to one for power.

Now, in the book of Acts, if I read it right, Pentecost was synonymous with purity and not power. Peter told the Council of Jerusalem what God did at the house of Cornelius. He said, God gave them the Holy Ghost, even as he did to us, purifying their hearts by faith.

Now, Jesus died to break the power of sin and to deliver us from guilt, and he wants to raise up a holy, pure body. He said, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a special people. Who is the man, who is the woman that has the power? It's the man or the woman who has the purity.

It's not the one who can heal the sick and raise the dead. It's not the one who can best talk in tongues or prophesy. It's not the one who draws the biggest crowds and builds the greatest church.

No, it's the righteous man for the righteous who is bold as a lion. Who is it that has the boldness, the Scripture says, enter the holy of holies? Only those whose bodies are washed with pure water, having the heart sprinkled by the blood of Christ from an evil conscience. The prophet Malachi prophesied of a supernatural purging that's going to come to the house of God before Jesus comes.

Now, if you are into prophecy, I don't know much about prophecy, but I know prophecy when I see it. I'm not, quote, a prophecy preacher. But nothing could be clearer than this prophecy of Malachi, that before Jesus comes there's going to be a general purging in the church.

He said, the Lord whom you seek shall suddenly come to his temple. Who can withstand the day of his coming? Who shall stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi and purge them of silver and gold that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. Now, this is a dual prophecy, speaking of both his first and second coming.

He's going to come again suddenly as a thief in the night, but before that happens, the prophet said, God is going to purify his church. We are not ready for the coming of the Lord. Is this, is this the church triumphant, covetous, divorcing, depressed, worldly-minded, grasping for material things, preaching a gospel of prosperity, lukewarm, competitive, adulterous, rich and increased with goods, unaware of the nations, blind, briefly blind? No.

Is this the church, pleasure-loving, recreation-minded, consumed with sparks and politics and power? Is this the church simply coping, filled with fear and anxiety, satisfied only with health and happiness? My Bible said he's coming back for an overcoming church, with that spot, with that wrinkle, one whose affections are on things above and not on things of this world, with clean hands and pure hearts, people

are looking for his coming, a people with a new Jerusalem state of mind, a new Jerusalem state of mind.  
Please turn your tape over for the remainder of this message.

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