

# Losing the Anointing - Part 1 (High Quality)

by David Wilkerson

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*David Wilkerson discusses the importance of the anointing in ministry and the cost of losing it through complacency and neglect of spiritual disciplines.*

**Duration:** 29:15

**Scripture:** Psalm 32:5, Isaiah 61:1, Jeremiah 29:13, Matthew 16:24, Luke 9:23, Acts 3:19, 2 Corinthians 3:17, Philippians 3:10, James 4:8, 1 John 1:9

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Personal Relationship"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the freedom from guilt of the past through surrendering to God, trading shackles for a glorious song. It highlights the importance of seeking the anointing of God, the cost of maintaining it, and the need for a deep, personal relationship with God to experience His transformative power.

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## Transcript

I'm free from the guilt of the past. I trade my shackles for a glorious song. I'm free, praise the Lord, I'm free at last.

Thank God, sing again. I'm free from the guilt of Toronto. Free from the guilt of my past.

Free from the guilt of the past. I trade my shackles for a glorious song. I'm free, praise the Lord, I'm free at last.

So long, I had searched for my speed. Enslaved by the world and my greed. And the door of my prison was opened by God's love.

The ransom was paid, I'm free. I'm free from the guilt of tomorrow. I'm free from the guilt of the past.

I trade my shackles. I trade my shackles for a glorious song. I'm free, praise the Lord, I'm free at last.

Pastor Clendenin, thank you for entrusting your pulpit to me tonight. This man I've heard about for many, many years. He was on television years ago.

And just a few minutes, I think Oral Roberts may have been on at the time. A real pioneer. And everywhere I've gone around the world, I get asked, do you know Pastor Clendenin? He has stirred the devil's nest all over the world.

A modern Apostle Paul. And set an example. Brother Clendenin, not many of us left that don't have any better knowledge and just trust God.

And not college graduates. Not theologians. But just have enough guts and senseless random trust in God.

A radical trust in God. I had no idea your ministry was so widespread, dear brother. And we want to support you.

And I know this is one of the great hidden secrets in missions. It's a hidden secret. Not too many in the states know about it and should know about it.

And we pray that that will happen. Pastor Conlon is my pastor. And I was reading Philippians today.

And I read something that said, there it is. I was thinking about Pastor Carter. And Paul said to the Philippian church, he said, I'm sending you Timothy.

Because I have no one else like-minded who will naturally care for you. Out of his nature. When I first heard this man.

In fact, the way he came to New York City. Pastor of a small church up in Canada. A former police officer and the Lord got a hold of his life.

And at Times Square Church, I was in probably the hardest time of my ministry. Overwhelmed. And I was driving my car and said, God, you have to do something.

And the great prophet Leonard Ravenhill had given me two of his tapes a long time before. And I had thrown in my car with a bunch of other tapes. But on that day when I was crying out, the Lord said, get those tapes.

And by the way, I forgot, a day or so before, I had thrown all the tapes away but those two. From Pastor Carter. That pastor Leonard Ravenhill had given me said, you need to hear this young man.

And the Lord said, get it and put it on. I heard one tape and then I put on another. Halfway through the Lord said, call him.

I pulled off the car, off the road. There was a number on the tape. And I called.

Teresa answered. I said, would you please ask God if he would come and preach for me. He did.

And when he got up to preach, I said, that's a God-touched man. That's a man of God. And our hearts were one.

And now he pastors a church, I think about 8,000 or so. And four godly men raised up. He has wives and one.

Four godly preaching pastors. And he's my pastor. And I help him as much as I can.

The last five years I've been traveling and ministering to conferences. I'm not going to preach tonight. I'm one of the fathers.

The Lord said, you don't have many fathers. And when I was a young preacher, I'd go to conferences. And I said, I wish there were older men.

I wish they would tell me if they have any battles like I have. And I got to thinking, those men that have been used by God don't have problems. And I said, if I ever get a chance to preach to ministers, I'll bare my soul.

That's what Paul did. He kept telling his story over and over again. Timothy must have gotten weary.

I mean, same how God touched his life and what he went through. The temptations he went through. Shipwreck.

He just told the story over and over again. Even in prison and the pathos and all they went through. And I have good reason to open and bare my heart because of what I read Paul the Apostle.

I had four or five different messages. I thought I might preach. They were new messages.

But they just didn't fit. And when I came, I've been in all the services and sitting in the back. And the first night, the Lord said, just don't even think about a sermon.

These are great preachers. Bare your heart. Heavenly Father, you have to help me.

So that no self is glorified. But you would speak to hearts. Lord, if these are the days that we preach, they are.

If we believe these are the days that we see the fulfillment of the coming of the Lord. And judgment upon all that is unlike Christ. Then, Father, we have to get serious.

My God, will you speak. I ask for the touch of God. And I ask, Lord, that you speak.

Don't let anyone leave without being moved. Lord, I believe there are many that came and say, I'm discouraged. And I'm going to go hoping God will speak to me.

Hoping I will have a word. And you've done that, Lord. But again tonight, oh, Jesus, speak to me.

Sanctify me. Lord, I'm unworthy. But I thank you that you make us worthy to proclaim your word.

Surely this treasure in earth and vessels. Now speak clearly, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

I just want to talk to you about the cost of a fresh anointing. The cost. I have no theological definition of the anointing.

I really don't see any need to go in the Old Testament and tell you the roots of it. And what the anointing meant in the Old Testament. I say anointing because I believe it's something different in the New Testament.

Jesus said the Father anointed him to preach the gospel. I don't know how to describe it, but I know when I hear it. There's an old song about the anointing.

It says, when you hear it, you'll know it. There's a weightiness to it. The man, the woman who is truly anointed of God never jokes when he handles the word.

There's a weightiness. I'm amazed and shocked. I don't know who started it.

I don't know where it's come from. But now it's even in the assignments of God and the evangelicals to start every sermon with a joke. That's not the anointing.

I'm not going to talk about what it means other than. When I hear it, I know that it's a man or woman that's touched God. I know that I'm hearing something more than a man's heart.

I know that somebody who's been through difficulties and temptations and trials has gotten to the throne. And when I hear it, I'm convicted. When I hear it, I'm moved.

When I hear it, I know I'm driven to my knees. And there's such a weightiness about it that I can't ignore it. I have to deal with it.

I was called to preach when I was eight years old at a camp meeting. Now, some of you young men don't know what that is. We didn't have motels, hotels.

We didn't have fast food restaurants. Christians got together and cleared some land and put up some tents and a tabernacle. And preachers would come in and preach.

And it would be preaching all day and praying all day and half the night. And at eight years old, I went down to a camp meeting. My father was a preacher and grandfather.

And I knelt, and the Lord called me. For two or three hours, I was under the anointing. And I received a call to preach the gospel that I've never turned away from.

I was a teenage preacher. But I passed through the church when I was a young man, 21 to 28 years of age. I'm sorry, 22 or 23 until I was 28.

Little town in Pennsylvania, Phillipsburg. I preach to about 100 people. And it was a Pentecostal church.

And I was fired up and preaching Pentecost. But about two years, three years of it, there was something that began to bother me. Preaching that we had a full gospel.

And nobody was getting saved. I was preaching to the same people. They were satisfied if I married and buried and had fellowship with them.

And nothing changed. And there was something burning in my heart. Because at eight years old, he put a call to win souls in my heart.

I wanted to reach out to a whole world, even as a young preacher. And I said, this doesn't make sense. We claim to have the full gospel.

We claim to have something the Baptists don't have and others. And we claim the full gospel, and yet they're out in the streets. And we're sitting here.

And about the fifth year of this, I said, I can't handle this anymore. I said, God, there has to be more. Because I would come home and just sit and watch a lot of television, like cowboy movies and watch television.

But I said, oh, God, there has to be more. I can't live like this. If this is Pentecost, I don't want it.

I don't want anything to do with it. And the Lord said, do you mean that? And I said, yes. He said, all right, if you would just give me the time that you spend watching television, give me equal time.

In fact, I had to get rid of it because I didn't know how to handle it. And I began to pray. I began to seek God.

And I got my Bible, and I would go out in the woods. Parsons was on a hillside. And up on a hill, I would park.

And I told my wife, I said, anybody come, they can blow the horn, I'll come out in the woods. And I had a tree there, and I had my Bible. And I began to just swallow the word.

I began to absorb the word. It began to change me. It began to break me and melt me.

You see, God does not give the anointing to lazy preachers, lazy Christians. He won't do it. There's a cost to the anointing.

Describe it as you will. You'll know when you come to a place where God changes you. Where you will never again be satisfied as long as you live without seeing God at work in you and walking with you.

And you know that something's happening to you and every time you speak. And the Spirit of the Lord began to fall on me. Began to break until there was a weeping and a brokenness.

And the Lord said, start just walking the streets here in your little town. And I did, and God began to save a few souls. I remember the anointing when it came.

I'd go out in the woods and prophesy to the trees. Even when we had company, I used to fall on my face and just weep and cry. God used me.

I want to see a true Pentecost. I want to see God at work. I went to church one Sunday and I couldn't stand up.

I rolled under the seat. I thought it was a nervous breakdown at first because I couldn't stop trembling. I knew God was touching me.

I went home. But that was the week that I picked up a magazine and saw Seven Boys Who Indicted for Murder in New York. And the Holy Spirit said, this is what this is all about.

I've heard you cry. Now I'm going to anoint you. He said, go.

I went to meet those. I told about it in the cross and switchblade. And I went to try to get those boys.

Got thrown out of the trial. The Assemblies of God, actually, my father was Assembly of God, Assistant Superintendent of the Eastern District. And my dad said, what did you do? And then others said, you shamed the Assemblies of God.

I was dragged out of a courtroom. But I had seen trucks pull up, prison trucks pull up, and teenagers all chained together coming out, going into the prison there. I said, oh, God, who reads these? Folks, that was the beginning of Teen Challenge.

But I remember the anointing. I remember I would go to places. I remember going to a youth camp.

They asked me to speak. There was a famous evangelist. And they said, a young man from New York.

And I got up. And all I said was, you young people, and there were hundreds of young people, I said, all I said was, you're living in sin. You're playing games.

You're really not serving God. You're here. You're playing games.

You're making out. And I just backed away. And the glory came.

I mean, the power of God just swept over those kids and changed the whole meeting. Nobody got to preach. There was something of anointing.

I went to a Bible school, Assembly of God Bible school. During that time, and it was death, absolute death. They just sat there.

There was a reputation for such a fear of the Holy Spirit doing something, evidently. And I just got up and I said, the dead praise not the Lord, or they either go down into silence. I said, you're dead.

Get up and raise your hands. And the glory came. The spear of the Lord fell.

I knew it wasn't me. I had to back off and just watch what God was doing. And everywhere I went, there was an anointing.

There was something happening. Cross and Swiss Bay was written in the midst of that, all of those blessings. And I had to travel all over the United States.

The promoters got a hold of it, Christian promoters, and I traveled for, I think, two months, national television, radio television, and it went around the world, and I became what some would call famous. And I traveled in youth crusades. I traveled in conferences, youth crusades, all over, massive crusades, all over the United States and around the world for five or six years.

I traveled finally with two big half-million-dollar buses, bands, and massive meetings, but I started getting busy. Very busy, building organization. But you see, that took me away from prayer, took me away from the altar, took me away from this word.

And you see, I know what it's like to have the anointing, and I know when it's lifted. I know when I don't have it. I know when the death moves in.

I know when... I've had young preachers tell me that have been successful, even in the assembly of God, some of the most famous. One of them in particular said, I know how to move a crowd. I know how to turn on the tears.

I know how to move them. I know how to fall down. And folks, I got so busy.

Some of you are here right now, and I'm speaking into your heart and into your spirit because you have become too busy. Or something has taken you away from the prayer closet, and now you go to the book just to get sermons, and now, God bless your heart, you meditate. That there's no hunger, there's no brokenness, there's no cry.

When I go into the Scriptures, I look at men that God has used, and there's always been a cry. Jeremiah said, I engage my heart to seek the Lord. And you'll find that there was a cry.

You see, Jesus said, your spirit is willing, but your flesh is weak. And that flesh has to be brought under control. That flesh has to be dealt with.

There can be no anointing until the flesh is dealt with. You have to do, that is your part. You can't wait for the Holy Spirit to do that.

The Holy Spirit waits for you. He said, your flesh. Otherwise, you're going to sleep at Judgment Day.

You're going to be asleep when God has decided to move by His Spirit all over the world, and He needs you, He needs me. But He won't do it until we pay that price. All I've known since I was a young preacher, all my father and grandfather preached was pray and read your Bible.

There was nothing complicated about it. Get shut in with God. Seek the face of God.

I've known no other way. I've gone through all the Puritan books. I have Puritans.

I began to study and read books, and I got away from this book. You can get so involved in studying how to understand the Bible that you can get away from the Word of God. I remember what it was like to stand before crowds and be dead.

I stood, and when you get away from that, when you get in the flesh, when you get satisfied, everything goes out of divine order. Your home goes out of divine order. My home went out of divine order.

My staff disorder. Everywhere I turned was disorder, and I knew it. I knew it in my heart, and I knew that I was drifting, that I got caught up.

You say, how does that relate to me? I've never been famous. I would never face that kind of battle. But we all come to a time where we have to make a decision.

You settle down, and you pay your bills, and you get a house, and you get a car, and then you wind up like the pastor that came to me in Africa two weeks ago, pastored one of the largest churches in the nation, and he came to my table while I was eating, and he stands there just broken. He said, Brother Dave, I've got 5,000 people, and I've been playing games with God for seven years now. He said, I don't know him.

I've been satisfied because people are there, and everything is well, and I drive a Mercedes, and everything's fine, but he said, I'm dead inside. Where's that effect? There is nothing worse that I can think of for a man of God or a woman of God than to lose the anointing of God and be dead and have the knowledge that something is wrong. It was in the middle of that time.

I remember the last days of that terrible time the anointing had lifted, and I was going through the motions still preaching to crowds, and after I preached, go back in a room and say, God, I can't go anymore like this. This is not the anointing. This is not what I knew.

How did I get away, and how do I get back? I was known around the world as a man of God, and yet growing lukewarm and cold in my heart that every kind of temptation out of hell. The devil's saying, I'm going to destroy you. I'm going to kill your minister.

I'm taking you down. I was in the middle of that, coming to the end of that period, and I was out in Long Island in the arena, 5,000 people, and they had gathered up young people from all over Long Island, pastors and youth pastors that brought them in, and I didn't know. You see, when you don't have this

touch, this anointing, and if you're not shut in with God, and you're not serious about the things of God, and you're happy with the status quo, or you have this inner struggle, how do I get back? How do I get this anointing? How do I? Are you even asking these questions? Are you even concerned? Are you sitting here tonight and asking? Are you examining your heart like I had to do? It's not enough to be calm.

I was still calm. God still loved me. He bore with me.

Such patience. And I got up that night, and I missed God completely. I preached on marriage.

My marriage at the time was being tested. I got up. It was the deadest thing I've ever done.

I went back. I knew it. I got back on my private bus, and here come the young preachers.

What's wrong with you? We got young people brought in here. They're drug addicts and all these, and you preached on marriage. You missed God.

I finally got so angry, I shut the door of my bus and said, I don't want to talk to anybody. It was shortly after that when I went home. I was ready to quit.

Not the ministry, but that phase of it. And I remember so clearly saying, God, there was one meeting I couldn't cancel. I said, I'll go to this.

Before we left the campus at our home base in East Texas, Brother Ravenhill came. Great prophet of God. He handed me a book this thick, 1,200 pages, Christian in Complete Armor by Puritan, written 300 years ago.

He said, God told me to give this to you. Read it now. I got on my bus, went back to my private room, threw it on the couch, said, who wants to read a dead man, 300 years ago, 1,200 pages? I just threw it on my, so discouraged.

I wasn't 20 miles down the road. And Lord said, go back in your room and read it. I didn't go 20 pages until I was stricken, totally stricken by the Holy Spirit.

I said, God, I don't know you. I don't know you. The word began to tug and pull at my heart.

You know, sometimes I think I'm too vulnerable. I sometimes feel that I should not bear my soul like this. You see, this is the last time.

There won't be many meetings like this. There will not be many times that God's able to speak so clearly to us and convict. And I don't care the cost anymore.

I'm 75 and I have nothing left to prove to anybody. Nothing. I want the anointing.

I shut my minister down for a year. You can't do that. Nobody can shut it down, but you can't shut yourself down.

You can deal with your own self. And I got back to seeking the face of God. I got back into the word of God and put my books aside and all the Puritans and all the theology books because I thought I didn't have a Bible school education.

I need to get educated. That's fine. I still, there are times after I've completed my study of the word that I refer to these dear men of God.

But the Holy Spirit came back, healed my marriage, healed my staff.

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