

Thou Hast Set My Feet in a Large Place

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing distress as a divine setup for spiritual growth and reliance on God.

Duration: 54:16

Scripture: Psalm 18:19, Psalm 31:7-8, Psalm 40:2, Psalm 66:12, Psalm 118:5-6, Psalm 127:2, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Gods Presence", "Spiritual Hope"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by referencing Isaiah 4 and Psalms 42, focusing on the theme of finding hope and help in God's presence. He encourages the congregation to reflect on their own personal experiences of God's faithfulness and deliverance in times of trial. The preacher then reads from Psalms 31, highlighting the psalmist's distress and blaming his past sins for his current suffering. The sermon concludes with a story about a young man who denies his illness, illustrating the concept of numbing oneself to reality.

Transcript

He set my feet in a large place. He set my feet in a large place. I want to show it to you.

Psalms 31, just lay it open on your lap there if you will and I'll, we're gonna pray and ask the Lord to bless our hearts this morning. Not going to yell at you. I'm not going to play the part of an evangelist this morning, just as a pastor with a heart of love for you and I know he's prepared something for you.

Heavenly Father, we need the Holy Spirit this morning to quicken the word to our hearts. Lord, we thank you for repentance. We thank you for the holiness you've called us to and Lord, you also have called us to the kindness of God, the mercy of God, the goodness of God and that's what is supposed to lead us to repentance.

That the goodness of the Lord should lead us to repentance. Lord, we've heard of your goodness and your wrath. We've heard of it all here Lord from this pulpit.

And Jesus said there are some who act like little children. They won't answer to those who mourn. They won't answer to those who dance.

They're like children in the marketplace. Lord, there are some that may not have responded to any other message and if they're not responding to this kind of message, Lord, there will not be a response. So Lord,

we pray right now that you would quicken my mind and my voice.

There are those here this morning that you have brought to hear this message. Lord, it's nothing special, just a simple little word from heaven, but it's encouraged my heart and I want you to encourage those who've gathered this morning. There are some here Lord that have been hurt.

They just don't understand what's happening. They've not been hurt by the word but by conditions that have been cast upon them. There are things they don't understand that are happening in their life.

They love you, but they can't understand the condition that's been thrust upon them. We pray that you'll give us an understanding of that this morning in Jesus' name. Amen.

I want you to start. I'm going to read 31 verse 7 and 8. 7 and 8. I will rejoice, and I'm reading from the New American Standard, I will rejoice and be glad in thy loving kindness, because thou hast seen my affliction, thou hast known the troubles of my soul, thou hast not given me over to the hand of the enemy. And here's my message.

Thou hast set my feet, what, in a large place. In a large place. Turn to Psalm 118 if you will.

I'm going to show you the emphasis David gives to this. 118 verses 5 and 6. You're going to see it again. And just to show you that David's putting an emphasis on this.

Psalm 118, 5 and 6. From my distress I called upon the Lord, the Lord answered me, and what did he do? He set me in a large place. The Lord is for me, I will not fear. What can man do to me? Alright.

I'll tell you what, go back to 31 and just leave it open there because I'm going to refer to Psalms 31 quite a bit in the course of the sharing this morning. Okay, look this way if you will. Large place in Hebrew is a root word called rakab and it means a place of roominess in which to grow.

It's a place of expansion, it's a place to go wide and deep and high, the scripture says. And that's actually the definition of this word large place. Roominess, a place to go wide and large.

It's a place to be opened up, a wide expanse in which to grow. That's the Hebrew definition, that's what the word means, that's what David said, God has set me in a place in which to grow. A wide expanse to grow wide and tall.

To grow in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, to grow up in Christ. Now really it's a message of encouragement. The Holy Spirit is trying to reveal to me a glorious truth in it at least.

The truth is what we perceive sometimes to be a narrow place in which He's put us, a place of suffering, we misinterpret it entirely. I've misinterpreted many things that have happened in my life and I thought I was not the Christian I should be. I thought it was a result of sin in my life and I'd be thrust into a situation that David describes here.

And really David says, the Lord set me here. And I want to show you where the Lord set him, what kind of a place this is, this large place. See, Gethsemane was a large place.

The lion's den was a large place. The furnace, the fiery furnace was a large place. These were places in which to grow.

Christ was really in a place to grow. He was coming into the Godhead. He was God in the flesh, but He was going to be a man glorified.

He was going to take His place before the Father as our intercessor. And what a place of growth He was in. Now let's look at this.

I don't think the large place is what most preachers are describing it to be today. To most of us, and this is the theology that's being preached today, the large place is a place of prosperity. It's a place without pain.

It's a place without suffering. Do you meet people like that, that seem to have it all figured out? It's almost as if they say, poor you, if you only knew how to figure this thing out like I have. You know, I've actually met Christians recently who have said, I don't allow suffering in my life.

I just refuse everything negative. I wish they could just spend one day with me reading my mail. I don't want anything to do with that kind of Buddhism.

And it's nihilism and it's Buddhism. What it is, it ignores reality. It absolutely ignores reality.

There was a young man just recently, in fact I got a call about it last night. He was in a Bible school on the East Coast and he had a terrible, terrible cold. So much so that he would not even use a handkerchief.

And you can imagine the scene, I won't even try to describe it to you. He ran around like that all day long. And anyone said, hey, take this handkerchief and use it.

He said, I deny I have a cold. I deny that I'm suffering. It's a place the Buddhists call nirvina.

It's a place where you just dull everything out. I just don't allow it. I don't want anything to do with that because I want to face the reality that's in this world, the reality that I'm in, in a place that God has set me.

Now, I'm not going to put you down if that's what you believe, but that's not a place of growth. If you'll read the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. Now if you're not mourning, you're not going to get comfort.

He said, those who are mourned get the comfort. Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. And boy, you read that whole Sermon on the Mount and Jesus meets you at a place of need.

If you have no place of need, you have no place of comfort. You don't even need the Holy Ghost. You don't need guidance.

You don't need anything. You have it. You have a little concept in your mind that if you would just ignore it, it will go away.

And then the problem with that is the kind of problem a minister brought to me recently. He was in a theology that taught that if you had the right faith, you could actually not die. You could live forever.

And he was in a circle of about five preachers preaching that, and the leader of this died recently. And that man's still in a tailspin. I hope he comes out.

He's become totally vulnerable to every lie of the enemy now, because suddenly it's all gone. Everything that he stood for. Let's look at this verse 8 and 9. What kind of a place is the large place? Verse 9 says, Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in what? Well, he just said he's in a large place, and God set him there.

Where did the Lord put him? In a place of distress. Now, the Lord didn't do it. He allowed it.

He permitted it. A place of distress. Go on.

My eye is wasted away from grief, my soul and my body also, for my life is spent with sorrow and my years with sighing. My strength is failed because of my iniquity. He's in a situation now and he's blaming his past sins.

He's saying, look what I'm going through. I'm suffering. And oh, my brother, sister, there are some things that come back on us.

Oh, yes, they do. Because of my iniquity, my body has wasted away, because all my adversaries, I've become a reproach, especially to my neighbors. And I'm an object of dread to my acquaintances.

Those who see me in the street flee from me. I'm forgotten as a dead man out of mind. I'm like a broken vessel.

I'm like, he's in a large place now, isn't he? And I'm like a broken vessel, for I've heard the slander of many terrors on every side while they took counsel together against me. They schemed to take away my life. We're talking about a large place now.

And I can hear an echo from some of you right now in your soul in the innermost. You say, Brother Dave, I can feel what David's talking about right now. Now the amazing thing is that David, if you'll look at Psalms 39, he says he's in distress in verse 10.

His life is spent with sorrow. Strength has failed because of his iniquity. My body is wasted away.

There's a feeling of deadness in David. There's a physical weakness. There's a sorrow.

There's a sighing. He said, I feel like a broken vessel. What kind of large place could that be? Psalms 18.6. I want to show you something before I describe this.

Psalms 18.6. Psalms 18.6. In my distress, I'm in distress. I'm in distress. I'm in distress.

In my distress, I called upon the Lord and cried to my God for help. He heard my voice out of his temple and my cry for help before him came into his ears. I don't think we realize that God permits this distress, that we can do just that.

We learn to call upon him. We learn, we gain a history with the Lord. Look at me please for just a minute.

I thank God for one thing that I have with the Lord. I have a history. Some of you don't have a history with God.

You've not been in the test. You've not been in the trial. You've tried to ignore it and you haven't understood why God has brought you into this large place to bring growth into your life.

But I thank God that there's a history being developed and so that the next trial that comes along, I've been through that and I've proven my God faithful. In my distress, David said, David had distress to his dying day, but I've learned to call on the name of the Lord and I've called on God and he's proven himself faithful in my distresses. I thank God for those distresses that have come into my life now because I've proven him faithful time and time again.

And you can go right through if you look at Psalms 16, the same one, go to 16 verse there, look at 16. He sent from on high, he took me, he drew me out of many waters. He delivered me from my strong enemy and from those who hated me for they were too mighty for me.

They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my stay. He brought me forth also into a broad place. And that's the same Hebrew word as a large place.

Very same room. He brought me forth into a very broad place. He rescued me because he delighted in me.

He rescued me because he delighted. But I want you to look at that verse 18. They confronted me in the day of my calamity.

Who's they? The enemy confronted me in the day of calamity. I had a confrontation with the devil in all the pits of hell and God delivered me. They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my stay.

He brought me forth also into a broad place. That's that large place and rescued me because he delighted in me. He rescued me by putting me into this large place.

He rescues us by putting us in a place where we grow. The potential to grow. Now this doesn't mean you will grow.

It's only that he plants you in a soil that's conducive to growth, that should produce growth, but in that place you can rebel against God. You can certainly rebel. David shows clearly that God sets us in a large place after we start hungering and thirsting after him.

You go to Psalms 42 and it's very clear in Psalms 42. I was reading this yesterday and it really blessed my heart. I hope this will bless your heart now we look at it for just a minute here.

Psalms 42 and look at verse 1 to 3 now. I think this describes many of you. You've been listening to Bob preach for this past year.

I know it describes my heart. Verses 1 to 3 describes exactly what I feel in my heart. As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for thee, O God.

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food night and day, while they say to me all day long, where is your God? David said there's not a deer on any mountain in Israel that's panting after water more than I pant after God. He said I am the most gut-hungry man on the face of this earth.

I'm so thirsty for God. I want him with everything that's in me. David wanted to live in holiness.

He wanted to walk in repentance before God. And you look at that for just a minute. Yet in spite of all of his spiritual hunger, his deep searchings after God, something very strange happens to him.

And it starts in verse 5. Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him for the help of his presence. What happens to David? He said, why am I disturbed? Why is there this strange disturbance in my heart? Despair had gripped him. He cries out, O my God, my soul is in despair within me.

And he couldn't understand what was happening to him. Look at 42.11 there. Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him for the help of my countenance and my God.

If you go to 43, look at 43 verse 5. Again, why are you in despair, O my soul? Why are you disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him. The despair here in Hebrew is a root word. It's called shashach.

And it means to crouch down, to be bowed down, brought low, almost to a point of collapse. Almost to a point of collapse. You know, don't you imagine that David is beginning to wonder right now, what kind of a Christian am I? What kind of a believer am I? That I should, after hungering and thirsting after God, end up with this disturbance in me that I can't explain.

It's something I can't put my finger on. And I'll tell you why I relate to this. After I wrote the book, this prophetic book, set the trumpet to your mouth.

A month later, I related to this. Never in my life have I wanted God more. Never have I cried out more.

I've been thirsty and hungry. Just like Bob was telling me the other night, we were talking on the phone, how he's been crying at night, O God, I want your holiness, I want your righteousness. And then to wind up in a place of dryness and an inner disturbance that you can't explain.

You can't put your finger on it. There's no reason for it. There's a distress.

There's a sense that I'll never make it. I can't live up to this thing. Some of you sit here and you listen to Bob preach and it goes through your mind, will I ever be able to reach that place in God? And you place a burden on yourself, simply because you're not learning to trust Him and walk with Him.

But I can take you in my library and I'll show you great men of God and their life stories. And they talk about this black night of the soul. They talk about this disturbance in the heart.

They talk about this after seeking God. It's not a result of sin. It's not a result of adultery, fornication.

It's not a result of getting hard against God. It becomes difficult to pray. It becomes difficult to read the Bible.

And you begin to run around because there's something inside. You know God by His Spirit's magnetically pulling you to Himself. And deep in your heart you want Him.

And I know I'm talking to some of you this morning that have been sitting in these meetings. You're so hungry for God. You say, Brother David, it's not that I want to go out and sin.

I don't want to turn back the way I was before. But I'm not making progress. I've got a disturbance in me.

I'm in distress. I've got a troubled mind and I can't explain to you why. Well, you go back to the Word.

You start reading what David said. Like a deer that pants, the water brooks my soul pants for the old God. And in the same chapter, why are you in despair, O my soul? Why have you become disturbed within me? Now, this is what I really felt the Holy Spirit press upon me.

And last night He really gave me, I'm really not a pastor. I'm an evangelist. But He gave me a pastor's heart.

I'm not talking only to my staff, but I'm talking to those that have been coming to these meetings. I want you to realize that that situation that we're describing here right now, that disturbance of the mind, that inner despair. And remember what the word despair says here.

I'm going to go over it again. It's the root word, shashach, in Hebrew means to crouch down, to be bowed down, to be brought very low, almost to the point of collapse. A few of you have enough boldness to just kind of nod at me.

Because if you're not there now, you've been there. If you've not been there, you'll get there. Now, this is not normal Christianity, of course.

That's not where you live. These are experiences of growth. Now, how you respond at that time is so very important.

How you respond when that troubling of the soul, that waters inside become troubled. You're going to say, well, the Lord's forsaken me. That's one option.

Or I'm unclean and this is a result of sin and God's just turned His back on me and now I am on my own and maybe when I get back to the point of repentance, God's Spirit will move in me once again and lift this burden from me. You see, God's allowed you to go into a large place. He's set you in a large place.

He's drawing you. He's drawing something out of you. He's trying to get you to a point where you'll trust Him, where you'll lean on Him.

He's shown you the utter helplessness of the flesh. There are some of you have the Holy Ghost in you but you will not rely on Him. You keep trying to lay down at night and figure things out.

How many hours do you spend trying to figure it out rather than just lay back on Him? I was talking to Brother Bob about some of the things that I've gone through, how we test the Lord. I couldn't sleep the other night. There were so many things in my mind, this disturbance that David's talking about.

I can't name any hidden sin. I can't name any flaunted sin in my life. I'm under the blood and I'm walking in covenant with the Lord.

I've never loved Him more and I love Him now. But I'm still in that place right now. I'm speaking to you in a place of disturbance of my mind and my soul.

It has nothing to do with my salvation. I'm secure in the Lord. I'm under the blood.

I love Him. But God's trying to create something. He's trying to bring something out of me.

He's trying to make me grow. First place, He's trying to get me to love people more by showing me the weakness of my own flesh so that I won't judge other people but look in my own heart and see my own battles and when I see my own battles, be more patient with other people in their battles. Amen? But I couldn't sleep and so I started quoting that scripture, He giveth His beloved sleep.

And I kept quoting it for an hour and I said, Lord I believe that. You're going to give me sleep? But my mind kept turning and after the second hour, He giveth His beloved sleep. Lord, when are you going to do it? About the third hour, He giveth His beloved sleep.

I sat up and bid. I claimed that in Jesus' name. He giveth His beloved sleep.

And I tried every game, counted every sheep. I did everything trying to get to sleep. And I said, Lord why aren't you keeping your word? I never did get to sleep.

I didn't sleep a wink. Seven thirty I got up and said, well Lord you didn't keep your word. And Lord said, is that the test? In other words, if I had let you sleep you'd believe me but I didn't, you don't trust my word now? You going to test me? Are you going to love me anyhow? I said, my word's faithful but I'm not going to let you test me like that.

I'm not going to let you put me to the test. That's unscriptural. And sometimes we claim all these scriptures just to see if God's going to keep His word.

And we put Him to the test. And look how we pout when it doesn't happen. We don't blame God, we blame ourselves.

But in blaming ourselves we're blaming God. You know, it says in Scripture when He was threatened, He never threatened back. Jesus never once threatened the Father.

I don't want to threaten God. But this despair, some of you are in it right now. Let me tell you, the Garden of Eden was not a place of growth.

Garden of Eden, you'd say, that should be a place of growth. They had everything that should be conducive to growth. No, the Garden of Eden was a place of failure.

The Garden of Eden was a place of failure. That's why all of this ease and prosperity, this Garden of Eden concept is not a place of growth. The fire furnace was.

The lion's den was. The Garden of Gethsemane was but the Garden of Eden was not a place of growth. It was a place of failure.

I'll tell you where there is a place of growth. It's at the Red Sea when the enemy is coming down on them and they learn to trust God. That's the place of growth.

When there's a confrontation, just like I read here, the enemy, in my affliction, the enemy confronted me. In that place of confrontation, that's when God begins to show us the growth. Hallelujah.

Go back with me to Psalms 42 for just a minute. I told you this is nothing supernatural, just a simple little thought. I don't know where it's going to go or end, but I think the Lord is ministering to me.

And hopefully he'll minister to you this morning. Psalms 42, 5. Look at that again with me if you will please. Why do you despair, O my soul, and why have you become disturbed within me, hoping God for I shall yet praise him for the help of his presence.

The help of his presence. Hallelujah. How many of you have a tested, tried history with the Lord like Daniel had when he came out of the lion's den? How many of you have a tested, tried history with God when you

could come out like, you know the Hebrew children come out of that fire furnace and said, he was there.

I met him in the furnace. They didn't meet him on this side of the furnace door. They met him on the inside of the furnace door, didn't they? There was a fourth man in there.

It was Jesus Christ, Christophany. It was a real appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ who came and revealed his presence in that hard place. That's where Christ reveals himself to me.

In fact, he's revealing himself to me in even a more precious way when it seems like the heavens are closed and I'm not hearing that still small voice where he's saying, will you believe what I've written to you? Will you trust this? Will you really trust this this morning? Do you trust that what you're going through now, he has a word for you here? And it drives you to that. And there's a help that comes from his presence, a revelation of his presence. The Bible says, I think it's in 1 Peter, the 5th chapter, 11th verse, that he is full of compassion and he is merciful.

The compassionate and merciful Lord. I want you to go with me, if you will please, to John 14 for a moment. Just in the New Testament, John.

John 14, 16, and I will ask the Father, and he'll give you another what? Helper. You know, I've seen that so many times. And now when the Holy Ghost is really dealing with me about acknowledging him in my life, I begin to really come to grips with it.

And I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper and he will be with you forever. Look at verse 26. But the helper, isn't that glad he's a helper? But the helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and he will bring to remembrance all that I've said to you.

My point is that the Holy Ghost is a helper in time of need. And we do not come to grips with that. We turn to our friends, we pick up the telephone.

How many of you, when you're suffering, when he's put you in this large room and he's trying to produce growth, you won't go to him. We don't run to him in confidence and faith and say, I'll put my hope and my stay and my trust in him and believe that he'll bring me out to a place of growth. Instead, we pout, we fret, we get on the telephone, we run to friends and we will not trust the Holy Ghost who abides.

And we ignore him, we do not acknowledge him. God permits these difficult times. Go to Hebrews if you will, please.

Hebrews the fourth chapter and verse 15 and 16, Hebrews 4. Hebrews 4, 15 and 16. For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses. Do you believe that's in your Bible? Come on, take another look at it.

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Now, that does not mean at all that God hangs around sympathetic to your sins and weaknesses of the flesh.

No, it goes deeper than that. He's talking about this large room that he places in this distress that you find yourself in. And the Lord's been there when he's in the garden of Gethsemane.

I preached a message about years ago. And what Jesus faced in that garden was a night of confusion. A night of confusion, an hour of darkness, and a cup of pain.

And that's what goes into the making of a man or woman of God. A night of confusion. When you cry out, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why is my soul disturbed? Why this disquietness within me? A night of confusion, Lord, where are you? And a cup of pain.

Nobody can describe your cup of pain. I'm amazed that people can come to church and put on a front and hide it. But we all have our own unique kind of pain.

The Lord taught me a long time ago, but those are the things, those are the ingredients that go into the making of a man of God. That if we respond unto that in total confidence and trust and rest in Him, that He'll bring us out. And if we'll say, Thy will be done, O Lord, begin to trust Him with all of our hearts and put our stay on Him.

And the time will finally come when you won't hear a voice. The voices will all be silent. You'll go almost to, sometimes you go to this Word of God and it seems like brass and the heavens are brass.

You have nothing left but your confidence and faith in Him and you stay on the Lord. And what do you do when the voices are not heard? What do you do when the soul is disturbed? When you know your heart is hungry for God. You'll let the accuser come in and say, sinful, unclean, give up.

And I've always said the most important move you make is the move after you fail. When the devil comes in and says, you're no good, you're filthy, you have lied to the Holy Ghost, you'll never make it. You're a second class Christian, you're a second class believer, give up, you'll never make it.

Everybody's bypassing, everybody's growing. Look at Bibles, they are growing, they're talking about their growth and here you are, you're not growing, you're just down here, you'll never make it. That's the most important time in your life when you deny the enemy and say, in Jesus' name, I rise by faith, I reject the lies of the Holy Ghost, I hate my sin and rise above it.

And move on in the Lord. You don't stay down, you rise up in Jesus' name. Hallelujah.

This large place is not only a place of growth, it's a place of God's presence, where His presence is revealed. I don't know about you, but the Lord always reveals His presence most to me when I'm in need. We have a tendency when everything's going wrong to just kind of neglect Him.

We neglect our prayer life. But He's been most precious to me in the past few weeks when I haven't felt much like interceding. And my wife would come and say, David, why aren't you in the upper room? I said, honey, I don't feel it.

And I know I'm not supposed to live by feelings. And I walk through my house and I go through the duties and take my telephone calls sensing that I have the greatest love for Him I've ever had in my life and that I'm being tested, I'm being tried. For some reason or another, I'm in a place of growth.

And I'm not afraid. I'm not afraid. You say, well, if you prayed that God give you new revelation of His love, if you prayed for a greater revelation of His presence in your life and you want the Word revealed to you, certainly you'd have a weeping spirit, you'd have the joy of the Lord just flowing in your heart, you'd be on the mountaintop.

If I had the time this morning, I'd take you through the lives of all the men of God in this book. In the very moment they started to hunger and thirst for God and give everything to them, that's when the confrontation came. That's when they were placed, their feet were set, they were planted in a large place, a broad room.

And that was a place of despair, of tribulation, of trial. And I know I'm talking to somebody right now, you say, Brother Wilkerson, you know me, you can see me when I'm in the services here. You've heard my testimony, how I love the Lord and how I want Him.

Why am I being tested like Him? Why are all these pressures being put on me right now? Why am I going through this? Why is God allowing this in my life? Hallelujah. Don't despair, child of God. He's allowed you to be placed in a large room because He's bringing growth to you.

If you'll just see that this morning, I want somehow God to take the blinders off of our eyes and say, hey, look, the devil's not harassing me. Now he can if you allow, if you give in to that and say, well, the Lord's given up on me. No, He's not given up on you.

And I'm going to show that to you in just a minute. He's not given up on you at all. Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

That's what God has to extract out of us, this kind of confidence in Him. That if you do not see an answer to prayer, if you see no miracle, and I'm afraid that's what's happening in America now in our churches. We're beginning to trust God.

We're like those ones who came to Jesus and said, show us a sign that we might believe on you. Jesus never performed a miracle to get people to believe on Him. It's not why Jesus performed miracles.

It was to get them to believe His Word. So that when He was gone, they still had His Word. How many Christians are there here this morning that if you never saw another answer to prayer, though God answers prayer and you know it, you never heard another still small voice, and you didn't have that exuberance that you like to have, would you still love Him and trust Him with all your heart? The time is coming, folks, of utter darkness on the face of this earth, tribulation and trial, and a real time of tribulation like the world has never seen.

And many, many of us are going to suffer. There's got to be a history with God during that time. I've been here before, and God's been faithful to me.

God has seen me through. And I want to tell you something. Some of you are weighted down with the burden of your sin.

There's something you've tried to lay down. You've heard me preach. You've heard Bob preach.

And there's something God's been trying to put His finger on in your life. And you went on and on, and God dealt with you, and you didn't lay it down. It's got so big in your life, you've given up.

You've given up. And I know that. I can sense it.

But you know, even though Israel failed God, though Israel sinned and sinned before Him, He had such an everlasting compassion, He didn't give up. Now, if you can convince yourself that God hates your sin, He'll

not put up with it. But you've not come to the end of it yet.

You've not come to the end of His mercy and His grace. And He's still reaching. He's still reaching in love to you.

There's some people who've been brought here this morning. I recall about some who've been living in sin. How many prisoners came to me? How many drug addicts? How many alcoholics? How many prostitutes over the years said, Brother Dave, I cried at night.

I called on the Lord, and I hated my sin, but I couldn't get deliverance. And then they felt that God had become their enemy. That God was no longer at work in them.

The Holy Ghost was no longer convicting in their lives. And yet I've seen no end of His patience and His long-suffering and His care. And He's calling you again, even though you may have turned Him down a thousand times.

You can go to the Jerry McCauley Mission in New York City, in Brooklyn. Jerry McCauley backslid 99 times. It was the 100th time that he came to Christ that he really dealt with reality and laid his sin down.

And he raised up the great Jerry McCauley Mission. It's won thousands and been there for years. It's still existing today.

Let's not suggest that you backslide and go up and down and get hot and cold. I'm going to go back to Psalms 31 for just a moment. Psalms 31.

Look at this. Psalm 31, verse 21. Blessed be the Lord, for He has made marvelous His loving-kindness to me in what? In a besieged city.

Strong city, yes. Besieged city. That word besieged in Hebrew means surrounded by my enemies and all bound up.

You know what he's saying there? The Lord showed me His marvelous kindness in a place where I have been all bound up. I've been surrounded by enemies. He showed me His marvelous loving-kindness at that very point.

Hallelujah. And God's going to show His marvelous kindness to some of you even now before the service is over. At your point of confrontation with the enemy.

At the point where you say, sometimes, Brother Dave, I feel like it doesn't pay to serve God. Have you ever said that? Oh, come on now. When you say, Brother Dave, I've been praying, all I ask God is for some evidence that He's answering prayer.

I heard one woman, I read a letter from one woman, she said, Brother Wilkson, I've been fasting and praying for five years about something and all I want is one little evidence that God's hearing me. If He'd just show me a little evidence, anything. But the heavens seemed so silent to me.

Of course, that's wrong. That's back to testing God. But he said, He's made marvelous His loving-kindness to me in a besieged city.

As for me, I said in my alarm, I'm cut off from before thine eyes. See, that's what David said when he was brought into this large place. God's put me here to cut me off.

I said in my alarm, I'm cut off from before thine eyes. Nevertheless, thou didst hear the voice of my supplication when I cried to thee. Would you mind turning over to Psalms 106 for just a minute? I've got just two more verses I want to share with you here.

Verse 7 and 8 from 106, Our fathers in Egypt did not understand thy wonders. They did not remember thy abundant kindnesses. They rebelled at the Red Sea.

Nevertheless, He saved them for the sake of His name that He might make His power known. What does it say? They rebelled at the Red Sea. Nevertheless, He saved them for the sake of His name that He might make His power known.

Would you look at verse 13? They quickly forgot His works. They did not wait for His counsel. How quickly we forget.

Isn't that true? How quickly like Israel we forget. All the blessings of God and all the times He's met us. Then He takes us into this large room and we say like David in our alarm, God's set me here to forget me.

I want you to go to one last verse with me if you will please in Psalms 56. Before I read that, look this way if you will for just a moment. I'm going to ask the Holy Spirit now to bring this home to us.

Sometimes I think preachers are too vulnerable. They get up and do their dirty wash in public and I'm not trying to just be vulnerable in front of you. I think sometimes we take that too far.

But then on the other hand, I'm human just like you. All preachers are human. And I think sometimes preachers are tested as much or more than laity.

I'm tested most of all when I think I have it all figured out and I've got God figured out and I've got a theology all figured out and I've got formulas all figured out and then God blows them all up. Then I'm driven right back to just confidence in His Word. But I'll tell you something, you know what holds me? It holds me now.

It's going to hold me until Jesus comes. I know with every ounce in me that God's for me. That God's on my side.

That God's not my enemy. I want to read that to you. Let's start verse 8 and go down to 13.

Psalms 56. Thou hast taken account of my wonderings. You put my tears in thy bottle.

Are they not in thy book? Has God forgotten a single tear you've shed? No, no, no. Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call. This I know.

What? God's for me. Hallelujah. In God whose word I praise.

In the Lord whose word I praise. In God I put my trust. I shall not be afraid what man can do to me.

Thy vows are binding upon me, O God. I'll render thanksgiving to thee. That's what God's trying to produce.

That kind of growth. To bring us to that place we're convinced that God's with us. He's with us.

He allowed us to be placed in this large room to produce this very thing in us. Thy vows are binding upon me, O God. I will render thanksgiving to thee for thou hast delivered my soul from death and did my feet from stumbling so that I may walk before God in the light of the living.

Bob's been preaching that come to the light, come to the light. And there you see it again. That I may walk in the light of the living.

That I'll keep coming to the light. Hallelujah. Now look at me for just a minute.

Are you convinced in your mind this morning that God is for you? He's not your enemy. I'll say it again. God is not your enemy.

He said while you were still in rebellion He loved you. I'm going to obey the Lord right now. I feel a stream of prophetic word in my heart right now.

There are some of you here right now. God help me to say it right and put your finger on it right now and do it in love. There are some of you here right now that are disturbed, disquieted within and you've been wondering why God has not yet broken you.

You've wondered why you're not in the place you want to be. You wonder why God's permitting some of the things in your life. And you're not mad at God.

It's just that you don't understand. And you're disturbed. And I'll say it again.

You don't want to walk away from Him. It's not that you want to backslide. But you don't know how to break through.

You don't know how to reach Him. You don't understand what's happening to you. And I'm trying to tell you what's happening to you right now.

God's trying to produce some growth in you. He's trying to tell you I want you to learn to stay on Me and trust Me. I'm trying to bring you into the light.

I'm trying to show you that if you just walk with Me and lay your sin down, just lay it down and ride out the storm. Just ride it out. What happened when the boat was wrecked? They all grabbed a piece of wood and hung on.

And the Lord brought them to shore. Get a hold of the Word this morning and just hang on. Hallelujah! God is faithful because He's for you.

And if God be for me, who can be against me? Now, you're going to let that discouragement destroy you if you're not careful. That discouragement can destroy you. That large room that He's placed you in, that disquietness of heart can turn to rebellion.

Don't let it turn to rebellion. Say, Jesus, I don't understand this, but I love You. Jesus, my heart's disturbed, but hold me.

Don't let me go back to what I was. And believe it or not, if you can see that, you're already growing. You're making progress.

If you're sitting here right now and say, Jesus, I know in my heart I love You. I feel Your love. Listen, if you and I had any concept of His love for us this morning, even though we are not worthy of it, even though we have trampled Him and we've done things that are disgusting in the sight of God and to ourselves, God says, I'm for you.

I can't get over that this morning. I can't get over that. God is for me.

He loves me. Hallelujah. I come against that discouragement in you this morning in the name of the Lord.

Not just to cast it out. I don't think there's any man that can cast discouragement out of you. Now, from the spirit of the enemy, the spirit goes, and if that's what's causing it, fine.

But not when God's put you in a large room and He's trying to produce growth in you. He's going to bring you to a place where you're not going to live by your feelings anymore, but by your faith and absolute confidence in God that He's for you, that He loves you. I tried to pray the other day.

I'd get up and walk around the prairie, and all I could hear was the Lord saying, David, I'm for you. You don't have to prove anything to me. It's not your hours in prayer that merit anything for me.

You love me. You trust me. I said, yes, Lord.

Just hang on. Learn through the day just to trust me now. Just trust me.

And I find myself praying all day now. And it's a prayer of trust. All day long, I said, Lord, I wish I could cry, but I can't cry.

No tears left. I wish I could set us up on some great mountain, but Lord, my soul's disturbed. But I love you, and I know you're for me.

I'm going to ride this out, and when I come to the other end of that, and when suddenly the joy begins to flood my... Oh, I've got joy. The Bible said, even, David said, even in, or the writer of Proverbs said, even in laughter there's grief. Even in laughter there's grief.

I don't like some of the shallow laughter, I say, because there's a lot of grief behind it. And I don't know why God put this in my heart. Perhaps there'll be a few of you come up later and say, well, listen, I know why God put that in your heart.

And I feel very inadequate this morning, because I'm not a teacher. I'm an evangelist, and I like to thunder. If you've ever been in my meetings, you know what I'm talking about.

If you'd been at the Women's Aglow in California, you'd know what I'm talking about. But there comes a time God just wants to bring a simple little word of encouragement to us. And I would endeavor to guess that about half of us are there right now.

The point, you've never loved Him more. Keep loving Him. Heavenly Father, you're so precious.

And Lord, I think what you're trying to tell me is that I need to love people more. I need more grace and more mercy in me. And you're putting me in a place where it's going to have to be produced.

There's going to be growth in that area in my life. And Lord, when you bring us to repent, it's not just saying, Lord, forgive my sins. It's the Holy Ghost showing us areas that we didn't even know existed.

He takes us in this large place, and He begins to deal with us. And He lets us get quiet. And He'll just be still.

He'll just hold back for a little bit and says, look inside. I want to show you yourself. I want to show you what you are, and I want to bring Christ out in you.

Lord Jesus, help us to realize that when Jesus was being tempted by the devil in the wilderness, never was God more for Him in that moment. Never are you more for us than when we're being tested and tried. Never are you more for us when that disturbance, that despair comes upon us.

Hallelujah. Lord, I see some of my own dear staff here this morning, and I look at their faces, and I feel their burden and their pain. They said, Brother Wilkerson, it's not that we don't want to let you down.

We don't want to let the Lord down. We just don't understand what's happening in our hearts. Lord, comfort their hearts this morning.

Comfort their hearts. Lord, you'll not excuse sin. You will not let us off that hook.

You're going to come to us and say, look at the goodness and the kindness of God and His severity. Goodness to those who yield. Severity to those who reject.

Help us just to yield to you this morning and say, Jesus, I'll turn my heart to you with all that's in me. I receive the quickening of the Holy Spirit. I receive the Word.

I will continue to hate my sin, but I'll understand He's patient with me, merciful and kind. Merciful. Hallelujah.

Lord, put your arms around this audience this morning. Hallelujah. Put your arms around Sherry right now, Lord, when she's nursing that child.

Let her see the love of Jesus in that tremendous moment. Let everybody that's here this morning right now reach out and say, God, I know you're for me. I know you're for me.

Do that right now, Lord. I know that you're with me. You've not forsaken me.

There's not a person here this morning that you've forsaken, Lord. Put your arms around them. Let us receive your love.

If you're here this morning and you've sinned, ask Him to forgive you right now. Lord, I don't want to live in my sin. I repent.

I repent. Is there anybody here this morning who needs to get up and say, Brother Dave, I need to repent. There's sin in my life.

Just get up and come and stand here right now. We'll pray with you. God dealing with you, you say, there's sin in my life and I want to repent.

I want Jesus this morning to put His arms around me and forgive me and give me power over my sin. Just get up out of your seat and come and stand here. We'll pray with you right now.

I want to be free. I want to be free.

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