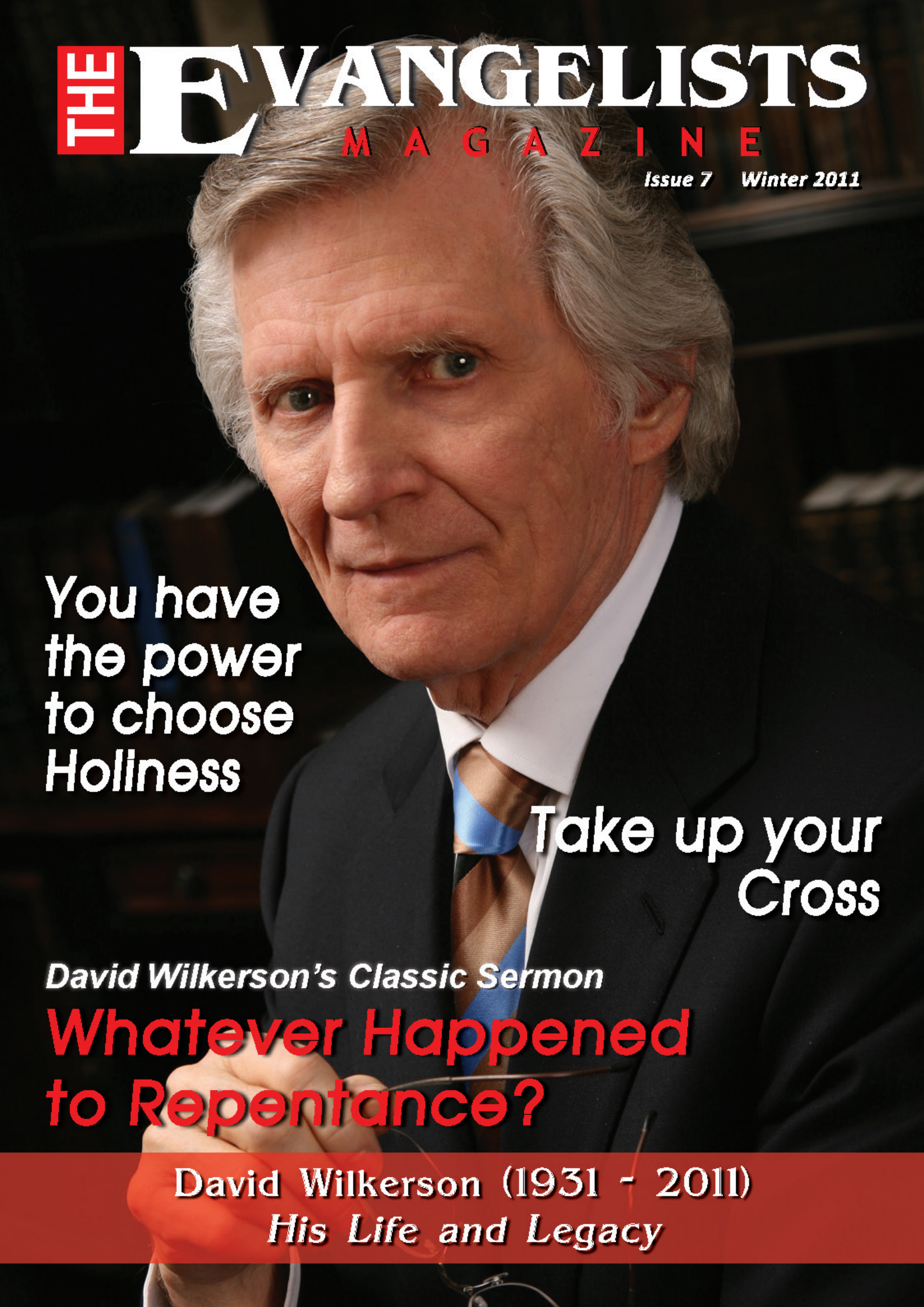




THE EVANGELISTS

M A G A Z I N E

Issue 7 Winter 2011

**You have
the power
to choose
Holiness**

**Take up your
Cross**

David Wilkerson's Classic Sermon

**Whatever Happened
to Repentance?**

David Wilkerson (1931 - 2011)

His Life and Legacy

THE COMMISSION

By Tim Knowling

THE EVANGELISTS MAGAZINE

(A Soldiers of the Cross Inc. publication)
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Soldiers of the Cross, founded by Tim
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evangelising the lost and seeing the
church become the mighty, mature and
fully-functioning army of God it is meant
to be, in a war that has already been
won through Christ's atoning death and
resurrection.

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Soldiers of the Cross

Front Cover: © Times Square Church

I have always had an avid interest in his-
tory, particularly Church history since
becoming a Christian. The historical
record of man's walk with God, as revealed
in the Bible, has shown a pendulum pattern
in relation to how closely or distantly we
relate to Him. In fact, the scriptures reveal
the extremes of both sides.

Take the Israelites for example. At times
they had Godly leaders whose hearts were
to please Him, other times corrupt and evil
leaders who indulged in pagan idolatry.
Through various circumstances the people
would turn back to God in repentance and
find restoration. Even after the day of Pen-
tecost the church has continued to show
similar trends - when religion takes the
place of relationship, leanness sets in.

However, over the centuries God has al-
ways stirred up people during these times.
This has resulted in such events as what
is commonly called the 'Reformation', as
well as many other great 'Awakenings' and
'Revivals'. When it comes to the fulfillment
of the Great Commission, I cannot help but
think another reformation is needed to see
this work completed.

In a recent conversation, I was told by a
member of a major denomination how
one of their own hierarchy admitted that
they, as a denomination, were not doing
anything of significance to reach the lost.
What then is the answer? The lessons of
the past show us that every great move
of God was ushered in with the prayers of
God's people.

We cannot, however, use prayer as a substi-
tute for obedience to doing what God has
already instructed. The saying is true, that
we would much rather talk to God about
men, than talk to men about God. As I write
these words I even feel convicted that I
have missed opportunities.

The historical record of the past shows
us that Revivals start with individuals. So
today, we can all start by praying that God
would grant us the grace to proclaim the
Gospel with boldness, as we reach out to
those who are perishing.

I like what someone else said, "The church
is like a manure heap. Pile it up and it
stinks up the place, spread
it out and it helps
things grow."

God is able to use all who humbly make
themselves available to Him. Like those
who have gone before us though, there will
be a cross to bear personally. See the story
on page 4 which reminds us of what Jesus
said concerning this very subject.

Since our last issue we have received some
encouraging feedback from our readers. It
blesses us to know that God is using this
humble publication to inspire others to
share their faith, as well as encourage those
who are actively out there in the field.

I am particularly encouraged by the reports
that come in from Africa, from those pas-
tors and Evangelists who have a desire
to learn and be equipped by teaching
resources, such as the School of Biblical
Evangelism, which we promote. We are
always on the lookout for resources which
we can pass on to others. And where there
isn't something suitable, we will produce it
ourselves if need be.

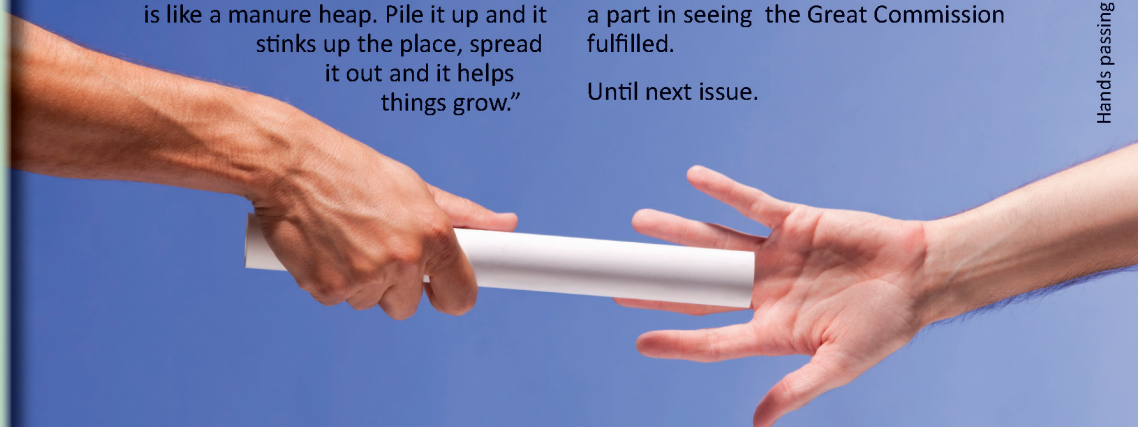
On April 27th this year, Pastor David Wilker-
son, whose early years were made famous
in the book and the movie, 'The Cross and
the Switchblade' was received into Glory.
His life and ministry not only inspired oth-
ers, but imparted into the lives of many,
including ours. See the story on page 7
about his life and the legacy that he has left
behind. As part of our memorial to David
Wilkerson we have also reprinted a mes-
sage that he preached in the latter years of
his life on page 8.

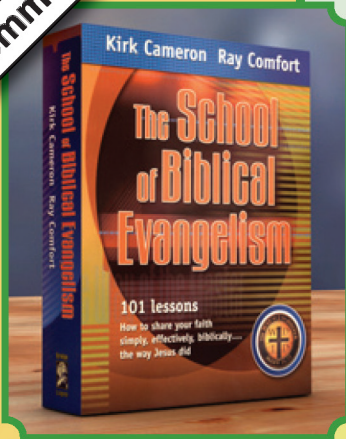
Also, for the first time in this publication,
we are glad to introduce, as a contributing
writer, Bishop Harry Westcott - a godly man
who has had many years in ministry across
this nation, as well as Internationally. With
his wealth of experience comes much God-
given insight into practical Christian living.
See page 12 for his article "You have the
Power to choose Holiness".

For those who may be reading this maga-
zine for the first time, remember that you
can receive a free subscription sent to you
every quarter. And if you are already a sub-
scriber, then why not sign up someone else.

The purpose of this publication is to
encourage God's people that we all have
a part in seeing the Great Commission
fulfilled.

Until next issue.





School of Biblical Evangelism - equipping Africans

"Christ is being preached here and thanks be to God for SOBE and to you and your team, I never struggle witnessing to sinners as before. SOBE has really transformed me totally with the knowledge of the Law as a School Master to bring the knowledge of sin to a sinner's heart..."

"God bless you so much and give you more grace to reach many with this information have got from SOBE. In future once I finish the lessons, am looking forth to influence many church leaders whom some are my friends from different churches and ministries in Kenya to study and be empowered with this information and impact the whole of Africa and the world with this tool of Evangelism."

Nicholas Onyango
Kenya

Reaching souls in Africa

"I want you to know that your publication are excellent, are really encouraging and equipping people for the furtherance of God's work in these last days.

Bro. Tim and Sr. Leah Knowling, God commissioned me to preach the Gospel particularly to the unreached and the hungered souls as [there are] so many areas, with so many people who have not yet heard the goodness. You are not here in Africa physically, but your messages that you sent me are winning a lot of souls."

Elder Kasuba Manad
Zambia



**Do you have a passion
to reach the lost?**

Not sure what to say?

Let us help you. We, at Soldiers of the Cross, can facilitate Evangelism Courses in your community, from a basic one-day Crash Course to an 8-week (1 day per week) indepth study. All would include in-the-field practice in your community or area.

For an information package and possible dates (*Australia only*), please contact us. Address details on page 2.

Operation 513 members still fighting the good fight



Previously, in Issue 4 we reported that members of the Gold Coast ministry, Operation 513 was being fined for handing out tracts and preaching during their weekly outreaches to Cavill Avenue in Southport. Ten members of the Operation 513 outreach team had been fined \$375, totaling \$3750. However, as they believed the charges were unfounded, they elected to have each heard in court. In February, they were given a permit to

preach with amplification at three locations in the mall. Then in March, the Gold Coast Council sent a letter to everyone who was fined informing them that all the fines have been dropped. They blamed it on an ambiguity of their own law. Praise God that common sense prevailed! However, not all is settled with the council. Just as this magazine goes to press, the Operation 513 members have been informed that the council wishes to change their permit - something that is not actually legal.

After the fines were dropped, it was the police, not the council officers that hassled and harassed them, without cause, on their weekly outreach. So much so, that the team felt it necessary to charge one of the officers with 'Disturbing a Religious Worship event'. If found guilty, the maximum penalty is two months imprisonment. Another, more senior officer, was charged with 'Abuse of his powers' - which carries a maximum penalty of two years if found guilty. Since then, the police have left them alone. The case goes to trial in approximately two months. We will keep you posted on the outcome.

This is not the first time for being persecuted for the Word's sake, nor will it be the last. Sadly, the church in this nation has become far too complacent and probably needs a good dose of persecution to wake us up to the battle going on around us.

Ephesians 6:12-13 says "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that you may be able to stand your ground and after you have done everything to stand." Friends, this is a spiritual problem not a natural one, and as such needs to be dealt with and won first and foremost, spiritually - through prayer and praise and the Word of God, to name three weapons that Christians have to use.

Can I please encourage everyone to pray for these labourers in the frontline. Remember, *you* could be next!



Take
up your
CROSS

“ And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, if any man come to me, and hate not his father, mother, and wife and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. ”

Luke 14:25-27

♦ Tim Knowling

As I read these words of Jesus and consider the fact that I am to follow in His footsteps as He is the master Evangelist, it would seem from this passage above that Christ Himself put a higher requirement on following Him than we might stress to those that we may talk to.

Just picture the setting in this passage of scripture. There were great multitudes following Him, and why not, for as Peter had said, it was He who had the words of eternal life (John 6:68). But just as these crowds were following Him and waiting to hear Him speak he says, “You want to follow me? You want to be my disciple? Then your love for me must surpass that of your love for your own family”.

The Amplified bible says “if anyone comes to Me and does not hate his [own] father and Mother [in the sense of indifference to or relative disregard for them in comparison with his attitude toward God] and [likewise] his wife and children and brothers and sisters-[yes] and even his own life also-he cannot be my disciple.”(Luke 14:26)

Matthew and Mark in their gospel accounts also gave testament to these words that Jesus brought to the people. The thrust of which was that if we want to be a disciple or truly follow after Christ then we will put aside our own interests even our own desires because our desire will be to, “follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth” (Rev 14:4)

A. W. Tozer, in his message ‘What it means to know Christ’, also stressed that if we are truly going to live the Christian life, then not only would Christ’s cross become ours, but we would have a personal cross to bear. The thing about a cross is that with it there is also a cost. Jesus also mentioned this when he addressed the great throng that was following him. (Luke 14:28-33)

I have often thought that perhaps the reason why we shy away from presenting these truths which Jesus did not

hold back from His hearers, is because we might have more people walk away than stay. But as A. W. Pink noted it is far better to drive men away through faithful preaching, than to drive away the Holy Ghost through pandering to man’s flesh.

This issue however apparently didn’t concern our Lord. On one occasion after preaching a message that was offensive to His hearers, it says “From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him”. (John 6:66) It was then that he turned to the twelve and said “Will ye also go away” (John 6:67)

I well remember, when my wife and I were ordained as ministers of the Gospel, that the following scripture was presented to us.

“And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62)

Again the context of this passage is important, because in it we see people who say they will either follow the Lord, or when called to follow Him, are not prepared to take up their cross or are not prepared to pay the cost of what is demanded from Christ in following Him.

For each of us our cross, and the cost that we have to pay in bearing it, will be different to another. For while many of us might not be called to the mission field in a country like Africa, someone else will have a different sacrifice that they have to make. And just as Christ himself took up His Cross on our part voluntarily, so it is for us, that with our cross will come a sacrifice that we have to make, there will be some cost involved.

I remember an older Pastor that I once worked with, who on sharing his personal testimony told how his own family disowned him when he became a Christian. For him, that was a cross he had to bear, for he had to live the reality that Jesus spoke of, that of lov-

ing Christ more than his own family.

For some of us the fact that we have sided with Christ will cost us our friends because we now belong to a Kingdom that is in utter contrast to the kingdom of this world.

Again Jesus didn’t spare us of the reality of the cost involved in following Him. He said, “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved”. (Mark 13:13)

For Christians who live in the Western world, I cannot help but think how easy we have it compared to some who are living in other countries. In the West we probably will not have our lives threatened for our faith, but the reality for many in other countries, is that they know the cost involved in following Christ could ultimately mean their own lives.

“Jesus didn’t spare us of the reality of the cost involved in following Him.”

A famous true story is told of two young Moravian missionaries, who sold themselves as slaves so that they could take the Gospel to slaves on an island in the West Indies. Such was their desire to reach these people that they went to extreme measures. Not only did they sell themselves to become slaves but most importantly they were slaves to Christ first. They were no longer their own. Their cry, with which they farewelled their families, explains the driving force behind them, when as the ship drifted away from the shore they called out, “May the Lamb which was slain receive the reward of His suffering”.

When we consider the sacrifice that some have made and are making to this day, some of the things that we might consider a sacrifice are rather trivial. For the most part we in the west have become a materialistic and 'me' focused people. And I'm not just talking about those outside the Church. We need to come to the realization that the Christian life is not about what we are going to get out of Him (Christ), but what He is going to get out of us.

“The testimony of Paul’s life demonstrates something far greater than all that he experienced.”

Some of us are not going to be required to take up a cross like the two Moravian

missionaries mentioned above, but perhaps your church might have a missions call to another land, and if the Lord calls you to go, even on a short mission trip, then there will be a cross to bear.

Most of us like our comforts of flush toilets and hot water at the turn of a tap, but chances are you will have a pit toilet and a hand basin to wash yourself in. But if that's your cross, then carry it.

The truth is you don't have to leave your country, or your own home city or town for that matter, to be in the mission field. We have enough people in our own countries that are perishing without the Gospel. We have to realise the truth though - that to some people we are going to be an aroma of death. They are not going to like us, because the Gospel message is a complete scandal to sinful men.

I believe the example of the life of the Apostle Paul should be the example for us to follow, not that we will necessarily experience all the things he did, but it is the example of his attitude which we should follow.

He gave up much to follow Christ. For in turning from his former occupation, he became an enemy to those whom he once belonged. He said that he con-

sidered his former life a loss and those things which were once important to him as dung compared to knowing Christ. (Philippians 3:7-8)

What was Paul's attitude to persecution and tribulation, for he certainly had his fill of it. Paul said *"Yet amid all these things we are more than conquerors and gain a surpassing victory through him who loved us"* (Romans 8:37 AMP).

In 2 Corinthians 12 the Apostle Paul went as far to say that he even gloried in these things. In verse 10, Paul goes onto say *"Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then I am strong"*.

To the natural mind such talk seems like utter foolishness and Paul admits to this in verse 11.

The testimony of Paul's life demonstrates something far greater than all that he experienced. And that was the grace of God. The Lord gave Paul grace, the evidence of which was that *"my (Christ's) strength is made perfect in weakness"*. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

So as we take up *our* cross, we also can find a place of rest, that the same grace that Paul was given, is available to us.

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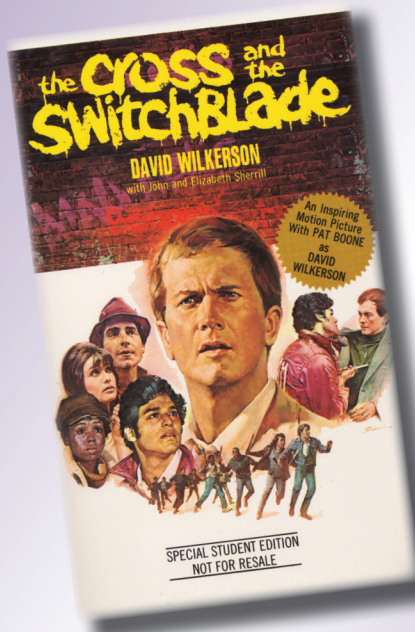
David Wilkerson

His Life and Legacy

◆ Leah Knowling

On April 27, this year, evangelical Christianity lost one of its most beloved sons, Pastor David Wilkerson. Whilst he is now with the Lord in Glory, David Wilkerson has left a legacy of God's grace that will live on in the hearts of those whose lives he impacted.

I have heard it said of the dates put on tombstones, "Whilst we note the beginning and the ending, our life consists of that little dash in between." The 'dash' of David Wilkerson's life was indeed, as Jesus said in John 10:10, full. And although his full life was not always what many would call wonderful, I do not think he would have changed anything.



David Wilkerson, whose early years of ministry were made famous in the book and movie, 'The Cross and the Switchblade', was born on May 19, 1931.

At the age of eight, David felt the call of God and made the decision to become a minister of the Gospel. In 1952, he married Gwen and for the next few years served as a pastor in small churches in Scottdale and Philipsburg, Pennsylvania.

Then, in 1958, he saw a photograph in Life Magazine of seven New York City teenagers charged with murder. He later wrote that as he felt the Holy Spirit move him with compassion, he was drawn to go to New York in February 1959. This was a journey that changed his life.

It was there that he began a street ministry to young drug addicts and gang members, the first and most notable being

Nicky Cruz, who later became an evangelist himself and wrote the autobiographical, 'Run Baby Run'. Later in 1959, he founded Teen Challenge, an evangelical Christian addiction recovery program affiliated with the Assemblies of God.

In 1963, Pastor Wilkerson, or Brother Dave, as he liked to be known, gained national recognition after he co-authored the book 'The Cross and the Switchblade' about his street ministry. The book became a best-seller, with over 15 million copies in over thirty languages and in 1969 was turned into a Hollywood movie starring Pat Boone as David Wilkerson.

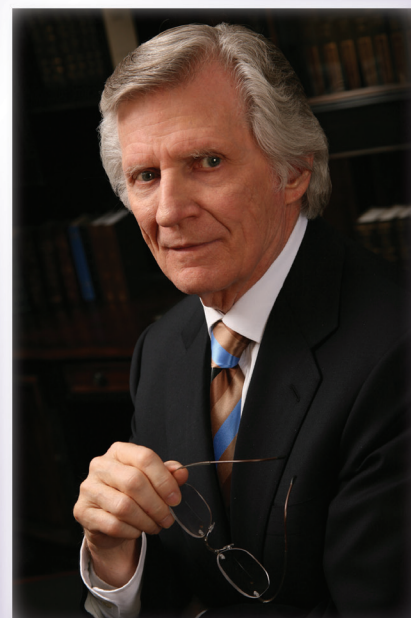
Although many people only know Pastor Wilkerson for this book, that was only the beginning of what would become a worldwide ministry. Over the next 20 years he also pioneered other Evangelism ministries, including Youth Crusades, CURE Corps and World Challenge, which today oversees all the other ministries.

Then, in 1986, while walking down 42nd Street in New York City at midnight, Pastor Wilkerson believed the Holy Spirit called him to return to New York City and to raise up a ministry in Times Square.

He founded and became the pastor of Times Square Church, which opened its doors in October 1987. The church first occupied rented auditoriums in Times Square, later moving to the historic Mark Hellinger Theatre (pictured), which the ministry purchased in 1989 and in which it still operates.

Over the years, he faithfully led this congregation, delivering powerful biblical messages that encouraged righteous living and complete reliance on God. (See page 8 for his message, 'Whatever Happened to Repentance', where he gives testimony of these early years.)

For over four decades, Pastor Wilkerson's evangelistic ministry included preaching, teaching and writing. Throughout that time a distinctive characteristic of his work was his direct efforts to reach the neediest among us with help for both body and soul. He authored over 30 books, including 'The Vision' and 'Revival on Broadway'.



Pastor Wilkerson's widely distributed sermons, such as "A Call to Anguish," and the one on page 8, are known for being direct and frank, emphasising God's holiness and righteousness and a right view of the character of God. In fact, it was these messages that greatly impacted our lives and confirmed what God was speaking to us, particularly in regard to the Gospel.

The 1990s saw Pastor Wilkerson focus his efforts to encourage pastors and their families throughout the world to "renew their passion for Christ".



On April 27, 2011, Pastor Wilkerson was killed in a head-on collision. His wife, who was also travelling with him, was injured.

David Wilkerson's last blog post stated the following: "To those going through the valley and shadow of death, hear this word: Weeping will last through some dark, awful nights, and in that darkness you will soon hear the Father whisper, 'I am with you. I cannot tell you why right now, but one day it will all make sense. You will see it was all part of my plan. It was no accident.'"

David Wilkerson's Classic Sermon
**Whatever
Happens
REPENTANCE**

In New York City, you can visit church after church, from stately cathedrals to small congregations, and you'll seldom hear a word preached about repentance. The same is true of many evangelical churches across America and worldwide. You can visit congregation after congregation for months on end, and never hear any mention of repentance.

Of course, there are churches today that do not compromise on this important biblical doctrine. But a vast number of churches have decided that repentance is too offensive a message. In fact, entire denominations have de-emphasized it.

In such churches, you can hear all about God's love, his blessings, his precepts for coping with life, but not a word about godly sorrow for sin. You can hear messages on loving others and being a good, kind person. All of that is indeed scriptural. But you won't hear a repentance message

like the one Peter preached at Pentecost. His sermon led thousands to freedom in Christ.

Many pastors today would be appalled at what Peter preached that day. Acts 2 gives us the context for the apostle's powerful message: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).

As this verse demonstrates, there must be a knowledge of sin before there can be true repentance. That is the purpose of the law, to awaken a sense of sin. And the hearts of those people in Jerusalem were stirred when they heard God's Word and recognized their sin.

Peter answered their desperate cries by instructing them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name

of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (2:38, my italics). What does it mean to repent?

True repentance results in sorrow, remorse and regret over sin.

To repent is to experience such contrition as to change one's way of life. Simply put, repentance is turning from one's sin and going in the opposite direction.

Repentance is not meritorious. Only the sacrifice of Christ's blood can forgive. But repentance is the only way to know true healing and rejoicing. There is no other way to enter the peace and rest of Christ except through the doors of repentance. Paul wrote to the Corinthians about the fruit that results from repentance:

"Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For

mon

ed to NCE?

behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear" (2 Corinthians 7:10–11).

Let me give you the background of Paul's letter to the Corinthians. He had exposed the sin of incest in their congregation, but nobody dealt with it. And because this awful sin was overlooked, there was no remorse among the people.

So Paul wrote the church an even stronger message. Now, as the people sat listening to his letter read aloud in the congregation, they were pricked at heart. And they repented, full of godly sorrow at not having faced the exceeding sin in their midst. That repentance brought great rejoicing.

Now Paul encouraged them, saying, "See what godly sorrow did for you? It wrought a carefulness in you. It brought an indig-

nation against your own sin." Repentance is the only way healing and strength can come to those who are caught up in sin.

Repentance and trust in Christ's redeeming blood result in total remission of sin, and that means pardon, forgiveness and freedom from sin's power. According to Paul, there can be no conversion, no freedom, no born-again miracle without repentance: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

Thus, Paul preached to the Athenians: "God...now commandeth all men every where to repent" (17:30). And Jesus tells us he came for that very purpose, "to call...sinners to repentance" (Mark 2:17). Perhaps clearest of all, Luke states, "It behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46–47).

Repentance was the message we were commanded to bring when we started a church in New York City twenty years ago.

In the early days of Times Square Church, the Holy Spirit instructed our pastoral team to preach repentance. He fired our hearts with the truth that where sin abounds, God's grace abounds much more.

We were to plant our church in the heart of Broadway, near 42nd Street with its strip clubs, XXX theaters, pornography shops, drug dealers, prostitutes and militant homosexuals. So we began holding services at the Nederlander Theater on 41st Street. At the time that block was called "Junkie Alley," because addicts snorted and shot up right in front of the theater. It was a picture of hell on earth.

The Spirit warned us that because we were entering into Satan's territory, we had to take a stand against the dominion of sin. In short, we were going into a war zone, to reclaim those taken captive by the devil. So we had to be prepared for his powers to come at us, and those we sought with all the weapons of hell.

We knew upfront we wouldn't be able to win those captives back by coying up to their sin. To bring them the reality of Christ's mercy, we had to confront their sin, so they would be convicted and ready to forsake their sin. It was the only way to wage warfare in such an intense spiritual battleground.

And so we preached repentance. We told everyone who walked through our doors that nobody could claim Jesus as Lord if their lives hadn't changed. That message was preached to all who sat in our services, regardless of their social status: Broadway actors and drug pushers, Wall Street executives and transvestites. No one could say they loved Jesus if their lives didn't bear the fruit of repentance.

After confronting sin through repentance preaching, incredible joy began to break out. People were being freed from their sin and forsaking old habits and a sensual way of life. Men and women from executive offices to Junkie Alley were being transformed by Christ's cleansing blood and the power of his Spirit to break every bondage.

Twenty years later, this same joy continues at Times Square Church. And we still deliver the message the first church preached in Jerusalem on Pentecost: repentance and remission of sin.

The feel-good gospel is all mixed up about the love of God.

Multitudes today are flocking to meetings where a feel-good pastor tells them, "All you need to do is believe, and you'll be born again." This doctrine is built on a passage in Acts 16, where an unsaved jailer asked the apostles what he should do to be saved. Paul's response was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:31).

“Repentance was the message we were commanded to bring when we started a church in New York City twenty years ago.”

Ministers who emphasize this doctrine forget that when the jailer approached the apostles, he was so convicted that he "came trembling, and fell down" (16:29). This man was so distraught he had even considered suicide. He had a sense of his own sin, and his awe of God led him to repentance.

The truth is, human compassion alone cannot convert anyone's soul. It reaches only the flesh, unable to touch the deep places of the soul. This is an important truth we learned in those early days of Times Square Church. And it's a truth that is at the very core of the gospel. It says that biblical reproof against sin — a message warning the sinner to run to the Cross or perish — is the greatest love message that can be offered to man.

“The truth is, human compassion alone cannot convert anyone's soul. It reaches only the flesh, unable to touch the deep places of the soul”

Today, underneath our church's name on the theater marquee, a message reads, “The Church That Love Is Building.” To us, this is no maudlin, sentimental, mushy idea. Rather, it is a message that states clearly, “We are here to fight for you against all of hell. We will give you uncoated truth, if you want a new life.”

Ministers who once avoided the repentance message are being convicted to preach it again.

The pastor of a mega-church recently fell under conviction over his light, easy messages. For weeks he struggled, thinking, “I'm not a true shepherd. I'm not giving the people what they need to grow and mature in Christ.”

So he changed his preaching to include repentance. At the time, his congregation numbered in the thousands. Then, once he started preaching repentance, he ended up with less than two hundred people. But he is fulfilled and blessed because he's now seeing his people grow in Christ.

I have to wonder: Is this why so many pastors never preach repentance? Are they

afraid of losing people? Do they fear being unable to make mortgage payments? Are they mindful of needing people to give more toward the church's growing expenses? I'm convinced these things combine to persuade good men to preach a soft message.

At times I've wondered what it would be like for people in feel-good churches to hear a repentance message by their preacher. I picture multitudes filing in to hear his latest sermon. Yet, backstage this man is in the grip of the Holy Spirit, who speaks to him with powerful conviction:

“The day of the Lord is at hand. The handwriting is on the wall, and God will soon judge the nations. All things are being shaken, and men's hearts will fail them for fear.

“Do not go out on that stage tonight and comfort the people in their sins. Many are soul sick and blind, like sheep gone astray. They are in turmoil, with painful family problems, addictions, bondages the enemy torments them with.

“If you won't warn them, their blood will be on your hands. The prophet Ezekiel has warned that if you don't blow the trumpet to warn the wicked, they will die in their iniquity and the Lord will require their blood at your hand.

“Go now, and warn the people to repent and forsake their evil ways. Never again choke my conviction, for it leads to life. Then comfort and encourage them.”

If that preacher were to obey, he would immediately witness two things: a mass exodus to the doors, and a fraction of the people left sitting stunned in their seats. After a few minutes, the preacher would begin to see tears and hear soft weeping. Finally, a voice would rise from among those who have stayed, asking, “What do we do now?”

This is already beginning to happen. A major prosperity preacher in Europe recently stood before a huge crowd and said, “The time has come to confess, to weep, to make things right with the Lord.” A preacher friend of mine was there and reported that the event was stunning. My prayer is that the same will happen in all of our churches, here in America and throughout the world.

I have to admit, at times I have left the pulpit in great pain over a hard message I had to preach. At such times I often question myself: “Lord, that seemed so hard. Did I hear you right? If I was wrong to preach this, please show me.” Once, when I was in deep agony over a message, I received a phone call from one of my children, who said, “Dad, thank you for preaching that message. The Lord spoke clearly to me through it. It brought me to a crisis with him that I've needed to face.”

Many who have repented — trusting in Christ and being forgiven — still hold onto lingering fear and unbelief.

I'm certain God is grieved over churches that reject His message of repentance. In fact, it is my belief that the Holy Spirit will not abide in such churches.

Yet there is something else I believe grieves God's heart even more than neglecting the preaching of repentance. And that is when those who confess Christ and have been forgiven continue to live in fear and unbelief.

I speak of those who have known conviction for their sin. They've known godly sorrow over their trespasses, and they have testified that they've been forgiven. But they haven't yet entered the rest and joy that come from forgiveness through repentance.

“I'm certain God is grieved over churches that reject His message of repentance. In fact, it is my belief that the Holy Spirit will not abide in such churches.”

You see, repentance leads to forgiveness — and forgiveness must lead to rest and rejoicing. These people, however, have no such rest. On the contrary, they live in constant fear that their lives aren't pleasing to God. They keep praying to renew their salvation, or they may even seek to be baptized over and over. Simply put, they have never come into a full knowledge of the power of forgiveness.

In truth, they are living under the Old

Testament covenant. And they're being oppressed by a law that keeps them tormented by a condemning conscience. As Isaiah says, they are *"afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted"* (Isaiah 54:11).

The burden of sin — the memories and haunting of past sins — must not be carried beyond the Cross.

All mourning over past sins, all self-imposed humiliation, must be cast into the cleansing fountain of Christ's blood. Ultimately, there comes a time when all who follow Jesus must hear him say, *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"* (Matthew 11:28).

The Lord calls out to all who have confessed, repented, and believed, yet who can't rejoice because they still carry a heavy burden of guilt and condemnation — all of these he calls to come to him and give him their heavy burden, and he will give them gladness of heart.

When we do this, the Holy Spirit comes to stand beside us. Jesus called the Spirit *"the Comforter,"* a name that means *"one who comes and stands by."* In short, from that point on we no longer walk alone, in our own efforts, but in cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

This is all because of the New Covenant that God made with believers in these last days. According to Hebrews, this covenant went into effect the moment Jesus drew his last breath: *"A testament [or covenant] is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth"* (Hebrews 9:17).

What is the gift of inheritance that Jesus has left us through his testament? It is this promise: *"I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more"* (8:12).

Yet we are given more than forgiveness through this New Covenant. God gives us a further word of deliverance, saying he is *"working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever"* (13:21).

Are you under severe attack, your mind harassed?

Numerous Christians, including some pastors, have told me they are continually harassed by former sins. They say, *"Brother Dave, if you only knew what I once did, how I sinned against such light, you would understand why I'm so down. My sin still*

hangs over my head, and I battle constant guilt over it. I believe the Lord has forgiven me, that his blood is sufficient to cover my iniquity. But I don't have the peace that comes from that knowledge."

Others tell me, *"I believe I'm forgiven, but my mind is continually bombarded with hellish thoughts. It can happen anywhere, even in church, and it makes me feel so unclean. I have a hard time believing I'm pure in God's sight."*

These believers forget that Satan also tempted Jesus with awful, ugly thoughts during his wilderness testing. Today, the devil sends little foxes into your life, to make you think you're hopeless, that God is mad at you. They inject thoughts into your mind meant to destroy your faith in the power of Christ's blood over you.

Dear saint, you are not to listen to those mental invasions. You have to cut them off, crying, *"Holy Spirit, I know you're beside me. Help me."*

"You are not alone in your struggle. He has sent you the Holy Spirit, who knows how to deal with the enemy and free you from all bondage."

You have to accept that all who take up the cross and fight the good fight of faith are in a constant battle. We're all going to face evil thoughts — thoughts that come because of our past, or because of a sense of rejection, or simply because we live in wicked, sensual times. Yet when we apply Christ's blood to these roots of doubt, it reaches into every cell of our being, including our minds, and thoroughly cleanses us. And that brings freedom and true rejoicing.

Are you fighting against a besetting sin, a stronghold of Satan?

Have you decided there's no hope you'll ever be free? I urge you, consider these four things:

1. Be sure you believe that the Lord still loves you. You are still under his grace and mercy, and his banner over you is love.
2. Repent, asking the Lord to produce godly sorrow in you.
3. Receive God's love, and rest in his promise to forgive you.
4. Believe his New Covenant word to you: *"I will be merciful to you, and forgive all your sins. And I will work in you that which is well pleasing to me."*

You are not alone in your struggle. He has sent you the Holy Spirit, who knows how to deal with the enemy and free you from all bondage. He is the still, small voice that will guide you and empower you through all your battles.

Pray with me: *"Holy Spirit, I want to grow in spiritual fruitfulness. I want to be rid of all hypocrisy, and I want gentleness, patience and love. I know you still love me, in spite of my lack of these things. So, stand by me, and help me. Amen."*

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You have the Power to Choose Holiness

A Meditation on Romans Chapter 6

♦ Bishop Harry Westcott

During the past five months I've been taught many lessons as I 'learn from Jesus' and 'find His rest in my soul' (Matthew 11:28-30). This faith building meditation is an indication of just how graciously the Lord is ministering to me through His Word. It is my prayer that as you read these words the Holy Spirit will powerfully make known their truths to you as well. So get ready to choose Holiness as we discuss the three questions that I see answered by Romans chapter 6.

Question 1. What happened when we became Christians? (vv 1-6)

The power of sin was broken and no longer do we have to be bound in its grip. Our baptism declares that we

are now part of Christ and have the same capacity not to sin as Jesus does, because his death broke the power of sin over our lives. That power which was in our sinful natures was shattered when we accepted Jesus as our Lord and Saviour and we demonstrated that fact in our baptism. We are "*baptised into His death*", that is we bury the old sinful nature and no longer does it rule our lives. The choice of burying the old sinful nature is ours, and bury it we must if we want to live the resurrected life of Jesus.

I believe much of Christianity today has put the cart before the horse by proclaiming the wonderful new life that we have in Christ to the neglect of our burial with Christ. We cannot live with Him if we have not died with Him.

Resurrection always follows death, not vice versa and it is time we understood this fact.

Why is it that so many believers fail and fall back into sin's power? Today our problem is not only getting the Church out of the world, rather it is getting the world and its values and standards out of the Church. We are now reaping the reward of proclaiming a success message at the cost of a repent-less gospel.

When we die with Christ the power of sin is shattered. That means that if we are truly buried with Him we have the same capacity to backslide, sin, be corrupted, etc, as a dead person does. Burial means sin's power over us is broken, crushed, fatally wounded and unresponsive. If that is the case, then why is it so many believers are falling



away and a huge disenchantment with the Church is beginning to emerge?

I believe that it is because so many have had their faith weakened by being exhorted to live the resurrected life without the necessary death which must precede the victory. It is equivalent to saying the children of Israel escaped Egypt and entered the Promised Land and completely missed the Red Sea.

Question 2. What are the benefits of burial with Christ? (vv 7-15)

The great joy of knowing that you are freed from all the allure of sin and its power. This wonderful freedom liberates us as believers into actively not allowing sin to control our puny bodies any longer. The resurrection power of

Jesus fills our lives with His power and ability to say NO to all ungodly desires. As a believer, buried with Christ and raised with Him, we do not let our bodies become tools of wickedness. That's right; sin need never again be our master. It's the choice of freedom that only comes when you know your old sin-loving nature has died. We cannot be 'alive unto God' until we are completely 'dead to sin'.

Baptism is so important for the reason of knowing the reality of our new life in Christ. If you have only been baptized because it was 'the in thing to do', or 'the next step', or 'because you couldn't become a member of our denomination' until you were, may I kindly suggest that you have not understood baptism at all. Baptism is death to the

old sin-loving nature that ruled your life before you came to Jesus, and it is resurrection to the wonderful new life that Jesus has given you to enjoy. It's out of bondage and into liberty! Now if this is the case, and Romans 6 says it is, then what reason can any of us give for falling back into sin? The benefit of burial is glorious freedom to obey God and not ourselves.

Question 3. Why is holiness a choice? (vv 16-23)

Simply because it is the fruit of obedience. *"Don't you realize you can choose your own master? You can choose sin (with death), or else obedience (with freedom)"* (Romans 6:16). The choice of our master is ours to make. True, we are made the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21). True, we are

saved by grace and not by our own work (Ephesians 2:8-9). True, God's gift is eternal life (Romans 6:23). I am not arguing with these great Gospel facts, however what I am saying is that we are not puppets, we are joint heirs with Christ.

“We cannot be alive unto God until we are dead unto sin.”

We are chosen by Him to rule over sin even in our mortal bodies and this choice of rulership is ours to accept, it is not thrust upon us. That choice of Holiness is one we must all make individually and our loving Saviour grants holiness to us when we become obedient to Him and not our old sin-loving nature (Romans 6:22-23).

I am becoming increasingly convinced by the Spirit, that for a revival to take place in this nation, it is dependent on the believers who make up the Church in Australia, returning to that basic first commitment to Jesus, and that is to be buried with Him. Only then will we know the glorious new life that awaits this nation in Christ. Burial is difficult for the Church because its dependence on life is so tied to the institution it has become and right now its worship of, and its demand for, the mighty dollar has, in many ways, taken its eyes off the Saviour so that in the end it is living to compete with the world. Naturally this is wrong.

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). Sin's wage is death – Jesus paid the price to set us free from its grip – we died with Him, therefore we choose never to live in the power of sin again because His gift of eternal life is so wonderful that its benefits are joy everlasting. Only when we, as individuals and then collectively as a church, live free of our sin-loving natures will we truly experience the Gift of God.

This message is taken from the book “100 Faith building messages” by Bishop Harry Westcott.

Bishop Harry Westcott has ministered widely across Australia and in many nations of the world. He pastored a church in revival and under the banner of ‘Vision Ministries’ successfully led International Charismatic conferences attracting thousands.

In 1989 he moved ‘Vision Ministries’ from Sydney to Mamre Farm, Alectown, NSW, a 90 acre property 31km from Parkes. People come here every year from across the nation and overseas to attend the ‘Old Fashioned Camp Meeting’ where they worship God in the 1100 seat ‘Go Forth Faith Arena’ – Australia’s bush cathedral.

Harry is the presiding Bishop of the International Communion of Charismatic Churches (ICCC) in Australia, which provides spiritual oversight to many ministers and ministries. As such he is looked upon as a Spiritual Father by many.

Tim and Leah Knowling (founders of Soldiers of the Cross Inc. which produces this publication) were ordained as ministers in 2005 by Bishop Harry and come under the oversight of ICCC Aust.





100 Faith Building Messages

By Bishop Harry Westcott

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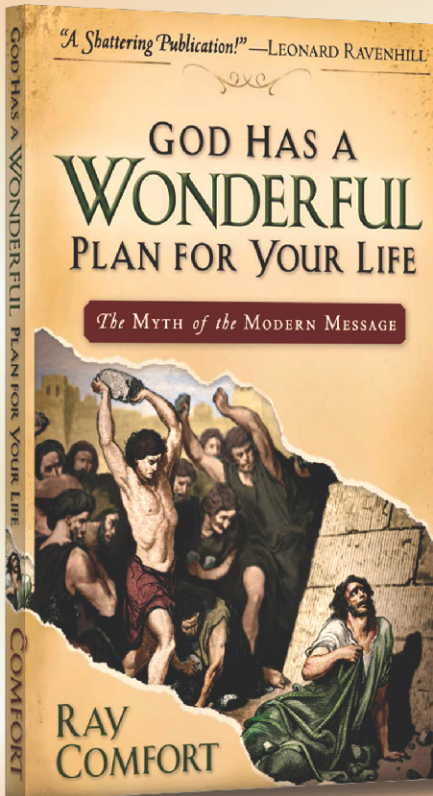


Campfire Meetings



Anointed Teaching

BOOK REVIEW



Why do 9 out of 10 children raised in Christian homes leave the Church? Why do many professing Christians show little or no evidence for their faith? Why do 80-90% of those making decisions for Christ fall away from the faith?

For decades, the world's most popular gospel message has been drawing the lost by promising God's wonderful plan for their life. But behind the facade of the 'wonderful plan' message is the reality of the trials, temptation, and persecution that Jesus promised. How can we reconcile the two?

In this life-changing book, best-selling author Ray Comfort explores whether this common gospel approach aligns with real life -- and with Scripture. The vital biblical principles he reveals will force you to re-examine your ideas about the gospel -- and will teach you how to reach unbelievers the way God intended. A must-read for all who care about the lost.

Books are available from your leading Christian bookstores or go on-line to www.livingwaters.com.



DVD a great gift for the lost

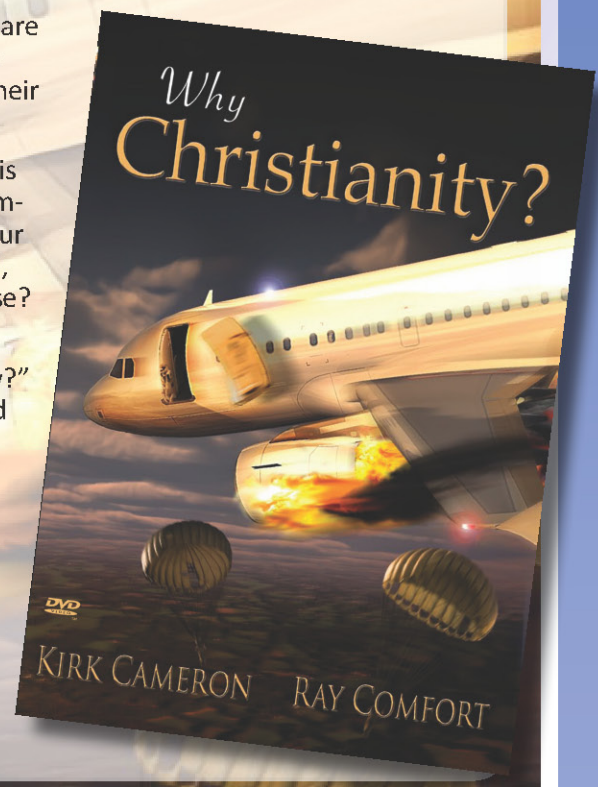
Have you ever witnessed to someone who thinks that all religions are the same? Or what about a person who grew up in the church but never came to a place of saving faith and is now confused about their spiritual state.

'**Why Christianity**' is a great tool to use to reach out to the lost. It is like a DVD tract only better. On this DVD, Ray Comfort and Kirk Cameron, from *The Way of the Master*, offers the viewer a choice of four gifts: The original Mona Lisa, the keys to a brand new Lamborghini, ten million dollars in cash, or a parachute. Which would you choose?

If you have ever asked what happens after we die, if there is a Heaven, or how good we have to be to go there, "Why Christianity?" will help you. If you have ever wondered which religion you should choose, if any, "Why Christianity?" will sort through the confusion so that you can make the best choice. Take the time to watch this carefully — there's nothing more important than where you and those you care about will spend eternity.

For copies of the 'Why Christianity' DVD, as well as other great resources, visit our website, www.soldiersofthecross.com.au.

Soldiers of the Cross



Walking In the Light

◆ Leah Knowling

1 John 1:5 says *"God is light..."*. It also says in Matthew 5:16 that we, as Christians, are to let that light shine out through us to the world. However, Matthew 6:23 says *"If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness."*

Most people understand that darkness is actually the absence of light. If you stand in a room for a day, you will notice it became dark or light, depending on the amount of light that enters in, not the amount of darkness.

But, here is an interesting point. If there is even a glimmer of light, regardless of its source, after awhile your eyes adjust and the room seems brighter than at first, even though there is no more light coming through. Therefore you *think* you are in light, when in actual fact, you are in darkness.

The evidence of how dark it is, can only be seen if you turn on a light. Suddenly the brightness of that light will almost hurt your eyes.

This, my friends, is the unfortunate state for many people in the church. *"If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth."* 1 John 1:6.

Many people call themselves Christians, go to church, tithe, pray and some might even read their Bibles. However, the fruit of their life belies their true spiritual state. They look like a good Christian on Sundays, but the rest of the week live like the world.

In the past, we would have said they are just 'worldly Christians'. However, Scripture is clear - oil and water do not mix. James 4:4 says *"Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God."* There is no such thing as a worldly Christian because the two terms contradict each other.

The sad part about it is, most of them are deceived into believing they truly are Christians, and are going to Heaven, when in actual fact, they are false converts. These are they who will cry out *"Lord, Lord"* and He will *"tell them plainly 'I never knew you. Away from me you evildoers.'"* Matthew 7:22-23.

Before I go on, let me clarify that no Christian is or can be perfect in thought, word or deed in this lifetime. In fact, 1 John 1:8 says *"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us"*. So I am not talking about those who still struggle in areas of their lives. The keyword here is 'struggle'. It is when we *don't* struggle against sin and just enjoy its *"pleasures for a season"* that there is something radically wrong.

Those who continuously walk in the darkness, are those who have *"a form of godliness, but deny its power"*.

In other words, it is about their lifestyle - what they say, what they watch, listen to, or read, what consumes their time. Are they seeking to be more Christ-like in every area of their life or are they just concerned about themselves? It is an question we can all examine ourselves in.

"Darkness is actually the absence of light."

Unfortunately, most of the people that I am referring to, will never examine themselves because they are deceived. That is, unless God intervenes in their lives, through His Holy Spirit, and brings a blast of light to dispel the darkness.

Believe me, God can and has done that. I know, because He did it with me. I

thought I was a Christian for 8 years, went to Church and even led worship and a youth group. Yet, my lifestyle outside of church towards the end of those years was worldly, to put it mildly.

I started off okay, but as Jesus said in the parable of the Sower, referring to the rocky ground soil, *"Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away."* Luke 8:13

It wasn't until God intervened in my life, and rescued me out of the world - literally - and put me in a tent ministry, that I started to 'see the light' and realised how dark my life had become.

Psalms 119:130 says *"The entrance of Your Word brings light."* One day, not long after joining this ministry, I was reading my Bible and all of a sudden I started to see myself in truth as God saw me - not a pretty picture. Let me tell you, it was like a blaze of light flooding my soul.

I sat there and cried as I saw my sin as against God for the first time - no longer trying to justify my actions, but owning them. That day, I came to a place of true repentance and faith in Christ as, at the same time, I saw the love of God, expressed in His forgiveness through Christ's death on the Cross.

That was the day, nearly 9 years ago, I truly believe I was born again, translated out of the kingdom of darkness and started walking in the light of life.

Friend, what about you? Are you walking *"in the light as He is in the light"* (1 John 1:7), or are you deceiving yourself and still walking in darkness because your deeds are evil. John 3:19

Can I encourage you to *"examine yourself"* this day to *"see whether you are in the faith"*. 2 Corinthians 13:5. You may not have tomorrow.