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## **Casting Down Unbelief**

**By David Wilkerson**

July 23, 2007 Dearly Beloved:

**GOD STILL HEARS AND ANSWERS PRAYER!**

With every written message we mail out, I include a letter concerning what the Holy Spirit is saying to me at the time. Each time, I pray for a word that will edify and inform. I beseech the Lord to give me something from his Word that will bless you in a time of need or be an encouragement.

I know I do not write these letters to increase our offerings and gifts. My single desire is that you will receive confirmation of some word God has already given you.

Let me share with you what the Holy Spirit is speaking into my heart — for your edification. It is found in Psalm 33:18–22:

“Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.”

Hear what the Lord is saying — and believe it is your word at this time:

1. His eye is upon you — if you fear him and hope in his mercy. Can you believe he sees all your ways — both good and bad, all your problems and troubles and needs — and that he has nothing but mercy and hope for you? He will pour out his tender mercies on you, if you will trust his love and not faint (v. 18).

2. He will do whatever it takes to deliver you from the spirit of death. He will keep you alive in the time of spiritual famine. You may be experiencing spiritual dryness. You may hear the voice of the enemy accusing you of being spiritually dead. But God has his eye on you and promises to keep a flow of his life in you (v. 19).

3. God promises to be your help and shield, as you wait patiently for him to answer your prayers. You may not see evidence of your prayers being answered, but faith waits for God to do all things his way — in his time (v. 20). “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go: I will guide you with my eye” (Psalm 32:8).

4. God promises you will rejoice because you trusted in his holy name. Mercy, help, deliverance and peace will be yours as you hope in the Lord (vv. 21, 22). “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles...O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusts in him” (Psalm 34:6–8).

A very special thanks to all who have supported our worldwide missions ministries with gifts and offerings. These funds are used to support widows, fatherless children, orphanages, feeding programs and the building of small houses for believers who have lost everything in floods and hurricanes. We now are reaching desperate needs all over the world in many nations.

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God alone be praised! Thank you.

In Christ,  
DAVID WILKERSON

DW:bbm 7.23.07

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## Newsletter: Casting Down Unbelief

July 23, 2007 “He went out from thence, and came into his own country [Nazareth] ...and many hearing him were astonished, saying...what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? ... And they were offended at him.... And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marveled because of their unbelief” (Mark 6:1–3, 5–6).

In the chapter just prior to this, Jesus performed amazing miracles. He cast out a legion of demons from a demoniac. A woman was instantly healed of a hemorrhage that had plagued her for years. A twelve year old girl, the daughter of a Jewish ruler, was raised from the dead. When Jesus performed such mighty works, he told those he delivered, “Thy faith hath made thee whole” (Mark 5:34; see also 10:52; Matthew 9:22; Luke 7:50, 8:48, 17:19, 18:42).

Then, in the very next chapter, Jesus came to his hometown, where he met with the worst kind of unbelief. Nazareth was where Jesus had grown up, living his first thirty years. Now he had come back to his own land, to be among his own people, including his own family.

The people of Nazareth had been told of Jesus’ great works. They had heard all the amazing stories of the “mighty works done by his hands.” Yet to them, such things happened *elsewhere* — in other cities, other places, other communities, not in Nazareth.

*Elsewhere* — just one day’s journey away — people were rejoicing because of Jesus’ wonder working power. *Elsewhere*, marvelous works of God were happening, with multitudes flocking and miracles abounding. *Elsewhere*, people were seeing spiritual awakening, with new hope coming to the hopeless. There was great excitement in the land, but to the people of Nazareth it was always *elsewhere*.

We have to understand that these people were church going, Bible loving, sincerely religious. They loved God’s Word and said of Jesus, “We know him and his family. He’s a good example.” *But they would not acknowledge Christ as God in flesh.*

The fact is, they were spiritually dead. They knew Jesus’ reputation as a miracle worker, performing mighty deliverances. But they had no faith, no expectancy. In other places, Jesus was met with a hunger, as people pleaded, “What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?” (John 6:28). No such question was asked in Nazareth.

Nobody in Jesus’ hometown wondered, “Why can’t we experience what these other places have had? Why can’t we have a visitation of God’s power right here? What will it take for us to see a stirring of the Spirit?” Instead, they remained self satisfied.

Beloved, this is the tragedy for many Christians today, as well as many churches. They hear of great moves of God *elsewhere*, with many mighty works being done and multitudes experiencing

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deliverance. But no one asks, “Why not here? Why not now?”

An entire generation of evangelicals has grown up acknowledging Jesus *the man*. They know he worked miracles while on earth and that he still works miracles on other continents. They know he has saved them and that his Spirit enlivens his Word in their hearts. Indeed, they believe all the things written about Jesus in the Bible. But they don’t acknowledge Christ as *God here, God now*, in their own lives.

You see, we can testify of our relationship with Christ, we can weep as we worship him, we can say we are friends of God. But there must come a time, in the midst of our hardships and trials, when we truly let him be God to us — the God of the impossible.

Scripture tells us the Lord is no respecter of persons. And he desires to do for anyone the same great works he does “*elsewhere*.” Yet wherever faith wavers, God’s hands are tied. “[Jesus] could do there no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them” (Mark 6:5).

Make no mistake: God’s power was readily available in Nazareth. Jesus stood in their midst, full of miracle working power, wanting to deliver, heal, revive, do mighty works. But, he declared, “I can’t work here.” Why? “He marveled because of their unbelief” (Mark 6:6). In other words, Jesus was shocked. He was stunned that his own people didn’t see or hear the works of God, that they wouldn’t accept the testimony of others elsewhere. So he moved on.

The Lord chooses simply not to respond to unbelief. He is grieved whenever his people “limit the Holy One of Israel” (see Psalm 78:41).

I do not know why God limits his works where there is unbelief. Where there is unbelief, there is a dead, dry wilderness. People are left completely without hope. Yet, in truth, there is no such thing as a “dead place.” There are only dead Christians, who have no faith. Nothing is too hard for God.

Years ago, when I was a child, a certain evangelist — an unknown man of faith — went to Argentina with a vision of God to save that nation. This man wasn’t a great preacher, just someone with a spark of true faith. He started by speaking in small churches, preaching faith: “God will open doors, if you will trust him. He is going to save hundreds of thousands. It is time to take him at his Word.”

The Lord answered that man’s faith. Hundreds of thousands did come to Christ, and a great move of God spread nationwide. A relative of General Peron was miraculously healed, and he supported the humble evangelist. Suddenly, meetings were being held in stadiums, with 200,000 people in attendance. At one point, the evangelist prayed with General Peron himself. That great work of God is still ongoing in Argentina today.

Hungry Brazilian pastors caught wind of the mighty things God was doing in Argentina — *elsewhere* — and they traveled to witness it. What they saw sparked their faith, and their hearts burned to see a

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mighty work of God in their own country. A great move of the Spirit followed, with multitudes in Brazil being saved and revived. Today that great move continues, with millions of believers.

In Chile, ministers heard about what God was doing in Brazil — *elsewhere* — and they too got the spark. They began to preach faith, praying, “Lord, if you did it in Brazil, you can do it here.” Millions of Chileans are now in the body of Christ as a result, with an estimated 30 percent of the population identified as evangelical believers.

Next door to Argentina is Uruguay, a country that has never seen a mighty move of God. As I write this, our ministry team is preparing meetings for some 2,000 pastors in that nation, to tell them what I am writing to you: “Wherever there is faith, God is on the move. It is not enough to hear what is happening *elsewhere*. The same God who moves in other countries wants to move in your midst. He is no respecter of persons.”

We simply can't be satisfied with the miracles we hear about others receiving from the Lord. Something in our heart has to say, “It's not enough for me to merely applaud those things. Lord, what you've done in other places, do in our midst.”

Years ago, God told me to go to New York City and preach to gang members. I was told I would be ridiculed, because at that time it was said there was no cure for addicts and alcoholics. I was warned that gangs wouldn't listen to a country preacher. But I believed the word God gave me. There was no money, no plan, just simple faith.

Immediately, God saved the worst gang leader and then a heroin addict. That gang leader was Nicky Cruz, who today has a worldwide ministry. The addict was Sonny Argonzoni, who serves as a bishop over 200 churches he has pioneered around the globe. It was the beginning of a great move of God, reaching addicts, alcoholics, gang members and youth, a work that continues to this day. Teen Challenge now has 520 centers around the world, because people in those countries weren't satisfied to hear what God was doing *elsewhere*.

At Nazareth, and likewise in the church today, unbelief can be traced to one problem: people do not believe Jesus is truly God. They don't see him as the almighty Lord in flesh. They don't trust him to be the God of the impossible to them. And their doubts speak loudly. Satan and his powers listen intently to the language of believers in crisis. And the moment they hear a flow of questioning or murmuring, they move in to establish a foothold. Unbelief opens the heart to all manner of satanic lies.

Over time, as trials increase and the flesh grows weary, many Christians tend to let fear and doubt creep in. They slowly lose what was once a total abandonment to faith in God, and their childlike faith diminishes. Caution and questioning invade their hearts.

Beloved, just as Jesus was fruitful in his confidence in the Father, our faith is likewise measured. “Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, *if we hold fast* the confidence and the

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rejoicing of the hope firm *unto the end*" (Hebrews 3:6, my italics).

I see three things that every believer must take care to do:

1. Remind yourself daily, "I have an enemy — a liar and seducer — who is out to devour me." "The devil...was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). This verse exposes Satan as "the father of all lies," the inventor and instigator of every deception. All lies are birthed in his bosom.

God has clearly warned his church about Satan's deceptions, especially in these last days: "The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world... The accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.... The serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood" (Revelation 12:9–10, 15).

What is the "flood" spoken of here? It is a river of lies, meant to disrupt the peace and confidence of God's saints. He seeks to carry us away by planting doubts in us about God's faithfulness.

I ask you, who does the devil lie to? Not to God. Satan knows better even than to try that. Nor does he lie to sinners. They are already imprisoned by his deceptions. No, the devil lies to believers, true seekers whose hearts are set firmly on God. Indeed, we can narrow this group further: Satan casts forth his worst accusations—his most subtle, convincing deceptions—against *those who are determined to enter God's promised rest*.

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Hebrews 4:9–11).

What does it mean to "rest in God"? It is to come to a place of total trust in the Lord's promises. Rest in God means there is no longer any struggle of doubt or fear, but rather a settled confidence. It is a continual belief that God is with us, that he cannot fail, and that he who has called us will see us through.

Just when you think you're entering this new life of trust — when you think your flesh is crucified, and you're depending wholly on the Lord — the old serpent comes with a pack of newly concocted accusations. He knows of our consecration to the Lord, our desire to do all that God has called us to. So Satan works to get the ear of our conscience, and with horrible lies he accuses us in everything we do.

You see, Satan's target is your faith. He knows if your faith is allowed to grow, it will render all his lies ineffective. Here are some of his biggest deceptions:

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**Lie Number 1:** “You are making no spiritual progress.”

The devil whispers to you: “It doesn’t matter how much you’ve hungered for God. Despite all your self denial, all the teaching you’ve taken in, all the time you’ve walked with Jesus, you are still weak and fearful. You’ve been given so much, yet it has changed you so little. You’ll never grow up spiritually, even if you live to be a hundred. Something is wrong with you. Others are getting it and passing you by.”

**Lie Number 2:** “You are too weak for spiritual warfare.”

Satan whispers, “You’re worn out, weary, tired. You just don’t have the strength to go on fighting. This spiritual warfare is too much for you.” For some believers, the following lie comes to them in their every waking hour: “You’re at the end of your rope. Go easy now. Slow down. Give up. You’re just too tired...tired...tired...” It’s a lie I have heard many times myself, in the study where I read my Bible and pray.

Our ministry received a letter recently from a dear woman who has been in constant pain for over ten years. She wrote, “I have come to a place where all I want in life is to have one hour free of pain. That is my one desire, other than to serve the Lord.” There was such resignation in her words.

Many have given up on any hope that God can change things. Right now I’m having to trust the Lord for my son Greg’s back surgery. I’ve also had to trust God through the death of our granddaughter, Tiffany. I’ve had to put all these tribulations in God’s hands and pray for healing through them. I know that without faith through my trials, it is impossible to please God.

Daniel warned that Satan would be successful in wearing down many saints. “[The devil] shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High” (Daniel 7:25). The Hebrew word for “wear out” here is to “mentally tire, make the mind weary.”

Satan is determined to bring us down by causing us to give in to a spirit of weariness. That is how he aims to rob us of our faith. I tell you, it’s easier to believe this lie when your body begins to wear down. The older I get, the less physical strength I have. I simply don’t have the same fire I once had to spend hours at a time in prayer. No matter how faithful you are, your body simply loses its strength in older age. But there is one thing that remains: the fire of faith. The one thing I can give the Lord until my dying day is my confidence in him.

Have you ever said, “I’m mentally drained, completely worn out”? That is no sin. The sin comes in not believing God’s promises of strength. We have to shut down the devil’s lies by faith. May we never move from this position: “The Lord will do it!”

**Lie Number 3:** “God is not with you. You have grieved him somehow.”

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The devil whispers, “God still loves you. But he isn’t with you right now. There is something displeasing in you, something unseen to you. His blessing is lifted from you at present.” Suddenly, the enemy pounds you with God’s Word out of context: “The Lord left Israel when they failed him. And your present dry spell — your mounting trials and troubles — are all evidence that he isn’t with you. The Holy Spirit has gone from you.”

That was the lie Satan planted in Gideon’s mind. Israel had been delivered into the hands of the Midianites and suffered cruelly at their hands. But the Spirit of God told Gideon, “The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour” (Judges 6:12).

When Gideon heard this, he looked around at Israel’s disastrous situation and believed the devil’s lies. He questioned God: “If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? And where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us up from Egypt? But now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites” (6:13).

The truth was, God had delivered Israel to the Midianites to chasten them. But he never forsook them.

Moses warned Israel that a time would come when they would corrupt themselves. They would fashion idols and worship them, doing evil in God’s sight. Indeed, this sin would threaten Israel’s very existence, scattering them throughout the earth until few numbers of them were left.

Yet, even with this hard prophetic word, Moses cast down all unbelief by trusting in yet another word from the Lord: “If from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; (for the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) *he will not forsake thee*, neither destroy thee nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them” (Deuteronomy 4:29–31, my italics).

We have an even surer word, from the Lord himself: “He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper” (Hebrews 13:5–6). “I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20).

2. Examine yourself to see if you have been guilty of the sin of unbelief. “Take heed, *brethren*, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God” (Hebrews 3:12). The author is addressing *brethren* — saints, believers. He’s not addressing sinners but partakers of the heavenly calling, saying, “You, Christian — take heed! Is there *in you* an evil heart of unbelief?”

The writer of Hebrews ties everything together: an evil heart of unbelief, hardening of the heart, departing from the living God. The fact is, unbelief is dangerous because it hardens, setting like concrete. It is possible to cry a river of tears and yet still be hard at heart.

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We see this happening with Israel, as God commanded them to go into Canaan and possess the land. Israel refused to go, believing instead the “evil report” of the ten spies who had scouted the land. Their unbelief destroyed their faith and confidence in God. And so the Lord cast them into the wilderness to wander for forty years.

When they finally decided to go in and fight, they did so without God — and they were defeated by the Amorites. Scripture says of them: “Ye returned and wept before the Lord; but the Lord would not hearken to your voice, nor give ear unto you” (Deuteronomy 1:45). Tears without faith have no meaning.

After Christ’s resurrection, the eleven disciples’ hearts were hardened by unbelief. They knew Jesus had risen, but their hearts were full of doubt. Consider these events:

“When Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene... And she went and told them that had been with him... And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

“Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen” (Mark 16:9–14).

In this last verse, Jesus ties together unbelief and hardness of heart. (In Greek, the word is “callousness.”) Christ didn’t like what he saw in the disciples, so he “upbraided” them, meaning to scold or reprove sharply. In short, he bawled them out mightily.

3. Be fully persuaded that your high priest is touched by all your hurts, and that you have full access to his throne. “We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:15–16).

We are to take everything to Christ. Yet his throne of grace is not a place where we must convince him to help us. He needs no convincing; he is more willing to give than we are to receive.

We have been invited into the throne room of the Potentate of the universe: “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do” (Hebrews 4:13). Everything is “naked and opened” to the Lord. He knows what you have been through, what you are now going through and facing ahead. And he’s not only on your side but waiting for you to come boldly to him.

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He is loving, full of mercy, anxious to help you in your time of need. And he is sympathetic, because he himself has experienced all that we are going through, at every point. Simply put, we don't have to explain anything to him: "Jesus, you know what I'm going through. I can't put it into words. You've been here before. Help me."

In all of this, we are not to bring into his presence the abomination of unbelief. Instead, we are to "convince ourselves," being "fully persuaded." "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 20).

Dear saint, it is time for us to make this our prayer, this very day: "Lord, I have had enough. Do in my life what you are doing in others'. And do it here, now, not just *elsewhere*."

"When I grow weary in doing your will, I know I can trust you to give me strength, to lift me up. I'm not going to sit around nursing my doubts. I know I have a place to go in my time of need. And I won't measure my spirituality by looking at someone else. I'm leaving all spiritual growth up to you, Lord.

"Nor will I listen to the devil's lies any longer. Instead, I'm going to build up my faith, in your Word. I know that without faith it is impossible to please you. Amen!" ☐

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