

## The Need in You and How to Meet It



David Wilkerson September 8, 2014

This message is for anyone carrying a need right now. It is especially for those who have been afraid to express their need. In fifty-eight years of preaching around the world, I have learned that often people carrying the deepest needs can put on a front. On the outside it looks as if everything is okay in their lives, but inside they feel like death.

When *The Cross and the Switchblade* was first published, I met a number of well-known personalities on TV talk shows. One was a comedian who had been divorced ten times. For the first hour we listened to the comedian mock marriage. He joked, "I'm about to get married for the eleventh time." All that time his future wife was sitting in the audience. The comedian said men should leave their marriage if they aren't happy and find themselves a younger wife.

At one point the host turned to me and said, "Mr. Wilkerson, you haven't been saying anything." At that moment the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and I said to the comedian, "Sir, I think I've just met the loneliest man in America. I think you cry yourself to sleep at night. You've made light of marriage and your own past marriages. But I think it's an act."

The host quickly went to a commercial. A few hours later, after the show was over, I was waiting outside to hail a cab. The comedian drove up in his car with a sad look. He said, "Mr. Wilkerson, I've got to talk to you. Please let me take you to your hotel." I climbed into the backseat of his car while he and his fiancée sat in the front. The comedian looked at me in the back seat and said, "Reverend, you hit the nail on the head."

As he drove along, he shook his head and continued: "Ten women couldn't be wrong. And I have maligned this woman," he said, nodding to his fiancée. "I think I need God. All along I've had a need deep inside me. And when it couldn't be met, I went from one woman to another. I was trying to find somebody who would meet this hounding need." I ministered to that man, told him about Jesus and prayed with him and his soon-to-be-wife.

**In all my years of ministry, I have yet to meet anyone who doesn't have a need.**

I've worked with young people who had drug addictions so fierce that society's experts said we should give up on them. But I knew that every craving that led to their addiction was driven by a deep need for love — God's love.

There is in each of us some deep question, some deep hurt, some unhealed pain. It could have to do with anything — family, children, marriage, job or simply loneliness. Try as we might, we can't hide our need in the presence of God. The Holy Spirit is a hound from heaven who comes to us to open up the love of Jesus. The Spirit manifests this love not just in words but in deeds, showing us the way to meet our deep needs.

We can't do anything physically to meet our need. No doctor or psychologist can provide it. And we can't do it by looking for some emotional answer. No pastor or friend, not even a mate, can meet this inner need. No one can get to the root of it because they don't have the ability.

There are people with vast amounts of wealth who have come to this realization. I remember reading about the owner of one of New York City's football teams whose daughter's life was snuffed out. This young woman had all

the money she wanted. She had fast cars and led an equally fast life. Then one day her life was gone, and no amount of her father's money could bring her back.

It amazes me how many young people continue to give themselves over to the party life to try to meet their great need. For many in this country, every night is a party. They're binge drinking and smoking pot in larger numbers than ever. It's all an attempt to stave off emptiness and ease their fears as they consider their future.

I asked a preacher's son recently why he was running with the pot crowd. He answered, "I've never felt my life was worth anything. I'm a slow learner, and I was never accepted by the mainstream crowd. So I got in with some friends who were smoking pot. I feel accepted by them. Pot eases my mind for a little while. In those moments I don't feel left out. I'm not afraid my life will turn out to be nothing."

But he admits it's not helping him. Whenever I talk to him, he reveals he has gone deeper and deeper into pot smoking — and he's finding less and less peace in it. I know this is true of some readers. Perhaps you've turned to pot, alcohol or some other drug to try to ease your pain and meet that deep need in you. But it's not working.

The Bible doesn't hide the fact that the pleasures of this world seem to give relief for a while. Yet there is a problem with sins of pleasure: The relief they bring diminishes over time. In fact, these sins keep subtracting relief until finally your soul has a negative balance. The things that once brought pleasure now take you deeper and deeper into despair.

Some people reading this message have been caught in that trap. Yet among them are those who have come to grips with this reality — and they have accepted the truth of the gospel.

### **You can't find help for your need anywhere else in the world but Christ.**

There is no other place to turn on the face of this earth. There is no other hope. You have to settle in your mind that your need is spiritual. And no drugs, no human, no amount of money can meet it.

There are three things the Holy Spirit wants you to know:

First, *your only hope is to recognize that your need is spiritual*. It has very little to do with your past. The problem isn't where you are now, but what drove you to this point.

Second, *you can't just hear the truth; you have to do the truth*. Scripture makes this very clear: Jesus said, "I am the way, *the truth* and the life. If you love me, you will obey me. You will do what I say. You will do the truth."

Don't be mistaken: It is not enough to know the truth. Maybe you know the Bible from earlier in life. But even if you don't, God makes clear in Romans he has made himself known to the world through the wonder of nature and by speaking into the heart of man. We all have been made aware of the truth of God.

Yet there is more to it than just knowing the truth. There is the "doing" of truth. This means hearing Christ's gospel, accepting it as truth, and walking according to that truth. God's design is for us to live the truth.

This may sound simple enough. But the apostle Paul speaks of those who "have heard the truth yet refuse to walk in it, loving their unrighteousness and pleasures."

Your great need will never be met if you still say in your heart of hearts, "I love what I'm doing. I can't give it up."

There has to come a cry in your heart. You have come to the end of your rope. Many reading this message know that. They've heard enough of the gospel to know everything I have said here is true. This brings me to the third thing the Holy Spirit would say to you:

### **In John 17, Jesus is speaking of his followers when he says something marvelous and astounding.**

In this passage, Christ is praying for his disciples. Yet Jesus' prayer here is also meant for every future generation who would put their trust in him as Savior and Lord. Jesus says this: "I pray...that thou shouldest keep them from the evil one" (*John 17:15*).

Jesus doesn't stop there. He adds in verse 20, "*But [I pray] for them also which shall believe on me through their word*" (*my italics*). In other words, "I pray not just for those who will believe in me. I pray also for the people my followers will be preaching to."

As I read this recently, Christ's prayer hit me full force. *He was praying for you, dear reader, as you read the words I write to you now.* Indeed, as you read my message, this passage of Scripture is being fulfilled.

Jesus started praying for you before this written message ever came into my head. And what I'm saying to you here is accompanied by the prayers of Jesus himself to the heavenly Father. He's praying that your heart will be open to what you read: "Father, give this one ears to hear and eyes to see."

Know that as Jesus prays for you, God has never turned down the prayers of his Son. Right now, it is all up to you. I say the following in love but with the responsibility given me as a minister of the Lord: It is a serious matter to shake off the loving grace of God.

There is a tendency to harden your heart over time. The more you hear about Jesus, the less you want to hear it — and the harder your heart becomes. So, dear one, this is the day for you. This is the time God has set for you to hear him. He hasn't brought these words before you by mere accident. You are reading this in his perfect, divine will.

He has known all along the deepest need in your heart. And he has born witness to every attempt you've made to meet that need. He has heard the deep cry of your soul. Ask him now to meet you in his Son, Jesus. Christ is the way to meet every need you have. Everything you need is in him. Amen.

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