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**Beyond Sunday
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**A BILLION STORIES
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Could Do What the Lord
Did for Me**
Ranfis's Story



Pastor David Wilkerson

The Hunter From Hell

by **Pastor David Wilkerson**, *Founding Pastor (1931–2011)*

There is a truth the Holy Spirit presses on the heart again and again: the enemy of our souls hunts what God values most. Scripture says that the seductress hunts for the precious life. This is more than a warning about temptation. It is a revelation of Satan's strategy. He targets what is precious to God.

The devil does not waste his efforts on what carries no value. He goes after lives that hold purpose, promise, and spiritual potential. The word precious speaks of what is beloved, valuable, highly esteemed, and dear in the sight of the Lord. Satan hunts those who have the most potential for the kingdom of God.

**The enemy of our souls
hunts what God values
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The Faces I Have Never Forgotten

Over the years of ministry, I have seen this truth in heartbreaking ways. I have looked into the faces of young people broken by drugs,

bound by darkness, abandoned by those who should have protected them, and I have asked the Lord, "Why these children?" Again and again the answer has come back: because the enemy hunts the precious life.

I think of five deaf and mute teenagers I met in a small room in Harlem. They could not speak. They could not hear. And yet the devil had found them. I sat there watching young people, some as young as twelve years old, already bound in addiction, and I walked out of that place with tears in my eyes. They were not hardened criminals. They were precious. And the enemy had gone after them early, because that is what he does.

I remember a pastor who came into my office, hat in hand, a broken man. He had preached against drugs from his pulpit for years. He had raised his sons in Sunday school. They had sung the hymns and known the Lord. Then came the day the police called him down to the station. His two boys had been arrested for possession and pushing heroin. He rolled up their sleeves himself and saw the marks. He got down on his knees in my office and wept.

He said, "Brother Dave, I don't know what I did wrong." Those boys sat in the chairs across the room with hard faces and walked out over their father's grief. I never forgot it. And when they left I said, "God, how did it happen?" The answer was the same: the adulteress hunts the precious life.

**They could not speak.
They could not hear.
And yet the devil had
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I think of a young man a teenage girl brought to one of our crusades. Just a year before, he had been a star on the football team—a fine-looking, healthy young man full of promise. His team won a game, and at the party that followed, everyone was dropping acid. They called him a coward if he didn't join them. He gave in and tried it once. Someone had mixed

The Hunter From Hell

(continued)

strychnine into the acid, and that one decision cost him everything. He spent months in a hospital, out of his mind. When she brought him to me, she had to lead him by the hand. His hair had fallen out. His teeth were rotting. He could only grunt. I looked into his eyes and saw nothing but hollowness. I got angry—angry at the devil, angry at what had been stolen from this young man who had never even sought out drugs. He had simply been at the wrong place, and the hunter found him. I prayed over him and believed God, but I never learned what became of him. I have never forgotten those hollow eyes. He was precious. And the enemy had taken what he could not replace.

Consider also the story of Nicky Cruz. He was one of seventeen children born into a home of witchcraft. His mother was a witch. His father was deep into the occult. And here was a little boy who cried out and wanted to be different. Even in that darkness, he called on God. The devil is not omniscient—he does not know the future—but he can read hunger. He can read desire. And he saw what that little boy could become. He saw the testimony, the calling, the threat to his kingdom. So he moved against Nicky Cruz early and hard. He chased him into the streets, seduced him into violence, and tried to destroy him completely. Thank God, he is a testimony for Jesus today. But the devil saw it first. He always goes after the precious life.

The devil may tempt you, harass you, and accuse you, but if you belong to Jesus, he cannot have you.

Why Some Battles Have Been So Fierce

Some believers have carried shame for years because of the darkness they once walked through. They assume there must have been something especially evil in them that made them vulnerable to Satan's attack. But the truth may be the very opposite. Perhaps the reason hell fought so hard against you is

because the devil saw something in you that threatened his kingdom.

Maybe he saw a hunger for God. Maybe he saw tenderness in your heart. Maybe he saw a future testimony, a calling, or a life that would glorify Christ. So he came after you with lies, temptation, fear, and condemnation. The next time the enemy attacks your mind, do not only ask, "What is wrong with me?" Ask instead, "What did the devil see in me that frightened him?"

I have known young men who, as small boys, used to go out into open fields with their Bibles and preach. God had called them early. And the devil saw it. He saw the potential in that child and went after him and seduced him. The enemy is not omniscient, but he can read hunger. He can read desire. He can see a heart reaching toward God, and he moves quickly against it.

The Pattern in Scripture

Consider Joseph. Scripture says the Lord was with him, blessed him, and caused all he did to prosper. Then came the temptation. Potiphar's wife set her eyes on Joseph. Why Joseph? There were many other men in that house. Yet the enemy targeted the one life that carried a holy purpose. The adulteress hunts the precious life.

The same pattern appears throughout Scripture. Job was assaulted, not because he was godless, but because he was righteous. His very righteousness attracted the attention of hell. The devil stood before God and said, he only serves You because You bless him. But Job was not a secret indulger. He was not leaning toward the world. He was precious in the eyes of God, and he came through the fire and said, though He try me, I shall come forth as gold.

Even Jesus Himself was driven into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. If the enemy pursued the Son of God, then no believer should be surprised when spiritual battle comes near.

What the Enemy Cannot Do

Still, here is the comfort of the gospel: the devil may tempt you, harass you, and accuse you, but if you belong to Jesus, he cannot have you. He can attack your peace, but he cannot steal your soul from the hand of God. He can whisper lies, but he cannot cancel the blood of Jesus Christ.

Nothing frightens the devil more than a believer who has come into rest—who is no longer striving in the flesh, no longer running in fear, but is simply at peace in the justifying grace of Jesus Christ. That is the rest the enemy will work hardest to take from you. Guard it.

You do not need to feel your own worthiness. Rest in His.

Rest in the Love of Christ

Many Christians live weary because they are always trying to prove themselves worthy of God's love. They strive, they fear, and they live under condemnation. But peace comes when the heart finally settles this truth: I am loved by Jesus Christ, and I am precious in His sight. Not because of talent, strength, or achievement, but because of His mercy and His finished work on the cross.

I look back over my own walk with God and remember years when I preached peace without having it. I strived so hard to please the Lord and never felt like I was measuring up. I allowed the enemy to run rampant through my mind. I wish someone had told me sooner how precious I was in the eyes of God. That word alone can bring the soul into rest.

If your heart is repentant and you desire to walk with the Lord, then you must stop measuring His love by your feelings. You do not need to feel your own worthiness. Rest in His. He made you worthy. You can come to Him at any moment and say, "Jesus, bring my soul to peace, because I have no other plea but Your blood and Your faithfulness."

The hunter from hell cannot define you. Your failures do not define you. Your past does not define you. The love of Jesus does.

Beloved, if you are in Christ, settle this in your heart today: Jesus loves you, and you are precious to Him.

Let that truth quiet your fears, break the power of condemnation, and bring your soul into rest. ■

This message was preached by David Wilkerson at Times Square Church.

Heritage and Legacy

by **Pastor Tim Dilena**, *Senior Pastor*

Heritage is our tradition and values that we inherit from our past. Legacy is the lasting impact and accomplishments we leave behind for the next generation. Simply put, heritage is our roots, while legacy is the fruit.

For me personally, and for our church here in New York City, the life and work of David Wilkerson is our heritage. That heritage started with one man taking a step of faith to leave a country church in the hills of Pennsylvania and come to the streets of New York to work with gangs. Our heritage is found in the story of *The Cross and the Switchblade*. I find myself going back to the pages of that book to remind myself of our story and to stay centered so we may leave a legacy. Godly stories should inform and inflame—and the story of *The Cross and the Switchblade* does both.

My heart is leaping with joy as Times Square Church brings to Broadway this story that changed New York City and impacted the world. In 2027, *The Cross and the Switchblade* musical will come to the Mark Hellinger Theatre with all original music to retell the 1958 story of David Wilkerson. The last gospel show on Broadway was over 40 years ago, and I have friends who directed and performed in it. When they heard about *The Cross and the Switchblade*, they rejoiced as I did.



This story of faith is for people all over the world to understand that nothing is too hard for God. It tells how a rural pastor was led by God to work in the worst areas New York City. It is a reminder of how some of the hardest gang members and criminals came to a life-changing encounter that transformed their lives. Finally, it is a story of how this moment created a legacy that still lives on in people and Christian organizations around the world.

Nicky Cruz is still speaking to millions about how his life was transformed. Teen Challenge now ministers in nearly 100 countries, seeing the power of God break people free from addiction through Jesus Christ. And Times Square Church stands in the heart of New York City as a lighthouse, proclaiming the gospel week after week.



Pastor David and Gwen Wilkerson

My story is wrapped up in *The Cross and the Switchblade*. I get to leave a legacy because of this heritage. When David Wilkerson came to New York City and met a police captain who helped him—that was my father. My father became the first treasurer for Teen Challenge. I grew up with the Wilkerson family in New York and was able to witness firsthand the testimonies of transformed lives. It was David Wilkerson who gave me my first challenge to go on a missions trip with his son Gary in Detroit. It was also David Wilkerson who first ordained me into ministry. I am part of the legacy of this heritage.

It is true that a people with a godly heritage have a strong sense of where they are going because they have seen the hand of God and continue to see it. The past adds meaning to both their history and their future. As one man said, "A people without a heritage are easily persuaded."

Our roots are deep as a ministry. My roots are deep as a person. The 1958 story of *The Cross and the Switchblade* is our heritage. The 2027 Broadway musical *The Cross and the Switchblade*—I pray—will be part of our legacy.



Beyond Sunday

Where Connection Comes Alive

Across Times Square Church, something meaningful is happening just beyond Sunday morning. Over the past several months, our Beyond Sunday Fellowship gatherings have quietly become a place where strangers become family, and where the life of the church continues to unfold in a simple, powerful way.

Each month, immediately following the second service, Room 201 opens and fills with conversation, coffee, and anticipation. People gather in small circles of five or six, many meeting for the first time, yet drawn together by a shared hunger to connect and reflect on what God has just spoken.

There is often a subtle hesitation at first. People find their seats, exchange a few polite words, and settle in. But within minutes, something shifts. The room fills with a steady hum as stories are shared, insights emerge, and hearts begin to open. A simple question about the sermon turns into meaningful conversation, and meaningful conversation often leads to genuine connection.

In one gathering, two young men in their late twenties joined a group. They were well put together and seemed new to this kind of setting, taking it in at first. As the conversation unfolded,



they began to engage more openly, sharing and responding with thoughtfulness. It was clear by the end that they had been encouraged and genuinely enjoyed the time.

Afterward, we connected with them and invited one of the men to BTG, our monthly Friday gathering for singles and couples in their thirties and forties. He attended the following week, continued to stay connected, and not long after stepped into serving. Today, he is faithfully volunteering and already making a meaningful contribution to the life of the church. What began as a simple moment of connection opened the door to something much deeper.



Each gathering concludes in prayer. Smaller circles form, and people begin interceding for one another. For some, it is the first time in years they have experienced someone interceding for them personally. In those moments, the message moves from something heard to something lived.

Beyond Sunday Fellowship is helping our church rediscover the beauty and strength of being the Body of Christ together. It is simple, relational, and deeply needed. If you have been longing for connection, or wondering how to take a next step beyond attending a service, this is an invitation. Come join us. There is a place for you here, and we believe God will meet you in it.



**chapter
by chapter**

A Daily Podcast with Tim Dilena

OLD TESTAMENT

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**Read it.
Wear it.
Live it.**



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12PM

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ONE HOUR.
YOUR TIME.
HIS PRESENCE.

WE ARE PRAYING FOR AN AWAKENING IN NYC

Lord, **awaken** people to the fact that God is real

Lord, **awaken** people to the destructive power of sin

Lord, **awaken** people for their need of a Savior

Lord, **awaken** people to the purpose of the cross

Lord, **awaken** people to the voice of the Holy Spirit

Lord, **awaken** people for a desire to read the Bible

Lord, **awaken** people to conviction of sin

Lord, **awaken** your church to a fresh fire from heaven

Lord, **awaken** your pulpits to preach with an anointing

Acts 2:1–2 (NKJV)

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.



A BILLION
STORIES

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ROAD TO A
BILLION

One billion starts with one.



Ranfis Ferreira



No Medication or Therapy Could Do What the Lord Did for Me

Ranfis's Story

I was born in Manhattan to Dominican parents, a first-generation American. My mother introduced me to Christ, and we were raised Catholic. From an early age, I knew I loved God—but somewhere along the way, I drifted and tried to fit into the world.

My father was an alcoholic, and alcohol was always around. Being anxious, I discovered early that drinking might have calmed me. It quieted my mind, so I latched onto it. Over time, my family stopped going to church, though my mom kept prayer alive at home.

As I got older, my drinking increased. It never led anywhere good. It might have calmed me in the moment, but it always left me worse. I began getting arrested—about 13 times. I had DUIs and a warrant in Florida for years. Alcohol left me anxious, depressed, and paranoid, and led to other drugs. I spiraled into a dark place.

I always knew God existed, but I wasn't looking for Him. I searched for answers in the wrong places. My anxiety kept getting worse. It became a cycle I couldn't break. My family was worried, but I was stubborn. I knew I had a problem but didn't know how to stop.

I managed to quit other drugs, but alcohol brought me to my knees. Even then, God never left me.

My family intervened and urged me to get help. I entered a 28-day program, but I knew I needed more. I could still feel alcohol calling me. I went to the Phoenix House for about 18 months. I did therapy and took medication, but it felt like a small bandage on a huge wound. The anxiety was still there.

But God was moving, and I started noticing.

I got a job working with my brother. One day, during a severe panic attack, with nowhere to run. I cried out, "Father, please take this anxiety from me." In that moment, it disappeared.

I was in disbelief. I spent the rest of the day thanking Him. When I got home, I knew I belonged to Him.

I started reading the Bible, praying, and seeking Him. It was what I had been searching for. I felt loved—deeply and abundantly.

I found Times Square Church and began attending every Tuesday. I'd arrive early, stay late, and began connecting with people. God took my obsessiveness and turned it into a passion for Him.

Now I pour Jesus' love into others and receive it in return.

If you can relate to this, you're not alone. There's an emptiness we all feel, but Jesus Christ will fill that emptiness—even the places you didn't know were empty.

No medication or therapy could do what the Lord has done for me.

Share your story at billionstories@tsc.nyc

Happy Father's Day



TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

Times Square Church was founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of *The Cross and the Switchblade*. It is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City.

CONTACT

212.541.6300 | info@tsc.nyc

CHURCH LOCATION

237 West 51st Street | NY, NY 10019

OUR SERVICES

Sunday | 10AM & 1PM

In person and online

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In person and online

Wednesday | 12PM

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