

A Call to Anguish, by David Wilkerson

And I look at the whole religious scene today and all I see are the inventions and ministries of man and flesh. It's mostly powerless. It has no impact on the world. And I see more of the world coming into the church and impacting the church, rather than the church impacting the world. I see the music taking over the house of God. I see entertainment taking over the house of God. An obsession with entertainment in God's house; a hatred of correction and a hatred of reproof. Nobody wants to hear it any more. Whatever happened to anguish in the house of God?

Whatever happened to anguish in the ministry? It's a word you don't hear in this pampered age. You don't hear it. Anguish means extreme pain and distress. The emotions so stirred that it becomes painful. Acute deeply felt inner pain because of conditions about you, in you, or around you. Deep pain. Deep sorrow. The agony of God's heart.

We've held on to our religious rhetoric and our revival talk but we've become so passive. All true passion is born out of anguish. All true passion for Christ comes out of a baptism of anguish. You search the scripture and you'll find that when God determined to recover a ruined situation... He would share His own anguish for what God saw happening to His church and to His people. And He would find a praying man and take that man and literally baptize him in anguish. You find it in the book of Nehemiah. Jerusalem is in ruins. How is God going to deal with this? How is God going to restore the ruin? Now folks, look at me... Nehemiah was not a preacher, he was a career man. But this was a praying man.

And God found a man who would not just have a flash of emotion. Not just some great sudden burst of concern and then let it die. He said: "No. I broke down and I wept and I mourned and I fasted. And then I began to pray night and day. Why didn't these other men... why didn't they have an answer? Why didn't God use them in restoration? Why didn't they have a word? Because there was no sign of anguish. No weeping. Not a word of prayer. It's all ruin.

Does it matter to you today? Does it matter to you at all that God's spiritual Jerusalem, the church, is now married to the world? That there is such a coldness sweeping the land? Closer than that... does it matter about the Jerusalem that is in our own hearts? The sign of ruin that's slowly draining spiritual power and passion. Blind to lukewarmness, blind to the mixture that's creeping in. That's all the devil wants to do is

to get the fight out of you and kill it. So you won't labor in prayers anymore, you won't weep before God anymore. You can sit and watch television and your family go to hell.

Let me ask you... is what I just said convicting to you at all? There is a great difference between anguish and concern. Concern is something that begins to interest you. You take an interest in a project or a cause or a concern or a need. And I want to tell you something. I've learned over all my years... of 50 years of preaching. If it is not born in anguish, if it had not been born of the Holy Spirit. Where what you saw and heard of the ruin that drove you to your knees, took you down into a baptism of anguish where you began to pray and seek God. I know now. Oh my God do I know it. Until I am in agony. Until I have been anguished over it... And all our projects, all our ministries, everything we do... Where are the Sunday school teachers that weep over kids they know are not hearing and are going to hell?

You see, a true prayer life begins at the place of anguish. You see, if you set your heart to pray, God's going to come and start sharing His heart with you. Your heart begins to cry out: "Oh God, Your name is being blasphemed. The Holy Spirit is being mocked. The enemy is out trying to destroy the testimony of the Lord's faithfulness and something has to be done."

There is going to be no renewal, no revival, no awakening, until we are willing to let Him once again break us. Folks, it's getting late, and it's getting serious. Please don't tell me... don't tell me you're concerned when you're spending ours in front of internet or television. Come on. Lord, there are some that need to get to this alter and confess: "I am not what I was, I am not where I am supposed to be. God I don't have Your heart or Your burden. I wanted it easy. I just wanted to be happy. But Lord, true joy comes out of anguish." There's nothing of the flesh that will give you joy. I don't care how much money, I don't care what kind of new house, there is absolutely nothing physical that can give you joy. It's only what is accomplished by the Holy Spirit when you obey and take on His heart.

Build the walls around your family. Build the walls around your own heart. It will make you strong and impregnable against the enemy. God, that's what we desire. AMEN