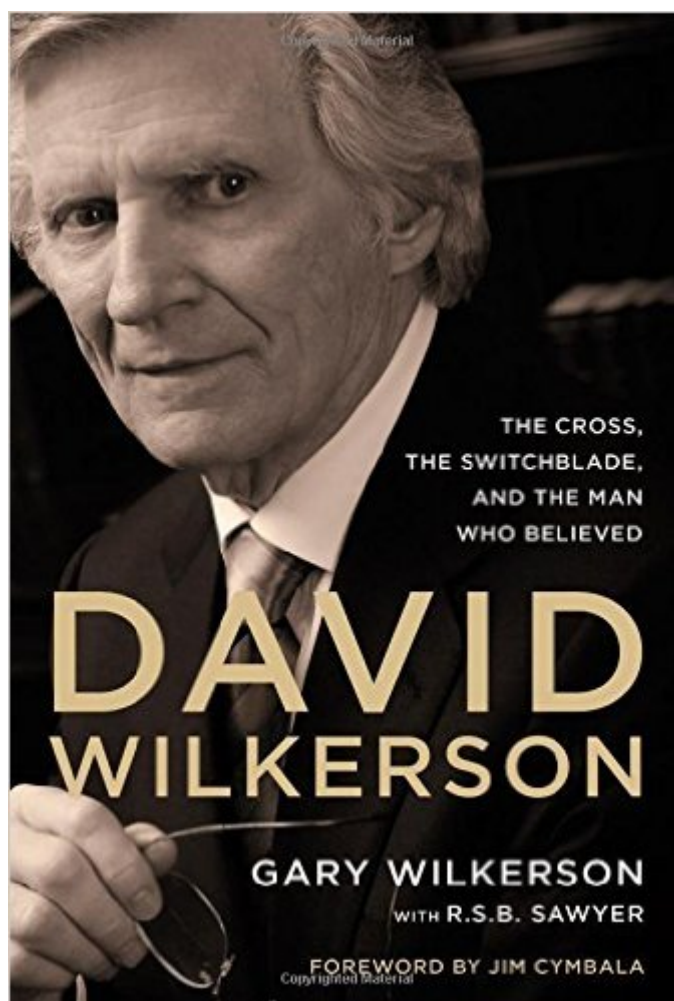




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# **David Wilkerson: The Cross, The Switchblade, And The Man Who Believed**



## Synopsis

This is the story of David Wilkerson, the man who believed against the odds that God could do great things in the rejected and ignored of New York City, who refused to give up on those on the streets even when they had given up on themselves, and who saw in the eyes of the drug addicts and gang members what others failed to see—the love of Jesus Christ. But who was David Wilkerson? Many Christians don't really know. More often than not, we saw the fruit of his faith in God rather than the man himself. When Wilkerson moved to New York from rural Pennsylvania in 1958 to confront the gangs who ran the streets, he was a skinny, 120-pound man. After the initial publicity that brought him face to face with some of the most dangerous young men of the city, he largely flew under the radar of the media, using the Word of God and a bit of tough love to help men and women of the street escape the destructive spiral of drugs and violence. Wilkerson was always the real deal, full of passion and conviction, not interested in what others said was the “right” or political thing to do. Wilkerson later founded the Times Square Church, now a non-denominational mega-church of 8,000 members, to this day a crossroads for those battling sin, drugs, and pornography, and a place where the message of Christ is discussed. He created the faith-based program Teen Challenge to wean addicts off drugs, and then World Challenge, dedicated since its beginning to promoting and spreading the Gospel throughout the world. Both now have branches worldwide, continuing the work that God began in the life of one man who believed David Wilkerson was a man of faith who trusted God would give him what he needed to enter a world of crime and killing. He was a man of conviction who took the dream God gave him and marched forward without ever looking back. And he was a man of vision who could not be shaken from his beliefs—sometimes even when counseled otherwise. David Wilkerson was the preacher of New York City.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Gary Wilkerson is the President of World Challenge, an international mission organization that was founded by his father, David Wilkerson. He is also the lead pastor of The Springs Church, which he and others launched in 2009 and has grown rapidly by God's grace. Gary travels nationally and internationally to conduct conferences for pastors, missionaries and Christian workers and to oversee mission ventures including church plants, orphanages, health clinics and feeding programs among the poor and unreached people of the world. Gary and his wife, Kelly, have four children and live in Colorado Springs, Colorado. R.S.B. Sawyer is a writer whose work has appeared in HarperOne's Best Christian Writing Series. He and his wife, Joy Roulier Sawyer, live in Denver, where they are active in the Lighthouse Writers Workshop community. Their editing work together has earned awards from the Associated Church Press and the Catholic Press Association.

Thank you Gary (and R.S.B. Sawyer) for publishing a very honest biography about a man that had significant influence in Christianity. I put this book down thinking three words that were used to describe David Wilkerson; Humility, Prayer, Courageous. I was awestruck at how a man of such influence would turn down a meeting with the President, but go out of his way to minister to a drug addict. Wilkerson was not trying to make a name for himself or build a platform. As a pastor in an inner city I have felt the temptation to play a political card and I hosted our Congressman and mayor on a Sunday morning. Wilkerson challenged me to reject those temptations and seek to minister to those who are marginalized and overlooked. Prayer is a verb, however, it became synonymous with Wilkerson as he invested his life in prayer. This book could have summed Wilkerson's life up in one sentence, "God will make a way for a praying man", this phrase was the grand take-a-way of the book. Lastly courage is what Wilkerson modeled to pastors. He took large steps in faith and confronted gangs and crime in a way that most spiritual men would dismiss as presumptuous, he confronted his own denominational barriers and defended his convictions when they were not popular which caused the Assemblies of God to rethink certain legalistic tendencies, namely divorce and remarriage. The biographical sketch was well written but what impacted me the most was how Gary exposed the humanness of his father. As Gary opened up about the family tension his father

grew up with and with great tact and integrity illuminated his father-son relationship. This was especially helpful for me because I have tension with my father who ministered as an itinerate preacher for several years of my adolescence. Every pastor needs to read this book in a hurry! Thank you, Edwin Handley

This book is totally feeding my soul! I don't want it to end and I'm wondering what will I ever read after I'm done with this one that is going to do for me anything close to how God is using this book in my life! I know, y'all are saying, "Your Bible will!", but you know what I mean. His son Gary has done a wonderful work with putting this book out. I'm not giving you a book report like some people do, but I'm **STRONGLY RECOMMENDING** this fabulous read!

This book met all my expectations of the life of David Wilkerson's Ministry, family and sound belief in God's ability to do all things. David saw what others chose not to, he obeyed where others would of disobeyed, he poured his life out for God to use. David knew he was a servant of the Most High God and that his time on this earth to accomplish the very reason for his birth, that he must follow through, even if it meant many in his surrounding where left astounded and neglected even offended! Not many saw what he saw, David saw the finished product, what Jesus does in a life yielded to Him. David was a weeping prophet in his time ( 1958 when God called him to NY,) he went not knowing how, but depending upon the ONE who did all things well, ( Romans 8:28 - Isaiah 46:8-10 - Ps 23:4 -----) there are so many scripture verses he molded his life after to obey GOD. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom! He truly served God, and I learned as I read what his son ( Gary, and so many others wrote.)-----That I also as David Wilkerson did on a daily basis was this secret-----**GOD HELPS ME UNDERSTAND WHAT I WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND** ! God loves in Gods way and not man kinds ways. Read, soak, and remember all he did because David Wilkerson became what all of us are called to be in Christ Jesus-----**BROKEN BREAD AND POURED OUT WINE, NOT MY WILL LORD BUT YOURS, I ACCEPT THE CUP OF JESUS.**

Barely could I read a page without weeping. Weeping in gratitude to the Lord for raising up this man, weeping in thanks for the thousands of lives changed by his preaching of the Gospel, weeping in pain understanding many of the same issues he struggled with, weeping because of the many times I have chosen needless things over prayerful communion with Christ. I also wept for our loss of him. I would recommend this book to anyone who believes that Christ can't use them for His glory because of their weaknesses and failures. David Wilkerson's life and ministry is a living example

that in our weaknesses God shows His awesome strength and power. Fr. Timothy Cremeens, PhD

David Wilkerson: The Cross, the Switchblade, and the Man Who Believed is an excellent biography about a remarkable man. Although his initial ministry among the gangs in New York occurred well before my time, David Wilkerson still profoundly influenced me through the lives of others whom he had touched. My pastor and father-in-law, George Markey, was a man who was deeply challenged and changed by the story of David's faith, boldness, and integrity. As is stated in the book, "It's in the darkest places that God shows Himself strongest." David Wilkerson, and those around him, did not seek a comfortable Christianity, but rather believed that God wanted them to go to "the least of these" and be the much needed salt and light for those bound by addiction, deception, and despair. Lives changed, souls saved. Clearly presented in this book are the strengths and weaknesses, the successes and failures of one of America's greatest evangelists. Although he wrestled with the concept of God's personal love for Him, David Wilkerson demonstrated the fervent love of God to millions of people. Love in judgment and love in mercy--God treats us as Sons and Daughters saving us from an eternity apart of Him, but does not let us stay comfortable in our sin, convenience, or compromise. I had the honor of meeting David and Gary Wilkerson over a decade ago in Kiev, Ukraine during a crusade. Their influence is not only felt in America, but around the world.

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