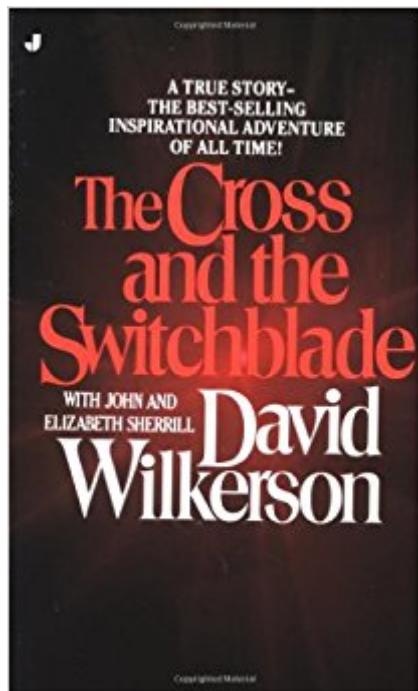


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# The Cross And The Switchblade: A True Story -- The Best-Selling International Adventure Of All Time!



## **Synopsis**

A young preacher from the Pennsylvania hills comes to New York City and influences troubled teenagers with his inspirational message.

## **Book Information**

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Age Range: 18 and up

Grade Level: 12 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

The story of how David Wilkerson came to found Teen Challenge should be a must read for anyone who follows Jesus Christ. The Cross and the Switchblade describes how Wilkerson put feet on his faith that took him from rural Pennsylvania to the streets of New York City. It's the story of how a pastor followed the leading of the Holy Spirit and reached out to minister to people with whom the churches would not associate. Wilkerson describes in his book how essential it is to meet the unloved where they are, rather than waiting for them to show up in church all dressed up and ready to worship within the ranks of the clean and respectable. He also rightly emphasizes the importance of follow up, how one can't just expect to go out and distribute tracts or preach from street corners without also developing real, loving relationships with people and ministering to their needs, both spiritually and physically. Now that Teen Challenge International has grown to over 200 centers around the world, it is interesting to note that the struggle in recovery ministry continues to be much the same: It's extremely difficult to get people to reach out in love to those who have never been loved, and it's nearly impossible to get church members to venture outside their doors to love their

neighbors as they love themselves.I praise God for Rev. Wilkerson and the way that he listened to God and ventured out in faith. I thank him for sharing the story of his work.

This book is as relevant today as it was almost 50 years ago. I read it first as a teenager in the 60's, then as a Jr. High teacher I read it to my class, and I'm reading it again now. My Dad became a Christian after reading this book. My husband read it on guard duty in Vietnam, and became a Christian a short time later. It is a powerful book about a vibrant ministry, Teen Challenge, that is still reaching drug addicts today. Don't read this book unless you are ready for the Holy Spirit to "Grab" you!

It's hard to believe that a book written about events that took place almost forty years ago could just as easily have been written today. David Wilkerson followed God's call to work with "lost" children, and the work continues today. Miracles do still occur, and Wilkerson has witnessed them. His story about the inner city gangs of New York is gripping, but the fact that his "Teen Challenge" centers may be found all over the world is just as gripping. An incredible story.

I read this book because a homeless women whom I've grown to really like a great deal, has a real burning love for homeless teens. She made me promise I would read it. It is a very easy read and wonderful story of how the Lord steps in to help those who walk by faith in taking on what appears impossible to others. It is also a very strong testimonial to how one person can make a tremendous difference in the world. My most important take away from this book isn't "to trust God", that is a given, but to not give up on teens. So many people have good intentions in working with teens, the homeless and other disadvantaged group. Like the seed thrown on poor soil they start with a flurry and wither in the competition from other things in their life. I have worked with many disadvantaged and the worst thing you can do is show your face and then pull back on your commitment. The Cross and the Switchblade really brings to light the importance of not giving up on this group. As I write this during the Christmas season where good meaning people bubble over with generosity, I'm deeply saddened because the people whom get the attention during this season are forgotten the other 11 months of the year. I would recommend this book to any one he believes a social situation is hopeless and they can't make any difference.

If you want to know what Pentacostal means in real life, this true story will give you a hands on answer. This testimony of David Wilkerson shows clearer, than I have ever read, that only by the

power of the Holy Spirit the fetter of drug addiction and the hopelessness of gang life can be broken and turned around 180 degrees to brimming joy, hope and true life in peace. This gripping story takes you to the heart and the utter and fearsome loneliness of gang members in 1958 New York City. It shows how the mercy of God wipes the sin and fear away and how HIS grace gives new hope and a purposeful, meaningful life. The book also tells us the birth of the now world wide ministry of Teen Challenge. I think the situation of downtown New York City in 1958 still exists today and it exists in thousands of large and small towns across the USA and the world. It is one of big everyday challenges to the church today. Jesus has promised us, that the poor will always be with us. The question is - what do we do with them? I want to call this book a must read for every youth pastor and persons involved in youth ministry.

This book brought tears to my eyes at God's love and mercy, and made me want to dance for joy at His provision and greatness. David Wilkerson started out as a preacher in a country church -- where he is a good Christian, and doing God's work. But one day, he feels as if God is leading him to New York to minister to a few thugs who have killed a boy. He follows the still small voice of the Holy Spirit and goes, and what follows is an amazing ride. God comes through again and again -- often at the 11th hour, when all seems lost. Isn't that just like God? I highly recommend this book because it is a great testimony to what untold miracles can happen in the lives of Christians when we step out of our comfort zones and go out on a limb for God. And the way He comes through will take your breath away. If I wasn't a Christian, I would think the story was pure fiction because it sounds too amazing to be true. But because I am one, and I have caught glimpses of what God can do for His children, I can say of the miracle upon miracle in *Cross and the Switchblade*: "Yes, God is totally capable of that!" To my mind, most of us don't enjoy this exhilarating journey with God because we don't trust Him enough to take risks for Him. David Wilkerson did, and God displayed all his wonders. Read this and be challenged. I certainly was.

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