

2014 a Warning

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon warns against spiritual arrogance and emphasizes the importance of humility and faith in seeking God's guidance.

Duration: 51:36

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 14:1

Topics: "Spiritual Humility", "Godly Obedience"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of humility, genuine surrender to God, and the need to listen to His voice. It warns against relying on human strength, strategies, and defending ourselves in the flesh, urging a return to prayer, dependence on the Holy Spirit, and seeking God's guidance. The speaker shares biblical examples of those who failed to heed God's warnings due to arrogance and self-reliance, highlighting the need for genuine humility and obedience to God's leading.

Transcript

Galatians chapter 3 please in the New Testament and 2nd Chronicles chapter 14 in the Old Testament. Praise God. Galatians chapter 3, 2nd Chronicles chapter 14.

I had another message prepared for this morning and I had a scripture that just simply wouldn't leave my heart. And I went to read this scripture and when I began to read this scripture, the Lord started speaking to my heart, to me. You know in the book of Revelation you have seven churches and when it says to the angel of, to the angel of, that word means pastor, to the pastor of.

And the pastor is the person who sets the tone of the church and very often will lead the church in the direction that it's to go. And we see that in the New Testament there are good pastors and there are also shepherds throughout the entire scripture that have led their churches astray. And so you need to pray for me.

We all have blind spots folks. Now a blind spot is something in our lives that God sees but we don't see it. He knows it's there but we are still clinging to some sense of virtue in ourselves.

We haven't come to the place like Paul did where he said, I'm convinced that within me dwells no good thing. We feel we still have some integrity in ourselves and we hold to it and God can't speak to us in that area of our lives. And I pray God, this message has struck the fear of the Lord in my heart.

I'm going to be honest with you. And I think about Peter when he said to the Lord, others may do these things you speak of. They may run and flee and deny you, but I never will.

So he had a sense of virtue about his own courage not to realize that God saw beyond that facade and he saw something in his heart that was going to cause him to deny that he'd ever even known Christ. And then when you look further, I think of King David. God was trying to speak to him about something that was going to take him down in the future.

And he wasn't listening. I know he wasn't listening because in the Psalm, when you read one of the Psalms, David makes definitive statements. I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.

I hate the work of those that turn aside. It shall not cleave to me. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes.

Now when I read that Psalm, I know that God was trying to speak to him. David, there's a day coming in your life when you're going to turn aside from the battle. You're going to become spiritually lazy.

And in that moment of laziness, you're going to set your eyes on something that you shouldn't be looking at and it will take your strength. And rather than this Psalm should have been written, Oh God, protect me from turning aside. Oh God, keep me from walking idly in my house.

Oh God, help me not to set any wicked thing before mine eyes. But instead of the humility that God looks for, the human spirit is capable of producing arrogance against God. And we're actually make statements to God about what we're not going to do.

Think about Solomon for a moment. God clearly warned him what he was going to do to the nation. And he wrote it so eloquently in the Psalms.

He wrote so beautifully about foreign women and the foreign gods that come with them and the seductive power of this spirit and how it leads people astray. It promises life, but its gates lead down to hell. He wrote it himself with his own hand, but yet still couldn't obey it.

He somehow felt it was outside of the realm of possibility of his own heart. Galatians chapter three, this is the second time in just a few weeks that the Lord's given me this as an opening text to speak from. In Matthew chapter 18 verses 15 and 16, Jesus tells us that where there's a controversy between two parties, that one or two more witnesses are to be called so that the actions and words might be weighed as to find out the truth of the matter.

And this is the second time the Lord has spoken this scripture to this congregation. The writer of Hebrews chapter two in verse one says, we ought to give them more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest in any time we should let them slip. And my prayer is, oh God, oh God, keep me.

Oh God, help me. I have seen too often now, I've seen it personally and I've seen it in the scriptures, people starting out while walking with great strength and near the end of, as they near the end of the journey, a sudden turn happens, something that's never been dealt with, something that God has not been able to speak to. And the cry of my heart this week has been, God, help me not to be an arrogant man.

Help me to walk humbly before you. And I need help to walk humbly, so do you, so don't look at me like that. You need the same help that I do.

God, help me to hear you. Help me not to put up any defenses. Help me to agree with Paul when he said, I'm convinced that within me dwells no good thing.

So important, pastors, that we don't hold to any sense of righteousness in ourselves, or we're going to fall. We're going to fail. The weaponry that's formed against us is too powerful for us.

It's not too powerful for God, but it's too powerful for us. And God will always speak. He sees into the future.

He saw it for Peter, he saw it for Solomon, he saw it for David. He spoke, but nobody was listening. And my heart's cry is, God Almighty, help me to listen to you.

Help me, Lord, not to know things and then walk in a different direction. Give me grace and give me strength. Give it to the leadership of this church and give it to God's people.

I've entitled this message 2014, A Warning. Father, I thank you, Lord, for your word. I thank you for the method in which you've spoken to my heart.

Oh, Jesus, help us now. Give me strength. Give this church strength.

Give us leadership strength. Give us genuine humility of heart. We've prayed for it, but you know, Lord, you know what's in us.

God, you know what will lead us astray. Every man's way is right in his own sight, but the Lord weighs the heart. Help us, Lord, to acknowledge you so that you may direct us.

Help us, oh God, not to lean on our own understanding. And I thank you for this in Jesus' name. Galatians chapter 3, beginning at verse 1. Oh foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth? Before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you.

Received you the spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun in the spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so many things in vain, if it be yet in vain? He therefore that ministers to you the spirit and works miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness, know you therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. Now go to 2 Chronicles chapter 14.

I'm going to do something I've never done before in this church. I'm going to read three chapters of scripture with you. We're going to comment on it.

This is what the Lord spoke to me about. And I'm trembling even now as I open this passage of scripture because I realize it was a word to me. You can glean from it what you will as a congregation, but I feel a mandate to speak it because I need your prayer.

So Abijah chapter 14 verse 1, slept with his fathers and they buried him in the city of David. And Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet 10 years.

And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God. For he took away the altars of the strange gods in the high places and broke down the images and cut down the groves. And commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers and to do the law and the commandment.

And he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images. And the kingdom was quiet before him. And he built fenced cities in Judah for the land had rest.

And he had no war in those years because the Lord had given him rest. Therefore he said unto Judah let us build these cities and make about them walls and towers and gates and bars while the land is yet before us because we have sought the Lord our God. We have sought him and he has given us rest on every side.

So they built and prospered. And Asa had an army of men that bear targets and spears out of Judah 300,000 and out of Benjamin that bear shields and drew bows 280,000. All these were mighty men of valor.

And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with a host of 1,000,000. That's an army of a million men came against him and 300 chariots. And they came to Marashah.

Then Asa went out against him and they set the battle in a day in the valley of Zephthah at Marashah. And Asa cried to the Lord his God and said Lord it is nothing with thee to help whether with many or with them that have no power. Help us oh Lord our God for we rest on thee.

And in thy name we go against this multitude. Oh Lord thou art our God. Let not man prevail against thee.

I was thinking about the cry of David when he came into the camp of Israel when the Philistines threatened again to swallow the testimony of God. How he came and there was something in his heart. It wasn't about preserving his own honor.

It wasn't about preserving the honor even of the armies of Israel. It was about preserving the honor of God. There was something in this man's heart and Asa had this same cry in his heart.

He said don't let man, don't let evil prevail against God and the testimony of God among his people. And so the Lord smote the Ethiopians verse 12 before Asa and before Judah and the Ethiopians fled. And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gerar.

And the Ethiopians were overthrown that they could not recover themselves for they were destroyed before the Lord and before his host. And they carried away very much spoil. And they smote all the cities round about Gerar for the fear of the Lord came upon them.

And they spoiled all the cities for there was exceeding much spoil in them. They smote also the tents of cattle and carried away sheep and camels in abundance and returned to Jerusalem. I remember coming here in 1994 and only a year or two later we entered into this church.

Most of you probably weren't here or you don't even know about this but there was a tremendous rebellion in this church. And it was an awful battle. There was only Brother Dave and I left preaching in the church.

And I remember Brother Dave at one point was so wounded he couldn't even come on the platform. He would sit behind the curtain in a chair. And I would come out on be passed off the platform and he would say to me is the Holy Spirit still here? Have we grieved the Holy Spirit as he left us? Is he still with us? And

God gave us an instruction.

Don't fight for yourselves and don't defend yourselves. There were slanderers everywhere. People passing out leaflets on the street here on Broadway with all kinds of vicious slander.

They even had an 800 number you could call and get slander reports. And the Lord said say nothing. Just keep preaching.

I was preaching on the joy of the Lord, the love of Jesus. I mean it was amazing. People are waiting for us to say something and God told us to be quiet.

He said I will defend you. And he did. And eventually a group left and sad to say not much came of it.

And many of them ended up in confusion. It was sad to see it to be honest with you. But the Sunday after they left this altar was the biggest altar call for salvation in the history of Times Square Church.

On a Sunday night 150 people came to Christ. That had never happened here before. At this time there was only about 3,500 or so attending this church.

The next year we baptized 1,000 new converts in this church. Many are still probably here with us today. God just simply opened the heavens and the heavens have been open ever since.

We've had an open altar in this house since those days. And what you see on Sunday night I was here the first Sunday night that ever happened. And what you have been a partaker of privilege to see.

I want you to know it came through a battle. It was a tremendous battle. It was a hard battle.

It wasn't an easy battle. It's not easy enduring lies about your character, your family, everything else. It's not easy to refrain from defending yourself.

It's a very hard thing to do. But God gave us the grace and we saw the victory. And we're on the 26th year of a church and the presence of the Holy Spirit is still here with us.

And I thank God for that with all my heart. Chapter 15 verse 1. And the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the son of Oded. And he went out to meet Asa and said to him, Hear me Asa and all Judah and Benjamin.

The Lord is with you while you be with him. And if you seek him, he will be found of you. But if you forsake him, he will forsake you.

In other words, if you turn your back on him, he will turn his back on you. Now for a long season Israel had been without the true God and without a teaching priest and without law. But when they in their trouble did turn to the Lord God of Israel and sought him, he was found of them.

And in those times there was no peace to him that went out nor to him that came in. But great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries. A nation was destroyed of nation and city of city for God did vex them all with adversity.

Remember Jesus told us in Matthew 24 in the last days, nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in diverse places and all these are the beginnings of sorrows. It was a season now this king came to power.

Now I'm speaking this as a type, you have to understand God gives us a pattern of what somebody else did to warn us about what could befall us if we're not careful. The scripture is given to us for instruction and it was a season where there were great vexations on all countries. Nation was rising up against nation, city against city and they were all vexed with adversity.

There was no peace. But verse 7 says, Be you strong therefore and let not your hands be weak for your work shall be rewarded. And when Asa heard these words and the prophecy of Oded the prophet, he took courage and put away the abominable idols out of the land of Judah and Benjamin and out of the cities which he had taken from Mount Ephraim and renewed the altar of the Lord that was before the porch of the Lord.

And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh and out of Simeon for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance when they saw that the Lord his God was with them. Now keep in mind at this time the kingdom of Israel was divided between north and south. Asa is the king of the south.

In the north after the division Solomon set the stage for the division. Rehoboam his son divided the nation of Israel. And in the north there never really was ever a righteous king.

In the south there was a succession of righteous, unrighteous, righteous, unrighteous. But in the northern kingdom it was almost evil from its inception in its leadership and eventually was assimilated. That means it just was swallowed by Assyria.

The spirit of this world just swallowed the northern part. And to stop the people from going back to the worship of the true God which was in Jerusalem they built altars at Bethel and Dan, both ends of the north kingdom to stop the people from going back to where the presence of God and the blessing of God and the strength of God really was. Now God was with Asa because God was with Asa and those that were in the southern kingdom.

Those that were hungry in the north began to go around these altars. May I put it that way? And they headed for Jerusalem. There were hungry people.

They're in a backslidden portion of the kingdom of God or the people of God but they'd had enough of it. They said enough of the powerlessness, enough of these halfway altars to God, enough of all of this talk about God but no power of God. And they headed around and there was a hemorrhaging as it was of the northern kingdom heading for the south because they wanted the presence and power of God again in their lives.

So they gathered themselves together, verse 10, at Jerusalem in the third month in the fifteenth year of the reign of Asa and they offered to the Lord at the same time of the spoil which they had brought 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep. In other words there was provision started to come in and it always will. Where God is working there will always be provision.

There will never be poverty there in a sense to do the work of God but God's provision will be there and of course the king of the north has to see this. He must be getting reports of this. This kingdom of the south is increasing and provision is increasing and there's phenomenal worship.

In verse 12 it says they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul. And they were so zealous about this that they even said whoever would not seek

the Lord God of Israel should be put to death whether small or great, man or woman. In other words we want no part of half hearted seeking of God here in this camp.

This is a whole hearted turning to God with everything that's in us and all that God will require of us and if anybody's not interested in that we don't want them here. They have no part in this. Go back to the northern kingdom.

And they swear to the Lord with a loud voice and with shouting, with trumpets and with coronets. In other words there was phenomenal worship. It was a moment that was embraced by every heart including Asa.

I can see this king and he's rejoicing at what God is doing. God is reestablishing his testimony in the earth again. God is bringing the backslidden home.

God is doing the supernatural in our midst one more time. God is bringing in provision for his kingdom. And all Judah verse 15 rejoiced at the oath for they had sworn with all their heart and sought him with their whole desire and he was found of them and the Lord gave them rest round about.

So this is phenomenal what's going on here. God has come. God is rebuilding his kingdom.

God is reestablishing his testimony among his people. Now chapter 16 begins. In the 6th and 30th year, that's the 36th year of the reign of Asa, Basha king of Israel, this is the northern king, came up against Judah and built Ramah to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa king of Judah.

In other words the king of the north, this backslidden part of the testimony of God said enough of this hemorrhaging. We're going to go up against this testimony that's being established and it's causing people to leave our ranks and go to another place than where we are to worship God. Now Asa did something.

He says he brought out silver and gold out of the treasures of the house of the Lord and of the king's house and sent to Ben Hadad king of Syria that dwelt in Damascus saying there's a league between me and thee as there was between my father and thy father. Behold I've sent thee silver and gold. Go break thy league with Basha king of Israel that he may depart from me.

And Ben Hadad hearkened unto king Asa and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel and they smote I John and Dan and Abel Mayim and the store cities of Naphtali. And it came to pass when Basha heard it that he left off building of Ramah and let his work cease. Then Asa the king took all Judah and they carried away the stones of Ramah and the timber thereof wherewith Basha was building and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.

So he'd come up with a plan. He hired a foreign army to go fight this battle. Basically said listen I'll pay you and I'll take this out of the treasure house of God.

These are silver and gold treasures that have been brought into the house of God for the work of God. Now he takes it and he hires something of the world to fight the battles of God. And he said now go and fight on his home front and it will disturb him.

It will leave off surrounding our city to try to cut off our supply and he'll go home and I'll be rid of his influence. And it worked folks. It worked.

It was a plan that actually worked. As he conceived it in his heart he did it. And in the natural there must have been some rejoicing in Jerusalem.

It worked. One more time we've been delivered. One more time we're free from our adversaries.

One more time we can carry on with our rejoicing and carry on with our all of the things that we feel that God's doing in our lives. But now a word comes from the Lord. Verse 7 it says at that time Hannah and I the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him because you relied on the king of Syria and you not relied on the Lord your God therefore is the host of the king of Syria escaped out of your hand.

Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubam's a large host with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet because thou didst rely on the Lord he delivered them into your hand. For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him. Herein thou hast done foolishly therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars.

In other words you've done foolishly and from the peace that you had the presence of God that distinguished you from other men is going to be gone. You're going to be just as powerless and just as troubled as everyone else around you. And I would have given you Syria into your hand but because you chose to employ the methods of this world you've lost influence now and you've lost authority.

And it's the type of what happens when we take to defending ourselves and fighting this battle in the flesh. When we stop praying and start strategizing. When we start taking the treasure and the things that God's given us and we set out to defend ourselves in our own strength.

Even from those of our own family who choose to attack us because the presence of God is with us. It's like taking our own brothers to court and not just simply taking it to the throne of God and letting God be the one who judges between what is right and what is wrong. Letting God bring our righteousness forth.

And the sad thing about it is when the church of Jesus Christ employs secular methods not only to advance the kingdom of God but to defend itself we end up as powerless as the nations around us and we lose our influence over the unsaved. Because this is a supernatural kingdom. It is not a natural kingdom.

And this war is not to be fought with human strategy. Our growth is to be a sovereign growth infused by the life of Almighty God within us. Our prosperity is to come from the hand of God.

Yes we're going to fight and yes we're going to have to struggle. Remember it was the Pharisees who put Jesus to death on the cross not the Romans. They were only the instrument.

The force behind it was a religious system that hated the sovereignty of God and hated the dominion of God over their lives. Folks we've got to have wisdom in the days ahead because I do believe with all my heart that God's about to do something profound perhaps in New York City and even beyond there. We're under judgment folks as a nation and the days ahead are going to be difficult.

The most difficult most of us have ever faced in our lifetime. But oh God thank you for the mercy of God in the midst of all of this. The house of the Lord will be full and people will be seeking God again.

I see a multitude bypassing these fraudulent altars that have been built in the name of God and saying I'm tired of this. I'm tired of seven steps to this and 14 steps to that and using Jesus to better your self-image. I'm sick of this whole charade.

I'm going back to Jerusalem. I'm going back to the heart of God. I'm going back to where God is and I'm going to live for God and I'm going to serve God.

Folks when revival comes the greatest opposition you'll ever face is not from the devil himself it's from the backslidden church. That's where opposition that's where slanderous articles will be written. Things will be said things will be made up when things can't be found.

God help us to be quiet and stay in prayer. It's amazing you know why this really speaks to me. It was in his 36th year.

When you look at these chapters in the Old Testament this is the 36th year of my conversion and this is the 26th year of Times Square Church. The time between chapter 14 verse 1 and chapter 16 and verse 1 is 26 years. 26 years of a testimony that's strong of a testimony that is going forward in the power of God of a testimony that is prospering.

It's the 26th year of the church and the 36th year of Asa's reign and when I saw it I began to tremble and then I begin to understand why the Lord keeps leading me back to the book of Galatians. Oh foolish Galatians who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth before whose eyes Jesus Christ has been evidently set forth crucified among you. Why would you leave your victory and fight your own battle? Why would you think that if they've called the master of the house Beelzebub that those of his household are going to receive any better treatment when God begins to do what only God can do.

This is only what I learned of you. Did you receive the spirit by the works of the Lord by the hearing of faith? How did you get as far as you are? Was it through human effort or did you believe God and God began to do it in you? Are you so foolish having begun in the spirit you're now made perfect by the flesh? Have you suffered so much in vain? Have you gone through all of this for nothing? Have you been trained only to fail at the finish line or the last hundred yards before the race ends? You know Asa was five years away from his death. If he had known that he only had five years to live do you think it might have he might have done things differently? He was five years away from his appointed time on this earth from the appointment of God to do what he was called to do.

He was five years away. After 36 years of believing God he turned to the flesh. He turned to the resources that had been given him.

After 36 years of walking with God he administers to you the spirit and works miracles among you. Does he do it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Even as Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith the same are the children of Abraham.

And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith preached before the gospel to Abraham saying in thee shall all nations be blessed. God is willing to bless the nations through his church and in measure through this church but only if we will continue to walk by faith and by faith alone. Remember it's an arrogant heart that says God I I will never do this.

See we don't know our own weaknesses. We don't know what we're capable of. We don't know what will rise up in us.

I've never had to face very very public slander but I do know I've always been a fighter when that has happened. I've I had a man one time that when I was a young Christian I was preaching when I just started preaching he ran around saying that I was immoral and I went to his house I was gonna mop the floor with this guy. For real I was gonna teach him a lesson.

So anybody wants to spread rumors like that this is what they're gonna look like when I'm finished with them. And so that's that's still there in measure. You know I'd be a fool to say it's not.

God was trying to warn David and Solomon. He was trying to speak to Peter but they wouldn't listen. But I prayed to God with all my heart.

I feel the Lord has had me share this publicly for a reason that I don't yet fully understand. That when we begin to be slandered as a church that we don't rise up and defend ourselves. I don't know what it's going to look like but I do know our enemies are going to come.

And I do know that God is warning us that it's coming in 2014. We have to stay in prayer. This church began in prayer and this church has to continue in prayer.

And when it does come we just simply go to prayer. There was a season where somebody bought the air rights over this church and they were going to build a high-rise which would have taken the whole back end off of this church. Would have disrupted us for over two years.

We could have fought it in court but instead we prayed. You remember that went into a three-day fast and we prayed. And I don't even know the reason today but the people who are going to build a building just went away.

They just left. They're just gone. We started in the Spirit.

We've walked 26 years with the presence of the Holy Spirit in this church. And by the grace of God we will finish this course. But it'll be by the grace of God.

Not by human effort. Not by human zeal. Not by any amount of loud shouting.

Not by the banging of the cymbals. Not by making oaths because we can't keep any of them. No it will be by walking humbly before a Holy God and just having this one thing in our heart.

Lord what must we do? Guide us as they prayed in the Welsh Revival. Guide us O thou great Jehovah. It was the theme song actually the Welsh Revival.

Guide us O God. Don't let us walk in the flesh after having begun in the Spirit. Don't let us initiate a program.

Move in a direction. Don't let us go in any direction that is something that has been conceived in our own minds and not birth of the Holy Spirit. For there's no profit in it.

There's no life in it. There's nothing supernatural and it's like a dead horse in a parade. You have to drag it and prop it up and convince everyone around you that it's alive and kicking when it's dead.

Everything out of the human spirit is dead. It cannot advance the kingdom of God. As good as it may look and as many seats as it may fill it is powerless.

There is nothing supernatural in it. We must be a church in 2014 that continues to walk by faith. I don't know how long the testimony of this church will even be here.

It is conceivable in New York City could go into some kind of a very difficult season. I really can't say that for sure but what I can pray for is that for the season that we are here that this be a testimony that brings

glory to God all of our days and I want to solicit your prayer for me personally that for the season I'm appointed here that I can lead this church in the ways of the Spirit and pass it on to the next pastor eventually as good as I received it. Now Father I thank you God for giving this word.

I thank you that you have walked the candlestick of this church and you've seen something that we may not be aware of. I don't presuppose Lord that I have as much strength as I'd like to think I have. I don't fully understand what my reactions would be when we are falsely accused.

God the only thing I can ask for is for a genuinely humble heart. Lord I ask for the courage to obey you no matter what it costs. I ask Lord for an eldership and a board and pastors who are not strategists but men and women of prayer.

I ask you to keep us dependent on you. I ask you also Lord that this might be the beginning of the miraculous in this church. Lord that you truly would heal the sick, give sight to the blind, that you'd open prison doors, there'd be incredible freedom come into people's hearts.

I ask you Lord to bring the backsliders home in this city and other cities throughout this country. I ask you to keep us Lord in the palm of your hand that the testimony of this church could be as Paul at the end of his day said, I have fought a good fight, I have run a good race, I have finished my course, there is a crown of righteousness laid up for me. Oh God help us Lord not to finish this course defending ourselves and angry with reproof.

Help us Lord Jesus Christ, give us grace Lord to walk humbly before you. I ask Lord that the soberness of this moment rest on us. We think on these things each of us Lord for the devil has laid a trap for every person here and he saves it for the moment that will bring about the greatest destruction of our testimony.

I pray God you help all of us this be a church known for humility that we can be spoken to, that we not harden our hearts as in the day of provocation. Lord but we would hear you and be quick to turn that none of us would assume that we have strength we don't have. None of us would have that thought in our heart others may but I never will.

Keep us from this Lord God Almighty and keep this church strong. Help us oh God to love you, to serve you, to honor you. Help us Lord Jesus Christ to be quiet in the face of adversity and to only do our speaking in your presence.

Help us Lord to fast and pray as we've done throughout the history of this church and not to neglect these things. Give us a strong burden for the lost, give us influence Lord over those who don't know you in this city. Help us not to lose the influence that edge of the Holy Spirit so that we wind up a dull axe in the city.

Help us oh God and keep us Father. Protect us this year Lord for you have seen something that we don't fully understand but God we receive it. We ask you to keep us and protect us Lord.

God we bless you for it in Jesus mighty name. Elders if you'd come pastors and elders come join me in the rest. Would you stand please? We might bring the microphone that's over there as well.

Thank you. Thank you Jesus. Now would you pray for us? You just lift your hands up towards us and just start praying.

Pray for us. Pray that God keep us. Thank you God.

Thank you Lord. Thank you God. Thank you.

Pray. Would you pray? Pray for us. Whatever the Lord puts on your heart.

Lord God, Father almighty in the name of Jesus God we come before you. Father as the pastors and the elders of this church oh God and we acknowledged to you number one Lord our unworthiness Lord but we thank you God for the blood of Jesus that has qualified us Lord God to come boldly before your very presence oh Lord and to serve.

Father I thank you God that you have called the pastors and the elders of this church Lord not so much to positions of authority oh God but we are servants of this body oh God and so Lord we humble ourselves before you because Lord we know that in ourselves we have no wisdom we have no power we have no ability God we have nothing to bring to you but we come empty-handed oh God and Lord I pray for myself for every pastor of this church every man every woman that stands in this pulpit oh God and Lord we pray Lord for your grace and your mercy oh God and your loving kindness oh Lord oh Father we bring nothing but Lord we know Lord that the promise of your holy word God that you will keep us Lord this is your word you are not a man that you should lie Father you tell us that we are in your

hand oh God and that no one can take us out and Lord that is where our confidence is oh Lord Lord your word says that you are able to cause us to stand and Father we Lord as pastors as elders as all those Lord who stand in positions of authority oh God in leadership in this church oh Lord we surrender ourselves afresh to you oh God this day Lord we lay our lives on the altar we pray God for strength oh God for a fresh outpouring of your holy spirit Lord help us God help us Lord for indeed Lord there is nothing in us oh God Father your word declares that those who are in the flesh cannot please God but as many as are led by the spirit of God these are the sons of God and so God we thank you God and we cry out to you in Jesus name that you would lead us oh God that you oh God would give us

wisdom that you would give us direction that you would lead this church oh God where you want it oh Lord and Father that we would humbly oh God obey you and follow you Lord with the grace that you give and Lord I pray for every sincere seeker of the Lord Jesus Christ in this house today and everyone that will be in this house today oh God for grace oh Lord that you would keep them that you would lead them that you would meet every need represented in every household in this place we give them to you God we look to you to you alone oh Lord we bless you we give you the honor glory and we pray this in Jesus name amen praise God I'd like us it's only a quarter to 12 I'd like us to take the next 10 to 15 minutes and we're going to worship and if you would like to just rededicate your heart

your life to God you're welcome to come to this front of the sanctuary or step between the screens here or Roxbury or even just kneel down where you are and just rededicate your heart your life to God and with this prayer Lord don't let me assume that I'm anything that I'm not give me a genuine humility before God and Lord give me a heart that can be spoken to and don't let me just be too quick to agree and say I will and I won't and I will and I won't because we're not capable of doing anything in our own strength but help us just to hear just to listen and just to hear what it is that you're speaking to us and keep us oh for our adversary is too strong for us Jesus said which one of you going to fight a battle would not sit down and assess that with 10,000 he's able to meet somebody who

comes against him with 20,000 then he goes on to say likewise whoever does not forsake all that he has cannot be my disciple in other words until you forsake your strength your reasoning power your ability in a sense I'm not suggesting we don't think but the until we get rid of human strategy we can't follow where

God is leading us because it's not a human kingdom it's a supernatural kingdom and so if you would like to do that let's I'd like to start with that song Greg we're singing this morning I can hear the sound of angels like the sound of rushing water let's begin that we're just going to spend the next 10 minutes or so in worship father in this last sunday of 2013 in the closing moments of this year that has passed we give you thanks and we give you praise how faithful you have

been we thank you lord for all the salvations in this house we thank you for how merciful you have been to us and how good you have been to us we thank you lord for everyone that you've touched and healed we thank you a god for those that you have delivered out of darkness and into light we thank you for loving us and you will love us to the end we thank you lord that you are our father that you are our brother and that you are indwelling christ we thank you lord we can have as much of you as we want and we pray lord for a heart to want you more we pray for a filling of the holy spirit for lord we hear your word today for all that you have done this last year you are speaking to us today for next year we pray for the filling of the holy spirit for not having begun in the flesh we were

born of the spirit and lord we have seen you do things by your spirit we ask you to continue to lead us into 2014 by the power of the spirit we ask you to fill us with the spirit we ask you oh god for uh taking to heart what you've said today for we know lord that people of the spirit will be in a collision course with the prince of darkness and the spirit of this age we thank you oh god that you promise to be our high tower and our defense you promise at the sound of your great name you will still our heart and soul and give us wisdom and courage you promise to be our glory and the lifter of our head you promise lord to teach us lord not to retreat in the face of opposition you promise lord i pray oh god you would give us a spirit of prayer and supplication i pray oh god that we would be

people quick to pray and slow to speak lord we pray for our pastor oh god and we pray you make his forehead like flint we pray oh god there would be a determination to walk in the spirit and to lead us in the spirit we pray oh god that he would heed this word so deeply oh god we ask you to cover him to protect him and lord i pray you keep him strong in the battle i pray oh god you he would not retreat oh god but lord that he would stay in the spirit and be obedient to the call of the holy spirit i pray for the leadership of this church oh god that you would bring keep the unity lord that pleases you and that lord no person lord would uh would want to rise up but oh god that we would stay in unity yoke together oh god that we could serve this body and by serving this body serve you i pray

lord for the servant leadership on every leader of every department of this church lord in the music ministry in the children's ministry and security and ushers and helps lord in all that all the workings of this church i praise you bless you and thank you for every leader oh god continue to strengthen them by your spirit oh god and let them be lead by example lord i thank you lord you will give us a spirit of humility of integrity lord and generosity and i thank you oh god for the things and the day to come for we will not fear it oh god for we will be clothed in your spirit and lord we will be used lord to the saving of souls because we will have a peace that passes understanding and a joy that will not be taken from us we thank you darkness must give way that the gates of hell will not

prevail in 2014 that you will keep our light burning because you are our light and those that walk and follow you shall not walk in darkness but we will walk in light and that lord you will help us you will help us jesus when we fall you will pick us up when lord we grow weak you will be our strength when we lose courage in the battle you will be our courage and lord i thank you lord we enter this year obedient to you and lord we thank you filled with the spirit we will not bow before the darkness because you are our god and love never

fails thank you for loving us there will be no end to your love just as there will be no end to your mercy your church lord will grow in this mercy and this love that will keep us in the love of christ that will not we will not bow oh god to the spirit of

this age but we will walk with the wisdom that comes from being loved and called of you we bless you today lord we thank you for blessing us in 2014 but we hold our head up and we look into this coming year and we say god before us who can be against us to god be the glory amen and amen

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/9lAgfHWEX-M.mp4>
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