

A Cry From The Heart of God (Video)

by Carter Conlon

This sermon emphasizes the importance of responding to God's cry for us, urging believers to hear the cries of those around them and be willing to fight for others who are struggling. It highlights the power of the Holy Spirit within believers, enabling them to overcome limitations and make a difference in their generation.

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Scripture: Mark 15:37, Exodus 3:7, 1 Samuel 17:8, Acts 4:31

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Description

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Transcript

Now, Father, I want to thank you, God, with all my heart. I thank you, Lord, for your strength. I thank you, God, for the anointing of your Holy Spirit.

I thank you, Lord, for your overwhelming presence, God, every time that we gather to worship you. I thank you, Lord, that you are stirring us, especially now in this most critical time in this nation and perhaps in this world. I thank you, Lord, that you're going to reveal things to us of your heart and draw us to you in a way maybe like we've never known before.

Help us, Lord Jesus Christ, to respond to you. Help us, Lord God, to love you and love your kingdom and love your people. We give you the praise and the glory in Jesus' name.

A cry from the heart of God, Mark chapter 15, beginning at verse 37. Now, this is Christ in his last moments on the cross. And Jesus cried out with a loud voice and breathed his last.

Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. So when the centurion who stood opposite him saw that he cried out like this and breathed his last, he said, truly, this man was the Son of God. Now, that's an incredible statement.

We're going to get into that in just a little bit into this message. But suffice to say, let me start by saying the ministry of the Son of God who came to this world to redeem us, it finished with a cry. Gospel of Matthew,

Matthew records it, and he simply says, Jesus called out again with a loud voice.

Luke records it in chapter 23, verse 46. He said, and when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. John the Beloved in John chapter 19, verse 30, he didn't record a cry, but he recorded the final words of Jesus to be, it is finished.

In my opinion, for what it's worth, there was so much in that final cry. There was so much more than can be uttered by anything that comes from the spirit of man. It had to be something that came from God himself.

It is possible that different people heard different things because God's voice is not like ours. It's not limited to a time and a space and a specific thing that we're saying. The spirit of God, for example, this morning, I'm speaking now to probably anywhere between 2,000 and 3,000 people, if we count those that are online with us today, and God can speak to you something completely different than what's coming out of my mouth.

That's who the Holy Spirit is. That's what he can do. He can speak something ... I've had people come up to me after I preached on Sunday and talk to me about how their life was transformed by the things that I just said, and I never said any of what they said I said.

I've heard that too many times for it to be coincidence. The spirit of God is able to bypass the things that we do and the presentations we make and begin to speak to every heart. If you love God, if the Holy Spirit is in you and upon you, no matter what I say today, God can speak to you in a phenomenally deep way in your heart.

There's a cry in the heart of God for you. His ministry finished with such a profound cry that a centurion said, truly, this man was the Son of God, a centurion whose job it is to crucify people. Historians say that the road into Jerusalem was literally paved with crosses and people dying.

He would have been the gentleman who was in charge of much of this, and he heard a lot of people die. He saw a lot of last moments in a lot of people that were crucified for whatever reason they were, but there was something in this cry that was so otherworldly. There was something in this cry that he'd never heard before, and it caused him to draw the conclusion, truly, this man was the Son of God.

It was deeper than can be produced by the voices of men. It was, in reality, a cry from the very heart of God. It is my belief that it was a cry for everyone created in the image of God to come home.

Ultimately, I believe it was a cry for you. Your name was in that cry. You have to have an expansive understanding of the voice of God.

He's not limited by time, space, or the moment. He saw from the Garden of Eden to today in Times Square Church. He saw you.

He saw me. He sees every person who's ever created in his image walking the streets of New York City and many totally indifferent to the things of God, not even aware of the fact that the Son of God came to redeem them and bring them home. There was something in that cry.

That cry was a cry like none other. It was a cry that was in the heart. I believe before the foundation of the world.

I don't fully understand it, to be honest with you, but I believe I will one day when I stand in the presence of God for the Bible promises that I will know in that day as I am known. All I can say is that I can feel on the cross the actual anguish in the Son of God for you, for me to come home, for every person no matter where they are. There was something in God's heart when he created man and woman, when he created humanity, something we don't fully grasp yet.

There was a love in the heart of God for you and for me. That's why the Bible says God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. It was deeper than the cry of a mother with a sick child or a father trying to coax his children off of the highway.

It was deeper than anything you and I can produce. That's why the centurion said, this has to be the Son of God, because I've never heard ever in my lifetime a cry like this. The interesting thing is that as the church of Jesus Christ, we now have the Spirit of God living inside of these earthly bodies, which means that the cry of God now resides inside of us.

That's an incredible thought, isn't it? The cry hasn't ceased. The cry of God is still going on for every man, woman, child, not only in New York City, but all over the world that are lost, that have no hope, they have no future, they've got no eternity, and they have no idea what it's going to be like forever to be cast out of the presence of God. Our minds can't even comprehend the horror of that kind of an eternity.

That cry that was heard through Jesus Christ on the cross by the power of God's Holy Spirit is now inside of us. Just like Moses, for example, we can lose the ability to hear it. Moses heard it at one time, or at least he thought he heard it, and he saw his brethren striving in the field one against another.

He set out to deliver them, and he was in tune, in a sense, with the plea, I guess that was among his own people. He set out to deliver them, and he failed, ended up for 40 years in the backside of the desert in a wilderness place, and he lost touch with it. When we lose touch with the cry of God, sometimes God will just bring it back to us, knowing that we're far from it.

He was so long away from it, it's out of his thinking, I felt this burden once, but the burden is gone. It's almost like a believer in Christ, that when you first came to Christ, you had such a passion and compassion for lost people. You could almost hear the cry as they walked past you down the street, but somehow, somewhere, you just got busy, or maybe feel like a failure, and the cry became distant.

To you, I say, God is well able, in his time, to bring it back to you. If you can't get to it, he'll bring it to you. The Lord said, Exodus chapter 3, verse 7, let me just read it to you, I've surely seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt, and I've heard their cry.

In other words, Moses, you don't hear it anymore, but I have heard it, and I know their sorrow. I've come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land, to a good and a large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, a place, he's going to say, that's now occupied by people that shouldn't be there, and have no right to it. Now, therefore, he says in verse 9, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come to me.

This is God, and I've seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppressed them. Come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. Oh, the mercy of God, the mercy of God, that he will come to us, and impart his heart to us when we just feel like we're a million miles away from what maybe we were called to do at one time, or something we lost, or it's left, or

maybe we're just out there and say, I just don't, I don't hear anything.

I don't hear the heart of God, I don't hear the cry of people, but God in his mercy will bring the cry back to you again. Thank God for that. And sometimes, other times, he just brings the, he just brings the us to the cry, as happened with King David.

He was a young man, and he, his father just sends him with cakes and raisins and cheese and stuff, and says, take it to your brothers and see how they're doing. They're out fighting the powers of darkness that, that continuously were threatening, at least to swallow up the testimony of God and the earth. And as he, as he came into the camp, the scripture tells us, as he talked with his brothers, there was this champion, the Philistines of Gath, Goliath by name, he came up from the armies of the Philistines, and he spoke according to the words, and David heard them.

The Bible says a little earlier in 1 Samuel 17, 8, that Goliath would stand, and he would cry, and he would basically say, you're going to serve us. We are stronger than you are. Our forces are dominant.

Our way is better. You may think God is with you, and if you do think God is with you, then send out a man to fight with me. If you beat me, we will serve you, and if not, you will serve us.

And this was the cry of the enemy. So the first thing that David heard, God brings David into the camp, and he begins to hear the cry of the enemy. Goliath was crying every morning out.

And sometimes, maybe you're here today, and you're aware now of the cry of the enemy. You're aware of this voice every day. It's in the media.

You can't miss it any longer. You will serve us. You will do things our way.

You will accept our definitions of life, and birth, and family, and marriage, and everything else. You will give your children into our hands. We are stronger than you are, and if you think you can fight against us, then put a man against us and prove that you can.

And if you can't, then you're going to serve us for the rest of your days. And of course, the first voice, the first cry that David hears is the cry of the enemy. And I know there's people here today, and you're troubled.

David became troubled by that cry. You're troubled by the moment that we're living in now. You're saying, oh God, what are we going to be leaving to our children in this nation? What kind of a people are we becoming? Incivility has become the order of the day.

Sagemanship is gone. Lying has become truth. Oh God, what a world we're inheriting.

How did this even happen? I think some of the soldiers in Saul's army must have been standing there with all their training, saying, how did this happen all of a sudden? What happened to our history? What happened to these glorious victories? Where's the power of God? And into the midst of this camp comes just a teenage boy. He's got no armor. He's got no weaponry.

And he suddenly hears this cry of this nine-foot big mouth standing on the other side of the valley. And he starts saying, why is nobody fighting against him? What's wrong with you guys? He starts challenging his own brothers. And of course, they accuse him of pride and saying, who did you leave those few sheep in the wilderness with? Go, leave your donkeys and just get out of here.

We're the men. You see, we'll look after this. And David says, well, if you're looking after it, why is nobody fighting this guy? Why are you letting him defy the God of the armies of Israel? Now, David first heard the words of the enemy.

But I want to tell you, God heard something else. The people were hiding. The scriptures, they went into hiding.

They were afraid. They were in caves. They were in dens.

They were in whatever little huts they could make. And God heard not just the cry of Goliath, but he heard the pleas and the pleadings of those who were in hiding. Now, we've got a lot of big mouths in our generation declaring that theirs is the new order and the new day.

But I'm telling you, there are people in their homes that are not in agreement with this. There are people in their apartments. There are people going to bed at night.

And God hears it. God hears it. And by his mercy, even though we don't hear their pleas, he will lead us into the battle one more time.

He will lead us, you and me. That's why I said real men go to church. Real men take up the cross.

Real men stand and fight in this generation. Real men become men and don't bow down to the effeminacy that's trying to get a hold of them in our generation. And sometimes, in spite of all of these, whether he has to bring the cry to us or he brings us to the cry, I don't really care how it happens to you as long as it happens.

Bring it to me or bring me to it. Either way, God, lead me. Guide me, oh God, into what my life is supposed to be and what effect I'm supposed to have on this present generation and how my life can make a difference.

God, give me the courage to face the giants again in our time. It can't be just something written in the pages of history. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

And sometimes, God answers our own cry by giving us his heart. Hannah, in the book of 1 Samuel chapter 1, the scripture says, She was in bitterness of soul and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish. You see, she was empty.

She was barren. She had produced no life. And it was a disgrace and a shame for her in her generation.

It's a type of a person like you or me that says, God, I'm ashamed of how little fruit's been born through my life. I'm ashamed of how little effect I'm having in the workplace, in my own home, in my neighborhood, in my family. I'm ashamed of coming to your house.

And she came regularly to the temple. I'm always coming empty. I'm ashamed.

I don't even have a name that's been born into your kingdom that's come to life through me. And God, she was in such anguish, the scripture said, that she couldn't speak. She moved.

She spoke in her heart and her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Oh, God, would you do something through my life? It was her cry now that God was about to answer. And God, in his mercy, gave

her a son and her son, Samuel, became a voice to the nation to call the people back to himself again.

If you and I have that cry in our hearts, I'm telling you, God will make you a voice. He will make you a voice in your home, make you a voice in your workplace. He will make you a voice in your community.

He will make you a voice. He will give you a voice. He will give you words that are not your own.

He'll give you authority that you don't have outside of him. Praise be to God. Praise be to God.

So whether he has to bring the cry to you or bring you to the cry or birth something inside of you because of the cry that you have to make a difference in your generation. He raised up a great prophet that turned many of the people of God for his generation back to the worship of the one, the true, and the living God. Now we go back to where we started in the scripture.

So Jesus cried out with a loud voice and breathed his last. You see, the cry was for you as well. The cry was for us as his church.

There was so much in that cry. I could spend the next month speaking on this topic. There was something on every level.

That would explain why it seems that everybody who witnessed it heard something different. There was just so much in that particular cry. Thank you.

Now I'll tell you, he cried with a loud voice and the scripture says he breathed his last. And then the way was made into the presence of God. The veil of the temple was torn from the top to the bottom.

And when the centurion who stood opposite him saw that he cried out like this and breathed his last, he said, truly, this was the son of God. So what did he see? What did he hear? Why was a man who's not a believer at that time, as the people of God were, what did he see in the son of God? What was so different about this man's last statement that made him come to this conclusion? I did some reading in times past on crucifixion and what kind of a death it is. When a person is crucified, ultimately the paralysis hits their chest because of the stretching of their muscles and the inability to extricate themselves from that position.

Their lungs fill up with fluid. Fluid begins to press itself around their heart too as well. And ultimately, just at the point of death, they can't draw a breath.

I wanna tell you something, you can't cry that loud without drawing a breath. In your last moment, if you were on a cross or crucified, it would be the persons on a cross, they literally drown and die of a heart attack, both twofold. It's a heart attack and drowning at the same time.

And when you're at the point of death, you can't speak anymore. But Jesus drew a breath and he cried out so loud that the centurion was seeing dozens, if not hundreds of people crucified. He would have known this is physically impossible to cry out like this at your last moment of life on a cross.

He would have understood that only God could do this. Only God could have given that man breath. Only God could have given him the power to cry out the way he just cried out.

Only God could do this. And he drew back after hearing the cry and he said, truly, this was the son of God. It's really that simple.

There is no chance that anybody could cry a cry that loud at the last moment, at the last seconds of life on a cross. And what we learn from this cry for you and I today is a simple teaching, a simple truth. The spirit of God within you is stronger than the deepest limitations of your physical body.

No matter how weak you may feel, no matter how far away you may feel from God, no matter how insignificant you may feel in this present day battle, no matter how barren you may feel as per producing life for the kingdom of God, the spirit of God in you as a believer in Christ is stronger than your weakness. Praise be to God. There is no limitation to what God can do.

You and I now need to ask the Holy Spirit to say, oh God, do something in my life that people look at me and say, truly God is with that man. Truly God is with that woman. You couldn't endure.

You couldn't speak. You wouldn't care if the spirit of God was not upon you the way God is willing to do it. In this generation, it's imperative that we let the cry of Christ become our cry now.

God, help me to hear the cry of the people. Don't let me, Lord, live an indifferent life, living for myself, looking for my own pleasure, doing my own things, just living every day to see how much fun I can squeeze out of it. When people around me are crying out for you and I can't hear them, I haven't heard them for a long time, but God, you can bring that cry to me.

And I'm asking you to bring it to me. Lord, make me aware of it. It doesn't make us despondent.

We don't become gloomy. It's just that we become aware of the fact that there are people in their homes that are crying out for freedom, for deliverance. They're crying out for their children.

They're crying out for tomorrow because they don't see hope. And there's others of us say, God, lead me into the battle. If I'm too dumb to find it on my own, lead me there.

Lead me to where people are crying out. Lead me, God, to the person in my office, my community that's desperate, that's losing heart, they're losing hope. They don't have a future.

God, if I can't hear it, just lead me there then like you led David. Take me there with my cakes and raisins and bread. And God, somehow make a way that I can make a difference, that I can fight the giants in their lives.

These things that are telling them that life is not worth living or leave your marriage or abandon your kids or there's no hope for the future or do drugs or whatever it is. God, help me to fight those giants that are wanting to tell these people that they have all the control over their lives and they have no power in themselves to stand. God, don't let me stand on the edge of the battle and wait for somebody else to do something.

Lead me there, lead me. And if you pray it, He will. He will lead you.

He will take you where you need to go. He will give you what you need to have. When I was a police officer years ago, I got transferred out of community relations and down into a kind of a platoon division.

It was essentially a demotion. And I was thinking, God, what if I've lived for you and I'm serving you and why would you send me here? And I remember the first week I was down and I was assigned to a kind of a rough area of the city and there was a guy on my platoon. I'm telling you, he was mean.

He was mean to the core of his being. He was mean in his speech. He was huge.

He was just mean. And you just didn't wanna cross this guy at any time. And I'm out of, just the first week I'm driving around and I don't even wanna be there.

You understand? I don't wanna be there. I'm kind of, I'm bummed. I feel it's a demotion.

I just, did I do something wrong? It didn't occur to me to even pray and say, Lord, what is your will for this moment? I wasn't there yet. And so I passed by this abandoned hospital and there was this guy. He was sitting in an unmarked car and the lights were out and he was just sitting there and I recognized him as I drove by.

And then I felt the Holy Spirit tell me, go and talk to him. And so I began to plea bargain with God at this particular point in my life. And I said, well, and tell him about me.

That was the next thing. Tell him about me. Oh Lord.

And I remember thinking, I'll go around the corner, get a couple of coffees and hopefully he'll be gone by the time I come back around. Because this was the kind of a guy who would take the coffee and reach into your car and pour it on you. I'm not kidding you.

It was that bad. And so I just, I got the coffees. He was still there.

I pulled up beside him, rolled down my window and I said, hi. And he says, hi. And I said, there's no easy way to say this.

I said, I'm a Christian. You probably heard. And he just nods.

And I said, well, God speaks to me and told me to park here and talk to you. And then he started pouring out his heart. He was sitting there thinking of shooting himself.

And I was able to lead him to Christ. And the last time I heard from him, he was in prison ministry here in the States, somewhere he'd gotten involved in prison ministry. So the point is the Lord will lead us into the battle.

Even when we're reluctant, even when we just got, I just had coffees. David had cakes and raisins and cheese. I had coffee.

And he led me into the battle of a man who may not have made it through the night because he was really serious about ending his life that night. And he poured his heart out and shared his despair. I shared Christ.

We prayed together. And he became a vibrant witness for Christ. It was amazing.

He really became a stand-up witness for Jesus Christ. It's time to let his cry become ours. Lord, bring it to me.

Bring me to it and empty me, God, of my own barrenness and fill me and make my life a voice for you. That's the moment we're now living in. This is a desperate moment for this nation.

It's a desperate moment for a lot of people all around us. You know, the people in your workplace, they put on a good front, many of them, but they're desperate. And God hears their cry.

That's why you are where you are. And the cry, the prayer of my heart is, Lord, let that cry that was in your heart in the last moment of your physical life on the earth as a man, let it become mine. Let me not live in a different life to the struggles all around me.

Let me not close my ears to the need in this hour or close my heart. And let me not be a coward, but give me a willingness to fight for those who just have no more strength to fight for themselves. Create in me a voice.

Give me a voice, Lord. Give me words. Give me reasonings.

Give me courage to speak. Don't let me be idle on the sidelines any longer. So Father, I thank you, God, with all my heart, Lord, that I have delivered to your people the word that you gave to me.

And in my heart, Lord, I am the first person at this altar today. I'm asking you to birth in me a new voice, a stronger voice, courage to face the enemy in our generation. I'm asking you, God, for ears to hear.

Lord, not just your word, as wonderful as that is, but the cries of the people that I may not live in a different life to the struggles that are around me today. Father, I pray for this church and this church age that you would draw us back to you again. Deliver us, God, from so many things that occupy so much of our time and our thinking, things that are of absolutely no profit to eternity.

God, help us, all of us, Lord. We recognize our need. So bring it to us or bring us to it or birth it in us, whatever you have to do, Lord.

I yield my body. I yield this body to you for your purposes. Whatever you have in the future, wherever you take me, whatever you want me to do or whatever you wanna do through me, God Almighty, I just pray for courage, wisdom, and strength and the ability to hear.

And thank you for it with all my heart in Jesus' name. We're gonna worship for a few moments. And if your heart is one with mine, I wanna invite you.

I'm in the annex, all our campus churches this morning as well. And here in the main sanctuary, I'm just gonna invite you to say, Lord God, please, I heard something from you today. And I want what I heard.

I want it to be part of my life. I want my life to make a difference. Take me away from the sidelines, O God, and bring me into the battle and help me to understand, God, your heart and give me your heart for this generation.

If that's the cry of your heart as we stand, would you come and just join me here? Balcony, go to either exit. Let's all stand together. And as we worship, just slip out of your seat in the annex.

We'll wait for you. Make your way down here too as well. We'll wait for you.

God bless. You know, I just love the picture that Moses headed to Egypt. David ran down into the valley to face the giant and Hannah went home.

And the voice that turned the nation was born from her womb. This is the miracle God that we serve. This is the power of God.

It doesn't matter about our age. It doesn't matter if we're too old. The world says we're too young, according to the world's standards, or too barren, according to our own testimony of ourselves.

God's spirit overrides all of that. And he takes the weak to confound the strong. And he takes the foolish to bring to nothing those things that stand in their own strength.

And so whether or not you are aware of it, you are mighty warriors in the kingdom of God. You're mighty in the sense that you're saying in your heart, use my life, God. Use me for your glory and speak through me, Lord, and guide me and lead me.

And, you know, just an acknowledgement that I won't even find it if you don't take me there. I won't hear it if you don't bring it to me. And I can't give birth to it unless you form it in me.

It's just a dependency on him. And he delights in taking us in our frailty and using us. He didn't need us to preach the gospel.

He chose to need us, chose to use us. It's mind boggling. One day I'll understand that too as well.

He's God. He can preach the gospel over a heavenly loudspeaker. He doesn't need us.

But somehow it's so tied in with us. His heart is so tied in with us that he declares that we're his body. One day I'll understand that.

But for now, I can only scratch the surface of it. And accept it by faith that God loves me and he wants to use me for his glory. And take me somewhere where I could even never go in my own strength.

Give me things I could never possess and make me into what I could never be. Praise be to God. So don't look in the mirror.

Don't look in the mirror for the answer to this one. It's not there. It's in him.

So Father, God, today, like Moses, we get up and we just head to our calling. And like David, we run to face the giants knowing that you are with us and the honor of your name is at stake. God Almighty, we thank you that you're giving us a voice again as your people in this last hour.

And as you did in the early church, Lord, when they prayed, God, you shook the place where they were gathered. They were filled with the spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness. This is your promise to us in this generation, Lord.

Forgive us, Lord, for forgetting it, for drifting away. And maybe because of our youth or our age or whatever, we just somehow reached the wrong conclusion about whether or not we matter for your kingdom's sake. Today, Lord, I just ask God for an empowerment of the Holy Spirit on every life, mine included, Lord, fresh touch of heaven, giving us the grace that we need for the sake of others, for the sake of others, for the millions in Egypt, for the trembling before the enemy, and for those who need a voice.

Oh, God, thank you, Lord, for choosing us. Thank you for calling us. Oh, God, with all of our hearts, all we can say is thank you.

Thank you, Lord, for your mercy, your kindness, your tenderness to us, Lord. Thank you, God. Thank you, God.

Would you lift your voice and just thank him for using you. Just thank him for using you. Everybody, just take a moment.

Just thank him. Thank him. Just take a moment.

Lift your hands, lift your voice and say, thank you, Lord, for using my life for your glory. Just lift your voice to him. God Almighty, thank you, Lord.

Thank you, God. Not in our strength, but in our weakness, Lord, that your strength might be made known and you might be brought to glory again in our time.

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