

A Day and a Night in the Deep

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon highlights the necessity of steadfast faith in the true gospel amidst trials and the dangers of false teachings in the last days.

Duration: 49:32

Scripture: Exodus 6:6, 2 Corinthians 11:23

Topics: "Struggles"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of fully believing and trusting in the word of God. He uses the example of the Israelites who, despite knowing what God had promised them, doubted their ability to conquer the land because they saw themselves as weak compared to their enemies. The preacher then shifts to the Apostle Paul, who endured numerous hardships and persecutions in his ministry to spread the gospel. Through Paul's example, the preacher highlights the depth of God's love and the power of God to deliver and transform lives. The sermon concludes with the preacher encouraging the congregation to testify to the freedom and deliverance they have experienced through Jesus Christ.

Transcript

I want to speak to you this morning about a day and a night in the deep. 2 Corinthians chapter 11, please, if you'll turn there. A day and a night in the deep.

And Father, I thank you, God Almighty, for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I thank you for the strength, Jesus, that you give, O God, for us to hear and for me to be able to speak today. Thank you, Lord, for this enablement of the Holy Spirit that brings your word forward with clarity and easy understandability and makes a pathway into our hearts that we can lay hold of truth because you said yourself, Jesus, you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.

Lord, we thank you, God, for the greatest freedom of all, the freedom from fear, the freedom from sin, the freedom from everything, O God, that disobedience to your word has brought into this world. God, help me today to convey this clearly. I ask it in Jesus' name.

2 Corinthians chapter 11, beginning at verse 23, words of the Apostle Paul, a night and a day in the deep. Are they ministers of Christ? Verse 23, I speak as a fool. I am more in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, that means in beatings and whippings, in prisons more frequent, in deaths often.

Of the Jews, five times received I forty stripes, save one. And that means 39 times the lash was put across his back, and that happened five times. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once I was stoned.

Thrice, or three times, I suffered shipwreck. A night and a day I have been in the deep. In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, care of all the churches. Now the Apostle Paul in these verses of Scripture was exhorting the people to be careful. The Corinthian Christians at that time were in danger of being drawn into another gospel.

A gospel that claimed to be a word from Jesus Christ, yet if they embraced it, it would rob them of strength and leave them powerless to face the trials in their day time. Remember in chapter 11 verse 4 it says, For if he that comes preaches another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if you receive another spirit, which you have not received, or another gospel, which you have not accepted, you might well bear with him. Verse 13, he says, For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

And in verse 20 he said, For you suffer, or you've opened your hearts, as it is, if a man brings you into bondage, if a man devours you, if a man takes of you, if a man exalts himself, if a man smites you on the face. Incredible words. Paul was saying there's a danger, and the danger is present in every generation, but particularly when we are facing hardship.

Whatever form that hardship is going to take, whether it's personal hardship that you're going through in the moment, today, or it's a collective corporate hardship that perhaps all of us are going to have to endure together in the future. Paul said, you've opened your heart, you've allowed yourself, you will allow yourself to be brought into bondage, if you do allow these messages to come to you, you'll be devoured, the strength that you have will be taken from you, in other words, you will allow people to exalt themselves and not Jesus Christ. And Paul said, you will allow if a man smites you on the face.

And what he's talking about is falling prey to the same religious spirit that slapped the face of Christ. That system of religion. System that's conceived and made in the hearts of men.

A system that builds on its own theories, its own sense of what is right and wrong, what is proper and improper, where security is and where security is not. And when the Son of God appeared in the midst of this system, in the simplicity of obedience to his Father, this religious system was highly offended by the simplicity of Christ. And you and I see when Jesus was standing to be judged by this very system, how that they didn't hesitate to slap his face.

Didn't hesitate to mock this simplicity of simply believing what God says. That simplicity. Nothing needs to be added to it.

Needs to be no deeper explanation. Bottom line, if God said it, then God's going to do it. He spoke the world into existence by just saying, let there be light.

He brought light and divided it from darkness. No argument is necessary. Their whole religious system would soon fail them.

Remember, Jesus stood outside the temple and the disciples were marveling at what man had built in effect. Some of it even initially under the guidance of God. And Jesus said to them, not one stone is going to be left upon another.

It was that very system that was responsible for putting the Son of God in the simplicity of obedience on the cross. And yet, you and I know that in AD 70, I believe it is, the Roman legions came in, destroyed the whole system as it was. And one more time, at the end of the age, scripture tells us conclusively that everything that man has built in his rebellion to God, the whole totality of a political and a partnering religious system called Babylon, actually, in the scriptures, is going to be brought down.

Not one stone will be left upon another. The heavens will be on fire, Peter says, and the world as we know it will be dissolved. Not one stone, folks, is going to be left upon another of everything that stands in a rebellion to a holy God.

And this whole system would fail, but yet Jesus Christ would be given the power to overcome the impossible and to be victorious in a battle which the strongest of ordinary men could never hope to win. In the simplicity of faith, folks, is how you and I are going to win this battle. The simplicity of knowing what's in this book, knowing who you are in Jesus Christ, knowing what God has said, knowing in your heart that His promises are true, embracing fully the Word of God, in simplicity of faith, you'll get through.

You and I will make it through to the other side. It doesn't really matter what we're going to have to face. It may not be a pretty picture in the days ahead, but if you're a child of God by faith, and if you're willing to believe the Word of God and the promises of God to you, you're going to make it through.

Paul was saying to the Corinthian church, in some measure, now he's trying to draw a contrast between the two types of ministry and the two types of ministers and ultimately the two types of Word. One, he said, comes in and exalts itself and takes from you, doesn't impart to you any strength, just takes from you, and ultimately even the strength that you will need to have will be taken. At the time when you so desperately need it.

But Paul says, if you look at my life, you'll see what I've been enabled to go through, and you'll be able to judge for yourselves. Which word has the power of God in it to get you through what you may have to face one day? Paul says, listen, you look at my life, look at the gospel I preach, look at what I've been through to get it to you, look at the depth, first of all, of the love of God to get this gospel to you, and secondarily, look at the power of God to keep you on the journey. People would be listening to this report of the apostle Paul and saying only God could have kept this man.

I would have given up. I don't know how many would like that as your resume. I've been in prisons more often than others.

I've been in deaths often. I've five times been lashed, 39 beatings across my back, three times in addition to this I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, you remember in the book of Acts, and left for dead, three times I've been shipwrecked, a night and a day I've been in the ocean, that's basically what he's saying, I was in the deep, cast upon the mercy of God, in perils of water and robbers, my own countrymen, the heathen, in perils in the city, in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings, hunger, thirst, fastings, cold and nakedness. What an incredible call to the ministry that is.

I think every Bible college should have that on their title page. If you desire to follow Christ, if this is sufficient for you, sign up. And he said besides those things, that I have to fight with outside, comes upon me the care of all the churches every day.

In the context of the last days, Paul wrote to Timothy, in 2nd Timothy chapter 4 verses 3 and 4, and Paul said the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts, they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they will turn their ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables. Now fables in the Greek, the word is muthos, it means just nice stories, with a conclusion that may or may not be true. They're simply powerless things.

In the last days, in the last days, and that's really pivotal, that's really key, because the last days, according to scripture, are going to be known for their difficulty. In the last days, famines, earthquakes, things happen, the Bible says in Revelation, the oceans turn to blood. I found it interesting, I never knew that when oil mixes with sea water, it turns red.

Did you know that? Well, you know it now. In the last days, there's going to be problems that arise in the nations, that can't be solved. There's going to be a distress, a heart beating as it is, or a beating on the chest of people, who thought they had the right ideas, they had the agenda, they had the answers for the futures of humankind.

In the last days, there are going to be famines, because the world is really overpopulated at this point, and our food production is becoming insufficient. You know that, I know that, if you're reading anything, you're aware of it. In the last days, the ambassadors of peace, according to Isaiah, are going to weep bitterly.

In the last days, armies of the north are going to come down into Israel, and try to wipe the nation of Israel off the face of the earth. In the last days. In the last days, in the last days.

There'll be distresses among nations. Things will seem to be spinning completely out of control. And Paul says, it's in those days, it's in those days, that people will be turned to another gospel.

Jesus himself said, in the last days, they're going to be saying, look over here, this is Christ. Look over there, that is Christ. Satan's plan against the church in the last days, will be to introduce a myriad of Christs.

Each one seemingly with the answer, each one seemingly with a divergence of opinion, another word, another perspective as it is on the problem. Each one claiming to be the word of God, each one standing saying, I am speaking in the Holy Ghost, I am speaking for Christ. And it's actually an incredible strategy, when you look at it from just strictly a military point of view.

Just as so complete confusion, into the church of Jesus Christ, that people are running everywhere, looking for the real Jesus, or little bits and pieces, something they can kind of paste together, and make their own Jesus out of. Something that offers peace, it offers hope, it offers a direction, it offers a future. And Paul was warning the Corinthian church, if you're not careful, you'll open your heart to these things, and what you have will be taken away from you.

The ability to endure will be gone. That steadfast glance of the eye, that the scripture talks about, the Psalmist David, when he talked about the singleness of the eye, my eye is fixed, I know where I'm going, I know who God is, and I know exactly how He's going to get me there. That singleness of the eye, folks, you and I are going to need this now, in this generation.

Fables are not just false promises, they can also be tales of woe. They can be words that describe a situation, without understanding God's presence, His purpose, and His plan in it. They can actually correctly assess the situation, but only from a natural viewpoint.

And of course, if you and I don't have spiritual eyes, then we will not reach a spiritual conclusion. In Numbers 13, 31, the spies, you remember, went into the promised land, and they came back, 10 of the 12 came back, and they said, Oh, it's incredible. This is a fable now.

It's incredible. It's awesome. I mean, it's everything that God said it was.

Marvelous. Look at the grapes. We need a beam between two men's shoulders, to carry the weight of the fruit that is in this land.

Nevertheless, they said, we're not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are. It's a fable. It's an illogical conclusion.

It's seeing things from the natural mind. It's negating, actually, the Word of God. Now, they knew what God had said to them.

But for some reason, they could only believe half of it. Exodus chapter 6, and verses 6 to 8. Now, the Lord gave these words to Moses, to bring initially, when He's about to deliver the people, He gave these words to Moses, and He said, Tell these words to the children of Israel. Exodus 6, verses 6 to 8. He said, Wherefore, say to the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

I will rid you out of their bondage. I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and great judgments. And I will take you to Me for a people, and I will be to you a God.

And you shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burden of the Egyptians. And I will bring you into the land, concerning which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And I will give it to you for a heritage.

I am the Lord. Now, they knew what God had spoken. And did He not bring them out? Did He not bring them out with great judgments? Did He not deliver them from their bondage? You remember the story.

And those of you who are not familiar with it, they were forced by the leaders then in Egypt to make bricks for their buildings they were building, and their memorials. And they were given little or no provision to do it. They were beaten if they didn't fulfill their tasks.

They were brought into bitter and hard bondage. And the Lord came with a word. And the word did not come in the strength of man.

The word came through an 80-year-old man and his 83-year-old brother. No army behind them, just a stick in his hand. And I've said it before in a one-line sermon.

That's all he had, let my people go that they may sacrifice to me in the wilderness. That's the only message that Moses had. And Moses told Pharaoh, if you don't let them go, you're going to suffer as a people.

But God said, I gave you my word. I delivered you from the burdens. I rid you out of their bondage.

I redeemed you with a stretched out arm and great judgments. I said I would take you to me for a personal people. You would know I'm the Lord God when I have brought you out.

And now I'm going to bring you in. I'm going to bring you in to everything I promised you. And folks, they had 50% of the truth as it is.

They were brought out. And when they got to the very shore of being brought in to the promise of God, their ears opened to another word. It's as if they're looking for a second opinion.

If they had been firm in what God had spoken to them, and what they knew to be the truth, they would not have listened to these. It's as if these 10 men were put there as a test, I suppose. There was a true word given to them through Joshua and Caleb, and of course in through Moses and Aaron.

But there was a false word. And they were given a choice. Which one are you going to believe? And sadly, you and I know the story, that their ears were opened to another word, an alternate view, a secondary assessment of the difficulty which had come to their doorstep.

In 2 Thessalonians 2, Paul the Apostle speaks of a great falling away that will precede the second coming of Christ. A great falling away. I used to often wonder, what form will that take? What will that falling away look like? I used to think, well, surely in this society we've seen a falling away in the last 20 years or so, where many, many, many of God's people have been captivated by Gospels that offer immediate gratification, personal advantage and gain and such like.

Surely that's got to be the falling away. But the Lord spoke to my heart recently and said, no, it's in the last days this falling away will happen. And I believe that the falling away comes at a time of crisis.

The falling away comes at a place where we're at the border of going into what God has promised, but only supernaturally can we be brought there. The falling away happens in crisis, folks, where suddenly the people's ears open to alternate truth and that infusion of confusion that the Scripture says is going to be launched against the church begins to grip the hearts of many. And the falling away is the falling away from strength.

It's not that they won't go to church anymore. It's not that people won't be clapping their hands or singing the songs of Zion, but Paul said you'll suffer if a man take from you, if a man smite the simplicity of Christ off of your face, the simplicity of believing the Word of God. If man becomes exalted, you'll allow it into your heart.

And the falling away takes the form of simply gravitating to an alternate view other than what God has spoken. Looking for a way through, looking for another perspective as it is on the journey. Somebody else with an answer.

Could you imagine if our military operated that way? Could you imagine if the fleets were heading towards the beaches and an invasion had been planned and as soon as they saw that there was opposition on the shores, as soon as they became aware that there's going to be struggle and trial and injury and other things happened to them, that suddenly among the sailors and among the soldiers there's a discussion erupts, does anyone else have a plan? Does anyone else know how we might do this and suffer less casualties? Can you imagine an army that defies the instruction that's been given? The chaos, the fragmentation, the lack of power, the lack of ability as it is to move as one man, as one body into that place that Christ said is yours, it's your victory. The church must have a testimony, folks, in this last hour of time.

We must have a testimony of strength.

We must not be found like the rest of the world, wallowing in confusion, looking for some new voice and ultimately looking for a world leader that can lead us out of this mess. You and I must not be found there. We already have a leader.

We already know his name. We already know where we're going. And the end result of Old Testament Israel opening their ears to this other report in Numbers 14.4, they said, let us make a captain and let us return to Egypt.

Let us go back to what we left behind. Let us find some security in this world in spite of the fact that not one stone is going to be left upon another, in spite of the fact that scripture says it's going to be dissolved, that it's going to spiral into chaos, there'll be no security to be found in it anywhere. Nowhere.

There'll be no safe haven on this globe, folks. Don't look for a plan B. There'll be no safety in the coming days, according to the Word of God, except for those whose hearts are attuned to the Word of God. That's where safety is.

Go to Mark chapter 4, please, in the New Testament with me. I'm going to conclude with this passage of scripture. Mark chapter 4, beginning at verse 35.

In the same day, when evening was come, he said unto them, let us pass over to the other side. That's the only word they had, folks. Let's go to the other side.

And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow. Don't you love that? About the Savior. He had a word from his Father, you see.

And he believed it. He was going to a cross, and he knew it. He was going to die on a cross, not on an ocean.

And he knew it. Therefore, he could sleep. You see, he fully believed the word of his Father.

And they woke him up and said, Master, carest thou not that we perish? Do you not care that we're going to die here? And he arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith? How is it that you don't believe my word? Now, if you go back to Mark chapter 3, verses 9 to 11, I just want to show you some of the things that they were aware of at this point.

Of the journey. Mark chapter 3, verse 9, it says, And he spake to his disciples that a small ship or a boat should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. Now listen, look at the things that are happening.

For he had healed many, insomuch that they pressed upon him, for to touch him as many as had plagues. And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. I mean, devils were confessing.

They knew who they were dealing with at this time. And when he said to his disciples, Where is your faith? Now they were aware that evil, evil had lost its power. I want you to think back again to where we began in Exodus.

The people, when they came to the shores of the promised land, what were they aware of? Evil had lost its power. Pharaoh had had to bend his knee. He had had, by the power of God, to release his hold.

The people were free now to go through and go into the place that God had promised them. On the sea, on this journey, he said to his disciples, We're going over to the other side. Now they had seen, folks, they had seen evil bend its knee.

They had seen demon-possessed people fall to the floor and the demonic spirits saying, We know who you are. You're the Son of God. You'd think it would have come into their heart by this point of saying, What have we to fear? Even the devils are trembling.

They know who this is. This is the Son of God. He was not withholding from them who he was and what he was about to do.

You and I know that evil in our lives has already been confessed. Evil has bent its knee and bowed and let you go. Folks, how many of you were in bondage? You were in prison.

Your mind was tormented. You were in the grip of evil. And you came to Jesus Christ, whether it's here or in your home or wherever you came to the Lord.

And you know today, don't you? Evil bent its knee. And the things it held, you lost their power. And you can testify.

If we had time here today, we've got 3,000 testimonies in this church this morning. Of people who can say, Pastor, that's true. I was in prison and the door opened and I was given freedom.

I walked away from years of bondage. My heart was bruised beyond repair. But when I came to Jesus, I haven't lost the memory.

But I've lost the pain. It no longer guides me. It doesn't lead me.

It doesn't control my life. I couldn't see anything ahead of me. But I cried out, Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.

And he touched me and he opened my eyes. And now I see. I don't know who this... I don't care who you say he is.

But I know for years I've begged at the door of the temple. And one day, one day, one day, he touched me. We sang it today.

He lifted me up. He gave me strength. He's given me the power to praise him.

He's given me a reason to live. I have another mind than the one I used to have. I have another heart.

I have another spirit. I'm not the person I used to be. Praise God.

Evil had to let me go. And that's what he was saying to his disciples in the boat. They had seen evil bend its knee.

The people in Israel had seen evil bend its knee. And he said, I said we're going to the other side. That should have been good enough for you.

You don't need a second opinion in the storm, folks. We're going to the other side. You and I are going there.

In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you. That where I am, there you may be also.

I have sealed you in my Father's hand. And no one, nobody can take you out of the hand of my Father. Hallelujah.

No trial, no tribulation. No angel, no devil. No wall, no valley, no mountain.

Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Which is in Christ Jesus. Hallelujah to the Lamb of God.

I'm going through to the other side. I'm going through. What he has spoken to my heart is good enough.

I don't need a second opinion, folks. The first opinion is good enough for me. The scripture we started with, Paul said, A night and a day I've been in the deep.

Now most likely, I don't have conclusive proof because he said three times he was shipwrecked. But most likely, according to the way I feel about it anyway, this was the shipwreck in Acts chapter 27. In Acts chapter 27, Paul was a prisoner being taken to Rome, where he was going to testify before Caesar.

He knew he was going to jail. So this was not a journey which really, in the natural, had a very pretty ending. But he knew God was in it.

He knew it was the will of God and he couldn't be turned from it. And in the midst of that storm, after a long absence, the scripture says Paul appeared on the deck of the ship. That's one of the most profound pictures in my mind of all the New Testament.

Of the strength that is given to a man or woman who chooses to obey God. Paul the apostle. You have to see the people.

This is a momentous storm. The waves have got to be very high. Probably the height of the balcony here.

The waves are huge, maybe even higher. We know that they're powerful enough to break into pieces a sailing ship, which is what happened at the end of this journey. Scripture says there was no small storm that was upon us.

Seasoned sailors were terrified, looking for ways to escape this storm. Paul stood upon the deck of that ship. I preached on it one time in a moment.

He goes from captive to captain. He's giving all the orders. Everyone now wants to hear from God.

They begin to realize that without the word of God, there is no way through this. This storm is too deep and too powerful. Paul says to them, I don't want you to be afraid.

For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whose I serve. Saying, Fear not, Paul, thou must be brought before Caesar. And, Lo, God has given thee all them that sail with thee.

There's 276 people on this ship, according to the record of Scripture. Wherefore, serves be of good cheer, for I believe, God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Paul so trusted the Lord that he was able to take bread on that ship.

Now, if you can even picture this in your mind, I want you to picture a wooden ship. The sails are torn and tattered. Perhaps the main mast at this point is in trouble.

They've cast out the tackling. You can see wheat floating all over the water. Most everything is gone.

Hope is lost. The people are filthy. They're ragged.

They've been in this storm for so long. And in the midst of it all is this little man. History says he was about 5'7".

He's got a loaf of bread and he's broken it. And he's got a piece of bread in each hand. And now behind him, you can see this huge swell coming down on the ship.

And he's just there, radiant, giving glory to God. This is an expression. It's a picture of what hope looks like in God.

It's a picture of what faith looks like. That's why Paul could say to the Corinthians, I've been in perils here and there and here. Others will try to preach to you.

Others will try to draw you into their theories about God. But I preach a Christ who's brought me through the storm. He's brought me through trial.

He's brought me through beatings. He's brought me through the humanly impossible. And that same Christ will take me over the finish line and into glory.

And if you and I will embrace that Christ, we don't have to fear what comes against us. We're going to make it through. Now I want you to picture for a moment.

He says, a day and a night I've been in the deep. Now I'm familiar with the ocean. Some of you may be as well.

I don't know if you've ever seen the ocean in its fury. Even if you've just seen it on a DVD somewhere. Now, Scripture says when they hoisted the sail to the wind and they made for shore and the front part of the ship got stuck.

I don't know how far out that was. Conceivably it was a big ship, so it could be quite a distance from shore. The bow of the ship is stuck.

And the waves are coming against the stern with such ferocity that it begins to break it up. So that tells me, first of all, the waves are moving in the direction of the shoreline. And Paul gives the instruction, and the centurion backs him on it, that whoever can swim should jump in first and try to get to shore.

And the rest on boards, it says, and on broken pieces of the ship. Just grab a hold of the cross, folks, in this generation. There's lots of wood to go around.

That was the message. You grab a hold of a piece of wood and you hang on for dear life. And there's a promise, if you will trust this word, that you're going to make it to the other side.

Now, you and I know that when waves that large hit the shore, it's virtually impossible to get into shore. In a boat, let alone swimming or hanging on to a board, because the undertow is so fierce. You simply can't.

Even five-foot waves make it almost impossible to get into shore. And that would explain why Paul ended up out in the sea for a day and a night. Just himself hanging on to a piece of wood.

With 276 people doing the same thing. How many of you think that Satan might have been there? With an alternate, well, Paul, maybe 275 are going to make it. Or 273.

You realistically expect 276 people to get through to the shore? I mean, Paul, 100 of them can't swim. Do you not think that five are going to panic and let go of the wood and make a break for it and drown? I mean, realistically, in the natural, those would be fairly decent statistics. But I don't think Paul was open for a second opinion.

Paul, I can see Paul for a day and a night hanging on to that piece of wood. Glorifying God just as he had on the ship. Thank you, Lord.

I'm going to make it through. Thank you, God. I'm going to stand before Caesar.

Thank you, Lord. There's not only me, but all 275 others are going to make it. As he's looking around the sea, and they might be just dots now on the horizon, but he said, God, you said they're going to make it.

That means they're going to make it. Every last one of them are going to get to shore. And the point of this whole message is no additional word is necessary, folks.

What God has spoken is sufficient. You don't need a second opinion. You get into this book, you read it for yourself.

Lay hold of the promises of God. That is all you need. You do not need a second opinion in the days ahead or third or a fourth.

You believe what God has spoken. Every promise in here is not just somebody writing down a historical perspective of Jesus Christ. This is the living, breathing word of God.

God is not a man who can lie. He will not change his mind and everything he's promised you, that is what he's going to do for you. Thanks be to God.

No matter how dark the days get, no matter how difficult, no matter how despairing, even if it seems like we're just treading water and hanging on to the cross, that's good enough. I have a promise in my heart that I'm getting through to the other side. Not just getting through, but there's going to be a purpose to it.

There's going to be a point to it. God is going to be glorified. The name of Jesus Christ is going to be lifted up.

As people all around are looking for encouragement in this time that we're living in, folks, don't let go of the simplicity of faith in Jesus Christ. It is a finished work. It is a proven work.

It is a glorious work. It is something you can bank your life on. You can set the course of your life and set the course of your heart and set the course of your journey on the finished work of Jesus Christ on Calvary.

God will not fail you. Hallelujah. Take a moment and just give him praise.

Take a moment and just give him thanks. Oh God, thank you Lord. Thank you God.

Thank you Jesus. Thank you Jesus. Thank you Jesus.

Thank you Lord. Oh yes Lord. Thank you God.

I want to give an altar call today and I want you to listen to this very, very carefully. It's an altar call that the Holy Spirit put on my heart. For people today who are going through a deep trial.

You're suffering from depression. And the depression and trial is so deep that it's wanting to push you into an overcoming despair. Satan's trying to swamp you in the waves of your circumstance.

If you will come to this altar today, for those that this applies to, the Lord's given me a word for you. It'll only take me a few minutes to share it with you, maybe five at the very most or less. But I have a word for you today.

And I do believe that the Lord's going to give you the strength to get through this part, this difficult, dark, deep time in your journey. We're going to worship for a few moments and as we stand, if this applies to you, would you please just join me at the front of the church. I'm going to share this word with you and I'm going to pray for you.

Let's all stand together. Balcony, you can go to either exit. Main sanctuary, just slip out of where you are.

Don't be afraid to come here. And don't be afraid that God's going to let you down. I raise my voice up with a cry.

May a strong hand subside my eye. Jesus, praise your holy name. You are the Alpha and Omega as the same.

You love them and you honor the dream. You died for sinners just like me. I raise my voice up with a cry.

May a strong hand subside my eye. On the tree. You died for sinners just like me.

I raise my voice up with a cry. May a strong hand subside my eye. Here's the word that the Lord gave me for you.

Now it's about a man of God in the Old Testament called Elijah at a time where he fell into depression. Scripture says, he went a day's journey into the wilderness. And he came and sat down under a juniper tree.

And he requested for himself that he might die. And said, it's enough now, oh Lord, take away my life. I'm not any better than my father's.

And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree. Behold, then an angel touched him. And said unto him, arise and eat.

And he looked and behold, there was a cake. Bacon on the coals and a cruise of water at his head. And he did eat and drink and laid him down again.

And the angel of the Lord came again the second time and touched him. And said, arise and eat. Because the journey is too great for thee.

And he arose and did eat and drink. And went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights. Unto Horeb, the mount of God.

This is the word the Lord gave me for you. For those suffering from depression and trial. The Lord says, just get up in the morning.

Tomorrow. And just eat a little bit of the scriptures. Open your Bible to the book of Psalms.

And maybe the Gospel of John. And just read a little bit. And then just drink of my love.

Drink of my presence. Know that I care about you. I won't fail you.

So just eat and drink. And he said, lie down again. And rest.

There's nothing wrong with rest. See, coming out of depression doesn't mean you have to go a hundred miles an hour. You just eat a little bit, he said.

Just eat a little bit. Drink a little bit of my presence, my faithfulness to you. And then lie down and rest.

And then the next day, it says, he came and he touched him again. The message of the Lord came. The messenger, which is the message.

And touched him again. And then suddenly you're going to want to rise up. And you're going to find the more you just read the word of God.

Spend a little bit of time with the Lord. Talk to him for five minutes, if that's all you can get out. Or one minute, if that's all you can pray.

And then suddenly something happened. A supernatural strength came into Elijah. And the scripture says he went forty days on that strength.

There's a supernatural strength when you do just the little bit that you can do. Just the little bit that you are able. And all he could give God was that little bit in the morning.

And the Lord gave him forty days of supernatural strength until he came to the next place. And that's exactly. See, let God show you that what he gives you will supernaturally empower you to get through this next stage of your journey.

You know, a lot of people get discouraged because they think the strength of God should take me right through to the end. Well, it will, but it goes from place to place to place to place. And for the next forty days, he was supernaturally strengthened.

That's what God's going to do for you. Just get up in the morning. Remember, okay, tomorrow.

And eat a little bit. And the Lord, it's going to be nice, it's going to be hot. It says in the Bible it was on coals.

And it's going to be hot. You read it and it's going to produce a warmth in you. And he said, I'll quicken it.

You just read it. I'll make it alive in you. I'll make it alive.

Don't read the book of Job. It's not a good book to read when you're depressed. A lot of people make that mistake.

It's like taking a hammer and hitting your toe because you got pain in your finger. There's a time to read Job and there's a time just to leave it there for now. Psalms.

John. Okay, Psalms and John. Just those two books.

Read the Psalms and then read the Gospel of John. And go back to Psalms and go back to the Gospel of John. Praise God.

Thank you, Jesus. Lord, I pray. I pray, Father, for those that have come.

I pray, God. Lord Jesus Christ. That your word.

Your victory be enough for us. I ask you, Lord, for a rekindling of faith. In our hearts, Lord, for what has already been spoken.

Not looking for something new, but to believe what has already been spoken. Father, I thank you, Lord, that these will not be overcome. Who've come to this altar today.

Just as the 275 traveling with Paul didn't drown. These will not be overcome. Lord, you sent me with this word today to give them.

And I've given your word, Lord. I've not made this up, Lord. You put this in my heart to speak this day, Father.

They're not going to drown. They're not going to be overcome. They're not going to be triumphed over.

They're not going to finish this race without a shout of victory. My God, I thank you, Lord. I thank you, Father.

That they will know. Everyone who's at this altar today will know that only God could have done this. There will be a testimony to Jesus.

On their lips, Lord. At this stage of the journey, when this deep water is overcome. They'll be able to say like Paul.

I have been a night and a day in the deep. But God had given me a word and I believed him. And I came through to the other side.

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. Hallelujah. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Jesus. Can we sing through it all? I want you just to stand for a moment and claim this song as your own today.

We're going to make it, folks. We're going to make it. We're going to make it.

No matter what happens, we're going to make it. Turn to your neighbor and say, you're going to make it. You're going to make it.

We're not going to fail. You're not going to fail. Hallelujah to the Lamb of God.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, mighty God.

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