

Abraham Could Have Stayed Home

by Carter Conlon

This sermon is about a significant transition in leadership at Times Square Church, where Pastor Carter Conlon is stepping down as Senior Pastor after 26 years of faithful service to focus on a nationwide call to prayer ministry. Pastor Tim Delina has been nominated as the new Senior Pastor, and the congregation is encouraged to fully support him. The sermon emphasizes the importance of following God's leading, even when it requires leaving comfort zones and making sacrifices, as seen in the examples of Abraham, Paul, and Pastor Carter's own journey.

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 4:15, Genesis 12:1, Acts 21:10, Psalm 23:5, John 6:33

Topics: "Leadership Transition", "Following God's Call"

Description

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Transcript

Father, we thank you, Lord God, for the presence of your Holy Spirit. Thank you, Lord, that you always come and confirm us when you are leading us as a people. Thank you, Lord, that you confirm your word.

Thank you that you confirm your leading. Thank you, my God, that you confirm us as your inheritance even when we are weary. Thank you, Lord, that you come with an overwhelming love and a sense of hope for tomorrow.

Thank you that that's just who you are, that you say to your own people, I know the thoughts that I think towards you, thoughts of good and not of evil to bring you to an expected end. So thank you, God. I'm asking that we could move forward as a church this morning, every one of us, nobody left behind, that everyone would take at least one step forward and, God, we thank you for it.

Anoint me, God, one more time and speak through this vessel. I have no other desire but to bring you to your people and your people to you. And so, Lord, we thank you with all of our hearts in Jesus' name, amen.

Luke chapter 14, beginning at verse 16, Abraham could have stayed home. Then he said to him, a certain man gave a great supper, not just an ordinary supper, I just want to bring your attention to that, but a great supper and invited many. And he sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, now, I believe in my heart that Christ is speaking now about himself.

He is the servant that's been sent by God the Father, thank you, to invite everyone to this great supper, which is the strength and life and redemption and calling and blessing of God through Jesus Christ on the cross, which is available to each of us as we come to him. So he gave a great supper and invited many. And he sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, come, for all things are not ready.

Now, when we look back at Abraham, for example, the Lord called him from his home and sent him out into a place, and the scripture says he didn't know where he was going, but he was given a promise that you're going to have descendants as numerous as the stars. Of course, we know today that's you and me as the church of Jesus Christ. And through you, all the world is going to be blessed.

Talk about a promise given to a man, amazing promise. I mean, I don't know how his heart was large enough to receive such a promise, but he did at the age of 75. And so he said, come now, all things are now ready.

Verse 18 says, but they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, I've bought a piece of ground and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.

And another said, I bought five yoke of oxen and I'm going to test them. I ask you to have me excused. Still another said, I've married a wife and therefore I cannot come.

So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house being angry, said to his servant, go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind. And the servant said, master, it's done as you commanded.

And still there is room. Then the master said to the servant, go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in that my house may be filled. For I say to you that none of those men who were invited shall taste my supper.

Now it's an amazing thing that the scripture talks about a certain king or a certain man made a great supper and invited many. Now the Bible tells us Jesus himself out of his own mouth said these words. He said in John chapter six, verses 33 to 35.

For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. In other words, this is the nutrition of God. This is the supper of God.

And I put it that way. This is the strength of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. And then they said to him, Lord, give us this bread always.

And Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life. And he who comes to me shall never hunger. And he who believes in me shall never thirst.

I am the bread. I am the feast. I am this great supper that a man prepared and invited many to come and partake of this supper and to be part of the blessing that it promises to be to many throughout the world.

David the Psalmist in Psalm 23 speaks of this incredible feast. And he says, you prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. So it speaks about God says, I'll give you strength in the midst of everything that would be sent to oppose you.

I love that in the presence of my enemy, not on the outskirts of my enemies or not after my enemies have ceased to attack me, but right in the presence of my enemies. He says, you sit me down to this incredible banquet. And people may have their swords drawn over you.

And all you can say to them is, would you pass the buns, please? And would you mind buttering it with your sword? You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. There's a strength of God that is available to those who walk with God. A strength that is supernatural, a peace that passes all understanding, giftings and abilities that can only come from God.

As a matter of fact, in life that can't be triumphed over. That's the promise of the word of God. Not just having power, which is great, but a life that will be attacked, but cannot be triumphed over.

You anoint my head with oil. I have clear thinking. In other words, I know my purpose in the earth.

I know that I'm called. David could easily say, I'm called to be part of that chain as it is, or that lineage going through the Bible, where God promises to bless all the families of this earth. That spiritual DNA was in David.

He had to have known it inside his heart. When you read his Psalms, of course, he didn't know it. He understood it.

Not everything, but he understood that his life was part of that lineage as yours and mine is as well. And he concludes by saying, my cup runs over. In other words, there's so much here at this table.

There's so much strength in this anointing that it's not just for me. It's for others. It flows.

I have a cup that I can say, would you mind take a sip of this? It's overflowing. Would you take a sip of this? Would you take a sip of this? There's a cup of anointing in the lives of those who say yes to God that overflows our natural ability. It overflows our own reasonings.

It overflows our own strength and begins to move in a realm that only God moves in. Now, just as Abraham had to respond at this great feast, there was a response that was required. The scripture says in Genesis chapter 12, the Lord said to Abram, get out of your country from your family and from your father's house to a land that I will show you.

I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great. And you shall be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you. And I will curse him who curses you. And in you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Now, it's interesting that the invitation of God came to Abraham at the age of 75. And he said, but it required him to leave a place that he was in and go to a place that he didn't know. It's amazing.

Like quite often, we want to be kind of blessed where we are, don't we? Like bless me now and don't ask me to do anything. Just pour this life and pour this light and pour this anointing and pour this oil. And oh God, and just right here where I am, isn't that good enough? And that's what Jesus was talking about in

the scripture that I read at the opening text where a man gave a great supper and invited many.

In other words, he didn't, it was not delivered to the door. The persons had to leave where they were to go to the supper. There was a distance to travel.

And I'm assuming there would be some inconvenience, maybe even associated with it. But they were invited to this incredible supper. But with one accord, the scripture says they began to make excuse.

And so many are invited to undertake this journey, but they begin to decline it. You know, there's a call on everyone's life. There's a call on your life.

And it requires the willingness to say, God, I'm going where you're leading me. We sang that today, where he leads me, I will follow. You know, we're not talking about going to Starbucks after the service today or out to Dunkin' Donuts or wherever it is that you go.

It's about the pattern and pathway of your life. Where he leads me, I will follow. I'll go out with him, with him all the way.

And I pray to God today that in your life and mine, this would be more than just a song we sing on Sunday. That there would actually be something in the heart. If Christ is inviting us to this incredible banquet of his life, his strength and his victory, that we wouldn't turn it down and say, but Lord, they began to say, he said, all things are now ready.

The banquet is now complete. In other words, the strength is now there. The victory is now won.

Remember when he rose from the dead, he took captivity captive. And he gave gifts unto men and women. And the reality is like, it's all there.

The banquet is ready and he calls us. But you know, as is this circumstance throughout history, they all with one accord began to make excuse. And the first one said, I have bought a piece of ground and I must go and see it.

And I ask you to have me excused. Or in the original King James, I believe it says, I pray you. It's almost like a type of a prayer that a person is praying.

God, please don't ask me to do this. Please don't ask me to go there. You see, I have a stake in this world.

There's things in this world I still want to see. And your way is so narrow and you're asking me to go out there and be rejected by society and be misunderstood by people, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. And you know, there's just so much I want to see.

I haven't been to Disneyland yet in Florida. And there's just so much, you see, I've got a stake. In this world.

And I want to see things. So I'm not ready yet. Please excuse me from this banquet that you've set before me.

And the next one said, well, I bought five yoke of oxen and I'm going to test them. And I ask you to have me excused. And that's the type of a person that says, I have investments, you see, in this world.

And I believe they're going to provide me a future. And maybe the security that I'm looking for. So just let me test it out at least first before I even consider this invitation.

Please excuse me from attending this banquet. Then the third says, well, I've married a wife and I can't come. And you know, it's the type of person that says, well, what about my family in this calling? I'm all settled in and I finally have what I want and I feel comfortable.

And I've got this life ahead of me and I've got commitments. I can't come. I can't do this thing that you're asking me to do.

And you know, the sad thing about it, it doesn't mean in this parable that any of these people don't go to heaven. So that's not where I'm going with this. What I'm saying in verse 24, he says, none of those, those who were invited, speaking of the people who just made excuses not to go with God, they will not taste of my supper.

This is not about eternal life, folks. This is about the power of God. It's about finding the purpose of God for your life.

It's about walking in the supernatural. It's about doing things or God doing things through you that only God can do. Only God can do these things.

But it doesn't happen to those who choose to hold to the land or hold to some other investments or hold to some other relationship. It comes to those who say, God, if you're leading me, I'll follow you. Now you don't have to, in my life, when he's been leading me, it's never been like in a week.

You know, just like if you're going for a job interview, say, well, you got 48 hours to make up your mind. What I found with God is he'll persist. When I went into ministry, I fought with him for six months.

No, not interested. No, not doing this. Don't talk to me about it.

Got a good job, have a good career. I'm advancing. I've got a farm.

I've got a wife. I had everything in here, by the way. I had a farm.

I had a wife and I had cows. So I had all of the things that are in here. So I really relate to the scripture.

And yet I find him calling me to another place, to something else for my life, another purpose for my life. But I had it all mapped out. I had it all planned.

It looked like it was going well. I mean, and yet suddenly God started calling. The question that came to my heart, as I was looking at this passage of scripture is, what if Abraham had stayed home? Can we even start to fathom it? What would biblical history look like? Abraham could have said, look, I'm 75.

And I've got commercial interests and I've got a home and I got a family. And he did. He had all of that.

I've got reputation in the community and maybe he was a civic leader. Who knows what he was? He could have had all of these excuses, but God was calling him. And even worse, he's calling him out into a place he has no idea where he's going.

And quite often with the call of God, that's exactly the way it is. He doesn't show us the whole pathway. It's just one step at a time.

Asks us one step at a time. I remember the first time I, this coming May will be 26 years from the first time I stepped on this platform. And that day I was in a high-rise, World Challenge had a high-rise apartment, one of the high-rises here.

And I was looking outside of the window. Out of nowhere, out of nowhere, the voice of the Lord comes and says, would you consider coming here to minister? My first thing out of my mouth was, first of all, I thought this is kind of jumping the gun. I've never met this man, David Wilkerson.

I'm only here to speak on a Tuesday night. And already you're talking to me about coming to this place. And the first thing out of my mouth was, what about my wife? And what about my children? We're all settled in.

We fought hard. We dug two churches out of the ground. We have a Christian school.

My kids are entrenched in their community. And God, we fought for 10 years and this finally come to fruition. We're sending people outside to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Everything is prospering. Our missions program is exploding. It's just amazing.

And now you're speaking to me about, you're speaking to me at this point about coming to New York City. The Lord was speaking to my heart. And the first thing I wanted to do was to protect my own family.

And then there's a knock at the door and Pastor David Wilkerson was there. And we went down and we were walking down Broadway and underneath the marquee of this, it was a show there called Cats back at this time. And I remember Pastor David said to me, we stopped and he said, would you be willing to pray about coming here to help me? And God had just spoken to me just a few minutes before.

And New York City, you have to understand, was not attractive to me. I lived out in the country. You understand? I played on a community hockey team.

You know, like this was my life out there. And New York City, the only thing I'd ever seen about New York City was the cross and the switchblade. I mean, where people are running after each other down alleyways with knives.

You know, that's all I'd ever seen. I had no exposure to New York City. And I'm looking out this window of this high rise and it's really not an attractive place to me.

Yet God began to speak. And when he speaks, we learn over time to begin to move with where he's leading us to go. And I thank God that we did.

Pastor Teresa, I thank God that we made the choice and we came here. What if Abraham had stayed home? Can we even fathom that if he'd stayed home? You see, the point is that for everyone who follows the leading of God, the future can be changed. And so too, it can be changed for those who don't.

You think of the numbers of people whose lives would not be transformed if we chose not to follow God. If we chose the safe path, if we allowed ourselves to get tied into this world, if we chose our own plans and dreams and visions instead of the leading of God, the numbers of people whose lives would not be changed. In the book of Acts, the apostle Paul was on the shores of the sea and he was heading off to Jerusalem.

And people sensed in the spirit there was going to be difficulty for him. And in chapter 21 of the book of Acts, verse 10, it says, as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. And when he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet and said, thus says the Holy Spirit, so shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

Now, when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered and said, what do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? I'm ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And so they loved Paul.

Paul was a good man of God and he brought the truth of God and people loved him. And if Paul had listened to those that pleaded with him not to go, you think about the books of the Bible that we would not have today. We would not have Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians or the book of Philemon.

They were all written in prison in Rome. And you think about how he chosen the path that looked to be the best in the natural. Had he not followed the leading of the Lord, how difficult it would have been, not just for Paul, but for all of the other people associated with him.

For Pastor Teresa and I, as I've just began to review this scripture, I thank God that over the years we've had the courage to say yes to him. We were just young believers and we had a farm, a sheep farm out in the country. And as I said, we had cows and we had ponies and we had a horse, we had chickens and a duck and we had goats, we had a whole bunch of stuff.

And suddenly I'm asked by the church that we're attending to get involved in the leadership of that church as an elder. And I knew what that was gonna cost. You see, we lived 36 miles away from that church.

So that meant I would have to come home. For example, on a Tuesday night, I'd have to put my kids to bed. I'd have to go in the barn, throw down 20 bales of hay, feed all the livestock, get dressed, drive 36 miles back into church to be at the prayer meeting and then 36 miles back home again.

And it was a huge commitment on our part, but we felt the Lord leading us to do this. And so in spite of the personal inconvenience, we obeyed God and we went and I became part of the leadership of that church and did many things in that capacity. On top of all this, at some point, the Lord speaks to us about starting a Bible study in our own community.

It's as if, it's strange sometimes, but it's as if God looks for somebody who's faithful to give them more to do. You know, there's a saying, if you want something done, give it to a man who's busy. Don't give it to a lazy person.

Give it to somebody who's already busy. And so we began to start a Bible study, which added another nine miles onto our journey because it was nine miles in a different direction from our home. And we would go there every Wednesday night, Pastor Teresa and myself, our children.

And sometimes only a couple of people would show up. I remember one time was only me, my brother-in-law and my son, Jason, who shared his testimony that night. So it was a very, very good evening for all of us.

And to start a Bible study, that Bible study eventually grew into a church and the people there said, we are a church and you are our pastor. And I said, well, you got part of that right. You got part A right, but part B wrong.

We are a church and God has done a miracle and he has established a testimony in an area that's been spiritually bankrupt for a hundred years. Truly a miracle. And I said, we are a church, but I'm not your pastor and I never will be.

And somebody prophesied in a prayer meeting one time. And I said, you ever do that again, I'll throw you out of here. I told him straight out.

I was serious. I said, don't you ever do that. I'm not a pastor.

The problem is that God started prophesying to me about that and just wouldn't let me away for six months. And then finally I broke and said, Lord, I'll go where you're leading me to go. And I left it all because in the police department, I had a good job.

I was making really good money. I had a dental plan for my family. I had a retirement plan.

If I'd stayed there, I'd be retired today. And I don't know, heaven knows what I'd be doing. But it was a career and I actually enjoyed what I was doing.

But I remember the day I walked out and across the road for the last time, I just turned in my uniforms and turned in my firearms and all the rest of it. And I walked out to the parking garage and there was this incredible peace came on my life. In the natural, it was suicide.

In spirit, it was. I mean, financial suicide and every other thing. And yet I knew God was in it somehow.

I had almost no encouragement to do this. I had people warning me of the disaster, warning me of the cliff ahead, warning me of the, your children are gonna go into hardship and you're making it, you're irresponsible. And even in my own father even had some pretty harsh words to speak to me.

The only one that encouraged me was Pastor Teresa. Thank God, thank God. She told me, she said, I was afraid you wouldn't go.

I wasn't afraid you would, I was afraid you wouldn't. And when we did that, then suddenly heaven opened. How else do you describe it? We saw the hand of God at work in everything.

It was absolutely amazing how we were fed, how we were able to feed others. In the midst of all of this, the Lord started asking us to open our home to people that needed help or they needed even just a place to live in some cases. And we did and we watched God supply in incredible ways.

One of the ladies that came with her two children who had rededicated her life to Christ, found her husband when she was living with us and ended up a missionary to South America with her husband and her children. If we had not gone with God, you see, this is my point. When we don't go with God, there's a lot of things that could have happened that don't happen.

A lot of good that could have come. And we end up not being the blessing that God would have us to be. That was the promise through Abraham.

And then coming to New York City, as I said, was not easy for us. And I'm telling you, I told Pastor Patrick here, we came in 1994 and by 95, 96, I used to spend half of my service staring at that light right there on the top until my eyes burned, wondering how in the world am I gonna get through this? It was so unfamiliar to me to come in from a culture that was really familiar to ministering in a church with over a hundred nationalities. And many of you were here then.

And you know, I stepped on landmines constantly all over the place because I don't know all of the cultures, all of the value systems and the beliefs, et cetera. Plus I wasn't raised in New York, so I don't know some of the annotations of culture here in this city. So it was very, very difficult.

And I would stare at the light and say, oh God, how am I gonna make it through this? Plus there was a huge rebellion in this church. I hope you don't remember that even if you were here. And so it was very, very tough to get through.

People were saying extremely unkind things, both to me and my wife and our children and Pastor David included. And so it was a very, very, very difficult time in New York City. But I leaned over to Pastor Patrick and I said, I'm still staring at the light and it's still there and I'm still here.

26 years later, praise be to God. And in the midst of it all, one day when everything is kind of calmed down, I'm starting to be more relaxed than I've ever been in the pulpit. And I'm just sharing my heart with you today.

Okay, if you'll let me do that. The Bible School that was founded by our founding pastor was in a need of assistance to go forward. And so he ended up asking Pastor Teresa if she would consider giving it the bridge to where it needed to go from where it was to where it needed to go.

And it was supposed to be just a short little season of doing this. And so we agreed to it. We met with Pastor David and we agreed and that she would do this.

And it was about a year or so in where one day standing in the driveway of the school, she looked at me and she said, I won't do this if you tell me you don't want me to. And she said, but I feel the Lord calling me. I see something ahead for the school.

I see it in the spirit. And I feel the Lord asking me for a commitment to the school. And I knew what that would cost.

Immediately, I knew what it would cost us. So I only had one question for her. I said, is the Holy Spirit asking you to do this? And she said to me, I've never been more sure of anything in my life.

I feel like I was born for this moment. Then I looked at her and I said, so I won't stand in your way. I can't, if God is calling you, I can't stand in his or your way.

Knowing full well, both of us, the cost it would be. So for the last 10 years, roughly, every Tuesday morning, she heads out from our home in New Jersey to the school and I head into the city. And it's always been hard.

We've been apart from Tuesday morning to Friday night. And I want to just thank you for driving home for my sake every Friday night. I really mean that.

And she would drive home every Friday night to be with me and to be here at the church on Sunday. Then we would have Monday together. Then Tuesday morning, she would go back to the school and spend 10 years like that.

And there have been over 400 young people in that time put out into the marketplace who know who they are in Christ. They are missionaries founding churches in Africa. They're pastoring churches in Europe.

They're leading in the United States. I could bring you a list of the great good that's been done through all of these lives. But also the fact that if she had not gone, if she had not obeyed God, none of these things would have happened.

We would have had some good things happen, but what could have been would not have been. Which brings me to what really I want to talk to you about this morning. Because for about the last two years, God has been calling me to something.

I have fought hard against it. I've fought as I always do to push it out of my mind or out of my heart at times, but it just doesn't go away. Two years ago, he started to speak to me that he'd opened a large door and he asked me to go through it.

And in those two years, I have found myself in Washington. I found myself in California. I found myself in Europe in pastors conferences with pastors that are just starving for a word from God.

Churches that are being called of God to go back to prayer again. The radio program has just exploded across the nation. Now we are in 605 stations now, the call to prayer and 300 stations, 302, I think it is something like that.

A half hour program called a call to the nation. I knew that if I responded to this call, that I couldn't give the time that this church deserves. This church needs a pastor.

It needs a full-time pastor, fully engaged with the 60 or so ministries in this congregation. A pastor who could be here for the weddings and the funerals and the counseling and the trials, the difficulties and the numerous things that go on every week. And I knew with the call that God's putting on my life that I couldn't do it.

And you deserve more than just a fly through pastor that's here once in a while and gone and traveling a lot. In that context, I will be transitioning on May the 10th into a new role in Times Square Church as general overseer of Times Square Church Incorporated. Now, let me explain that role to you.

That role, Times Square Church was just a church when I came here, but now it's five unique and distinct parts. It's the church, the Bible school, a radio program across the country. It's a newsletter that goes into 28,000 homes and it's pastors conferences and leaders conferences that we are part of now.

I am part of at least all around the world. As general overseer of Times Square Church Incorporated, I will be here as a guide leading as best as I can. I'll be here to advise.

I'll be here to, I'll still be speaking. I'll still be leading the prayer meeting. The new pastor has asked me to continue the prayer meeting to guide it on Tuesday nights for the unforeseen future.

And I know this is a bit of a shock, but the point really is God is calling me. You saw that. He bore witness to it today in the worship in this church.

I always look for the witness of the Holy Spirit, that there is a new calling on my life. And as a church, you will be getting a new pastor on May the 10th of this year, a new senior pastor. And I'll be transitioning and I'm not leaving.

Okay, I'm not leaving. I'll still be sitting here. I won't be in that first seat anymore, but I'll still be sitting on the platform.

I'll still be speaking when I'm asked to speak and I'll still be speaking and leading a prayer meeting on Tuesday night. So I'm not leaving. I'm gonna be here.

I'm gonna stay as a guide. I'm gonna guide the new pastor into that which the Holy Spirit spoke to our founding pastor, David Wilkerson and pass on as much as I can to the new pastor in the coming couple of years. I really love this man of God.

To be honest with you, the Lord spoke to me about him about 10 years ago and showed me that he was going to be my replacement one day. So I've known this for quite a long time. I took two of the elders and pastor Teresa into confidence 10 years ago and told them, I said, the Lord has shown me who my replacement is, but certain things are gonna have to happen for that day to come.

But I want you to bear witness. I want you to understand what it happens. I'm not making this up.

That God spoke to me 10 years ago about this good man of God. He's not a novice. He's 55 years old.

He's very, very familiar with this church. His father was the man, his father was the police captain who, when David Wilkerson... Come on, you can rejoice. His father was the police captain who, when David Wilkerson was standing on a box wanting to preach and a local police officer said, you can't, his father was the man who said, let the man speak.

I don't think he was born then. You're probably wondering who it is. His name is Frank Johnson.

Pastor Tim Delina is gonna be a great pastor. He is a wonderful friend. I love him.

I love him. It's gonna be a pleasure for us to work together. And you have to understand though, he will be the pastor of this church.

There will not be a duality of leadership here. I will never allow this to become an I am of Paul and I'm of Apollo situation. If that ever happened, then I would withdraw completely.

And I have given him my word on that. I will be here in a helping role, a guiding role for the church. And I'll speak if he asked me to speak and I'll share if given the opportunity.

I'll be out there on the radio. For those who are concerned, you will still be able to get the messages I speak on our website. And you'll be able to get those at a website that's been around for quite a while now called carterconlon.com. It will be connected to the church it will not be a separate ministry from Times Square Church.

But just for the sake of order and those who want to hear what God is speaking through me as I travel to pastor's conferences throughout the world, you will be able to go to that website and you'll be able to listen to the messages. I am honored to have been your pastor for 26 years. I'm honored to have been here.

Thank you. If you wouldn't mind being seated just for a moment. I want to read to you from a scripture that the Lord gave me concerning this transition.

In first Corinthians chapter four verses 15 to 17. Now in this light, I want to tell you I'm going to do everything in my power to see pastor Tim Delina fully established and hit his full stride for this church. I believe that for Times Square Church, the best is yet to come.

I honestly believe that. I believe the glory of this latter house is going to be greater than the former. I am committed to putting that baton firmly in his hand.

I'm committed to being a friend, a confidant, a guide. I'm committed to serving and being under the leadership of the new pastor of Times Square Church Incorporated. And I'm doing this of my own accord because God is leading me.

It's important to know that. Paul said these words in first Corinthians chapter four verse 14. I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children, I warn you.

For though you have 10,000 instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore, I urge you imitate me.

So I'm asking you as a church body to give your full heart and your full support to Pastor Tim DeLena. He is not my choice, he is God's choice. You have to understand that.

He's God's choice. God chose him to do this. God took him to the school he needed to go through to prepare him.

He's been learning and he's a very quick learner. He's very bright and I thank God. It's going to take this church to a whole new place.

Verse 17 and I love this because I sent this to Pastor Tim a little while ago. It says, for this reason, I've sent Timothy to you who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord who will remind you of my ways in Christ as I teach everywhere and in every church. So Paul was moving on to do what God had called him to do and he sent Timothy to look after the church.

I think we're going to have, I think it's just going to be a great journey. I honestly do. I have a gladness in my heart about it.

And anyhow, I want to read to you, this is the letter that's going to be going up on all of our social media, just so everyone understands. This is from the Board of Directors of Times Square Church. After 26 years of faithful service, Pastor Carter Conlin is transitioning his role from Senior Pastor of Times Square Church to Chairman of the Board and General Overseer of Times Square Church Incorporated.

Over the past decade, Pastor Carter has felt a mandate of the Lord to call the nation to pray. This call to prayer, it's time to pray has grown to include a nationwide radio ministry, pastors and leaders conferences, a book and the Times Square Church worldwide prayer meeting which has participants in 204 countries. God has placed a sense of urgency in Pastor Carter's heart to dedicate this next season of his life and ministry to continuing this imperative ministry.

In early 2020, Pastor Carter asked the Board of Directors to consider the nomination of Pastor Tim Delina as the new Senior Pastor of Times Square Church. The nomination was accepted and unanimously

approved. We are pleased to announce effective May the 5th, and it'll be the 10th, which would be the service for Pastor Tim actually takes over the church.

The Pastor Tim Delina will assume the role of Senior Pastor of Times Square Church. With over 30 years of pastoral leadership and experience, Pastor Tim Delina joins Times Square Church as the third Senior Pastor in 33 years since the founding of the church by Pastor David Wilkerson. Pastor Tim has been a frequent and well-loved speaker at Times Square Church.

He has a love for this church body and for New York City, his hometown. We are excited to welcome him, his wife Cindy and their four children to the Times Square Church family. We look forward to his leadership and vision for the future as he carries on the rich legacy of Times Square Church.

Pastor Carter is committed to stand in unity with Pastor Tim as he and David Wilkerson once did to usher in a Christ-honoring transition that ensures the continuing health, the mission, and the future of Times Square Church. Sincerely, the Board of Directors, Times Square Church Incorporated. If you would be kind enough to stand and pray with me, by the way, Pastor Teresa will be speaking at three o'clock and sharing her thoughts on this part of the journey that we are now entering into.

God Almighty, I thank you with all my heart, Lord, for how you have kept your hand on this church congregation. I thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, that your kingdom is advancing, that you are moving and you are preparing to keep this house so that the latter testimony would be greater than the former. Thank you, Lord, for the past.

Thank you for all the things that you've done. Thank you that you've carried us and kept us through flood, fire, trial, through blessing, Lord. You've not let it take away our hearts from you.

Thank you, God, that you've been speaking about the future. We praise you and bless you, God, for the incredible harvest that is going to come into your kingdom through this church and through the fact that not only those of us, Lord, on this platform, but Pastor Tim is also obeying you to leave a very comfortable place to come here, knowing that it's a difficult place to be at times. So thank you, God, for this man of God, for his wife, Cindy.

Thank you, Lord, for their children, their willingness to come back to New York City and to fight for those, God, who don't yet know you as Lord and Savior, to teach, train and disciple those who are new in the faith and to help us all to respond to the call of God on each of our lives. Thank you, Lord, for the great privilege you've given Pastor Teresa and I, Lord, as we have served this church and will continue to serve the Bible school. Thank you, my God, for the great, great, great, great blessing of walking in the anointing of your Holy Spirit.

Thank you for the lives that have been changed. Thank you, God, for the words that you have given week after week after week, Lord. You continue to speak and you've taken this frail vessel and, God, you poured your word out through my life.

Lord, I thank you, God. I thank you that I have no regrets. I've done it all.

I've laid it down on the track, God. I've not been lazy in this pulpit, Lord. I've sought you for the people's sake.

Thank you, Lord, that you will protect this church in the future and you will guide us all, Lord, into that place of life and blessing that you promised, Lord. You said if we would respond to this great feast, Lord, that we would taste of your supper. So I pray, God, that we would taste of the strength of Christ in this church, not just a few of us, but of many, O God.

Most, the majority would taste of this, God, that in this house would be born things in people's lives that would truly give glory to you, God, in your kingdom. Thank you, Lord. Thank you for Pastor Teresa.

Thank you for her dedication to the young people of this congregation and those you bring in from around the world. Thank you, Lord, that you'll continue to give her strength to lead that school as long as you call her to lead it, Lord. Thank you, God.

Thank you, Lord, that I'm going to get my wife back, finally. God, thank you. In Jesus' name.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/fpWAA12BlpY.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/carter-conlon/abraham-could-have-stayed-home/>

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