

Another Jesus

by Carter Conlon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of following the true Jesus of the Bible, rather than a false Jesus created out of human imagination, and calls for a clear call to salvation and a commitment to Christ.

Duration: 56:10

Scripture: Matthew 7:21, John 10:27

Topics: "Another Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his experience of being invited to speak at a ministry conference without knowing much about it. He emphasizes the importance of coming to Jesus as portrayed in the Bible and not creating our own version of Him. The speaker talks about the need for believers to go beyond superficial faith and embrace the heart of God, surrendering their lives completely. He also highlights the danger of relying solely on emotional experiences without allowing the Word of God to transform our lives. The sermon references the book of Acts, where Peter confronts the people with their sin and the need for repentance. The speaker warns against evangelistic movements that focus only on emotions and urges believers to seek a genuine relationship with Christ.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church Pulpit Series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing WORLDCHALLENGE PO BOX 260 LINDALE, TEXAS 75771 or calling 903-963-8626.

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And we're going to spend time in the Gospel of Matthew and we're going to take a look at the Jesus that Jesus brought to people. We're going to take a look at the words that He said and so it's really going to have to be His word that speaks to your heart tonight. I'm going to ask for that kind of an unction, that kind of an anointing.

I know that tonight there is a type of people that have braved the storm to come out in this service. By and large, there are many, many people here tonight that are willing to count the cost of what it is to walk with Him. And you're going to have to ask tonight for the Holy Spirit to make the truths that you're about to hear real to your heart.

Real. To break down all defenses, to break down preconceived notions and to say, Oh God, if there's any chance that I have created my own Jesus. If there's any chance that I have charted my own course.

If there's any chance that I have gathered around a group of people or some doctrine that I've heard somewhere that is a golden calf by the name of Jesus. God, deliver me tonight in Your power and in Your strength. Deliver me so that the Jesus I follow is the Jesus of the Bible.

Lord Jesus, the voice I hear is Your voice. Didn't He say that? My sheep hear My voice and another one they will not follow. And so tonight it's going to be a red-letter night.

We're going to be looking in the Gospel of Matthew and looking at the claims that Christ made upon the lives of all who would be called by His name. That's my life and it's your life. There are no exceptions.

All who would follow Him. There were legitimate claims that He laid upon their lives. So I'm going to half preach it and the other half will be almost like a Bible study.

I have a lot of scripture. You'll have to be very quick to turn to the scriptures because I'll be turning fast and reading them to you. Let's pray together.

Lord Jesus, You are the way, You're the truth and You're the light. There's no one else besides You. There's only one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.

There's no one else. There's no other name that is named under heaven whereby men might be saved. And Jesus, we want to know You.

We want to walk with You as Your people. Lord, it's You that we want to live for. It's You that we want to follow.

And it's You that we want to hear. My covenant God, I ask, Father, in Jesus' name, that You would touch every heart, that You would touch every life. Touch my life tonight.

God, empower me with the Holy Spirit. Lord, deliver, just take me out of this message altogether. And let it only be You.

Jesus, speak through me tonight. Speak through Your Word tonight to every heart and every life. And Lord, I ask that all falseness would be exposed.

Any crooked path would be made straight. Any high place would be brought down. And Lord, we would be found worshipping You.

We'd be found at the right place with the right Jesus. Oh God, there are so many in this generation who are worshipping a person they think is Jesus. But it's another Jesus.

Oh Lord, I'm asking tonight that You deliver anyone who happens to be in this sanctuary tonight, or anyone who hears this message in the coming days, from following a false Christ, from following a false Messiah, even though His name might be called Jesus. Lord, help us now to find the right Messiah. Help us, Lord, to walk the way You would have us to walk.

Oh Jesus, we want to live for You and You alone. You are the Son of God. Reveal Yourself through Your Word tonight to every life and to every heart.

Father, I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Now, 2 Corinthians chapter 11.

The Apostle Paul, in verse 1, says these words, 1 to 4. He says, What to God you could bear with me a little in my folly, and indeed bear with me? For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy. For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, Paul says, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Now, we're going to be hearing some words tonight from Jesus that are actually quite simple. There are people who try to make them complicated, they try to spiritualize everything, but if you will take it just the way it's written, it's actually quite simple and easy to understand, and even easier to follow in the strength of the Holy Ghost. Paul says, I fear that your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

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. Paul is warning the church in Corinth that there are going to come deceivers. There are going to come people, it's easy to spot those who are preaching about some other god somewhere, some ashen god, or a god of steel with some iron-topped belly, and things like this.

It's easy to pick it out that that's not the Messiah. But what becomes difficult, and even more so in this generation, is those that have come, and they are preaching in the name of Jesus. But the Jesus they preach is a god that they have formed out of their own imaginations.

He's a god that they prophesy about out of the dreams of their own hearts, and the visions of their own eyes. Jesus said himself, through one of the prophets, I have not sent these prophets, and yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, and yet they have spoken in my name.

And how much more in this generation. We see the golden calf having been raised up, and there are some that preach a Jesus that just simply wants to bless you, and make you happy, and prosper you all the time. I remember one time I was talking with a man who was a musician, who had traveled with a known evangelistic ministry for many years.

He had been in services and crusades, had seen hundreds come to the altar through the preaching of Jesus. And I remember this particular man, every time he'd go into a room, he'd have the whole place in a virtual uproar in no time at all. He caused contention and strife everywhere he went.

So I went to his house, because he was starting to attend the church that I was pastoring, and he was assisting there. And I went to his house, and I told him, I said, Brother, what you're doing is wrong, it's sin. I said, everywhere you go you cause contention.

I said, the scripture says only by pride comes contention. And I shared with him, I said, you need to repent of this thing. And he sat back in his chair and stiffened up, and looked at me, and he said, repent.

He said, I've been serving God for years and never had to repent before. Now you've got to tell me I've got to start repenting? And walking in repentance? I wonder what kind of a Jesus he came to, that didn't call for him to be examined by the word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit in his heart, and to lay down issues of life and attitudes of heart that are unlike Christ's. I wonder what kind of a Jesus this man came to.

Now the Apostle Paul says there are many that are going to come preaching Jesus, and yet it's another Jesus. Pastor David preached on Sunday evening about the scripture in Matthew, where Jesus said many will come in that day, and say, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and do many wonderful works, and cast out devils? And he will say to them, depart from me, ye who work iniquity. I never knew you.

I never knew you. You see, they were preaching in the name of Jesus. They were doing works in the name of Jesus.

They were casting out devils in the name of Jesus. They were prophesying in the name of Jesus, in the church, in Jesus' name. But Jesus looks at these people and says, I never knew you.

You see, they had been recipients of another Jesus. They had embraced another gospel. There are dangerous modern day trends that I want to talk about for a moment tonight.

And number one, that I've seen in evangelism over the years, we have substituted the word hurting for the word sin. In the church, and evangelists will call people, if you are hurting tonight, you can come to the altar, which is true. If you are hurting, you can come.

But I have seen that word hurting substituted for the word sin on an incredible scale. If some of these modern day prophets were able to rewrite the Bible, they would write it this way. And God's people were hurting, so they murmured against him in the wilderness.

And Moses was a long time away, and the people were hurting, so they built a golden calf. Today, there are many who preach of Jesus that appeals only to the realm of needs and emotions. There are some who preach of Jesus who is just simply a spiritual Santa Claus.

He just meets every need, and he's out there, and his whole reason for being is just to make everybody happy. Do you know how erroneous that is? Do you know that it's not the primary concern of God to make you and I happy? His primary concern is to make you and I holy. His primary concern is that we would turn to him for strength to walk through the trials and fires of this life, to live in self-denial if that's what he causes us to live in, and to preach and proclaim his name to the ends of the world.

That people who live in darkness might come to know Christ as their Lord and Savior. We're not called just to be happy. There is joy, but that joy comes from abandonment to Almighty God.

It comes from a life that's separated from the things of this world. It comes when we can, as the Apostle Paul said, This world has nothing in me, and I have nothing in this world. It comes when we can say with an honest heart, If I live, I live for Christ.

If I die, it's gain. I desire to go, but for a season it's more profitable that I stay here and minister in the capacity that God has given me to minister in. It's not God's primary desire to make us happy.

And don't fall into that trap. Some people come to church and the gospel is preached, and they go home and say, Whoa, whoa, what a rotten service. I mean, I thought I'd be happy at the end of the service.

Not always so. Sometimes God's word comes and will touch an area, touch an idol in your heart. It will touch something in your heart that's not right in your life.

If you lay it down, you'll be happy. You will be happy. You'll go out of here shouting and rejoicing.

I used to serve a God of self, but that thing has been cut off in my life. You'll go out and your life will be changed. But if God's word comes and there's something you're resisting, and you're resisting that call to full and wholehearted abandonment in Christ, then you're not going to be happy.

There are people who run around and they're doing it now. All over the western world, in this generation, they're running around looking to be happy. They'll spend thousands of dollars to get on a plane and go to some new place so they can do some foolish thing so they can be happy.

Because they've come to this Jesus, and the Jesus that they've come to, his primary concern is to make everybody happy. The God that I came to, the God that I know, the God that I serve, his primary concern is to get a hold of my heart, every area of my heart. And that his nature might be made manifested in my life.

And that he might be able to use my life on this side of eternity for his honor and glory, even if it means hard times. Even if it means I have to suffer. Even if it means I feel like screaming day in and day out for months on end because of what God is doing in my life.

So that the fruit of Christ might become perfected in me, and that others who live in darkness might come to the saving knowledge of Christ. And there are evangelistic movements that only appeal to the realm of need and emotions, moving the crowd continuously in emotions. Brothers and sisters, I've been there, I've seen it, and I've seen the long-term fruit of it.

I've been in services where people are running up and down the aisles, and there's nothing wrong with that if it's in the Holy Ghost. I'm not against that. They're popping up and down like pogo sticks, and they're twirling around like tops, and they're doing all kinds of things and shouting and yelling and everything, but it's all just rank emotion.

That's all it is. When the service is over, they go home, they go back to their life, nothing has changed inside. The word that they've heard doesn't penetrate, it doesn't produce the nature of Christ in them, and give it about ten years, and eventually they fall off from the church.

Their children fall away from God because there's no substance, there's no reality in what they've been involved in. They've come to the spiritual Santa Claus that they've created out of their own minds, and they've called him Jesus. I want to bring to your mind and attention the book of Acts chapter 2, when Peter got up and preached in the Holy Ghost, he just said, this same Jesus whom you have crucified, God has raised him up.

He made the people aware that it is their sin that crucified the Lord of glory. And when they heard that message and they were pricked in their heart, they said, men and brethren, what shall we do? What can we do? You cannot truthfully present Christ without also appealing to the areas of reason and will. We must appeal to reason to present Christ to the people.

The Apostle Paul said, I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. We must appeal to reason when we present the gospel, that the ultimate end of following Christ is an absolute abandonment to the will of God. We must appeal to the area of will, because I fully believe that until self-will is broken, there can never be a full surrender to Christ.

Self-will has to be broken. No matter where we start from, brothers and sisters, we've got to come to our own Gethsemane. We've got to come to that place where we say, Father, if it be possible, take this cup away from me.

Nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done. That's the call of God upon a Christian's life. It was the call of God upon the life of Jesus.

And Jesus said, if any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

If we don't present the whole Jesus, we end up with a half a Christian, if there is such a thing. But I feel that that half Christian, many of them are going to stand before the Lord and hear those sad words, depart from me, I never knew you. You went to church and you did all kinds of works, but your heart wasn't my heart.

My nature wasn't formed in you. You didn't turn to me with all of your heart. You never followed me wholeheartedly.

You see, if Jesus put the conditions of following him up front, why is it that today we put them on the back burner? And I'm not saying we, I'm not talking about Times Square Church, but all over the Western world, people, preachers and evangelists are putting the conditions of Christ on the back burner. My brothers and sisters, I know what I'm talking about. A few years back I was invited to speak at a very, very large conference that was being held in a certain city, and evangelical churches from all over that city were being gathered by this particular ministry to spend three days together in a time in the Word, in a time in worship, a time to be challenged.

I was invited to be one of the keynote speakers, although I knew nothing about the ministry that was there or what I was involved in. And I went down there to be a keynote speaker, and the thing that God put on my heart to speak about is the message, to some degree, that you're hearing tonight, is that the Jesus we come to had better be the Jesus of the Bible. I talked about the cross.

I talked about the call of Christ on the life of every believer. I talked about the heart of God for this generation. And those who come to Christ and are called by His name, sooner or later, have got to stop rejoicing in just superficial things and have got to embrace the very heart of God and say, Lord, what is it that you would have me to do? What is your will for my life? And I began to share on these things, and I gave an altar call for people who wanted to surrender to Jesus Christ.

It was a very religious atmosphere. There were supposedly born-again people from virtually every denomination in that city. And I gave an altar call for those who... My altar call was very definite.

I said, there are people here, you're elders and deacons, you've been in the church for years, some of you even sing in choirs, but you're not saved. You don't have the heart of God. You never had the heart of God.

You never came to fully surrender your life to God. You came to Him for what you can get. But the true Christian comes to Christ for what he can give to the kingdom of God and how he can serve his Lord and his Master.

And I gave an altar call for salvation, and by the hundreds, it was in a stadium-type place, and by the hundreds, people came out, weeping and crying and broken before the Lord. Men with cards on, identifying themselves as leaders in the church, came out. And by their coming out, they were saying, I'm a leader in the church, but God, I'm not saved.

I'm not saved. I've come to another Jesus. Lord, I come to you tonight.

I come to give my whole life. I come to give my heart. The people rejoiced.

I was able to lead those people in a prayer for salvation, and they began to rejoice, and the joy of Christ was released in their lives. But right after the service, some of the leaders of that organization and some of the pastors got together and had a meeting as to how they might get rid of me out of the conference. And one of the men said these words to another pastor that was there, He's wrecking our good feeling.

He's wrecking our good feeling. I want you to think this over. This is not an isolated incident.

The gospel that's being preached in most of the western world now is just a gospel that's tailored to make the sinner feel good in his sin. To make the lukewarm man feel good in his lukewarmness. It's to make the man who's not committed to the purposes of Christ feel good and saved when he's not committed.

But thanks be to God that there are still voices. Thanks be to God that there are voices like Pastor Wilkerson that are not compromising in this generation and still laying out the claim and call of God upon those who would follow Jesus Christ. Better that I offend you tonight.

Better that you leave your matter in the harness than you go out happy and dancing and lost in your sin and stand before God and hear Him say, I never knew you. Jeremiah 6.16, the prophet Jeremiah says, Ask for the old path where is the good way and walk therein and you shall find rest for your souls. Ask for the old path.

That's got to be the cry of your heart if you're a Christian tonight. Oh God, show me out of your word. Show me what your call is.

If there are conditions to following you. Jesus, you said it yourself, no man starts to build a house without first counting the cost. If I've not counted the cost, if I've not even understood the cost, then Lord God, show it to me tonight.

Better that I should see it and make a clear-cut decision than to live in illusion all my life and end up before the throne of God having missed the heart of God altogether. In Jeremiah, the Lord said to Jeremiah, in Jeremiah chapter 15, He says, Let them return unto you, but return not thou unto them. There is a call of God in this generation calling the holy remnant bride out of all of this mixture that's found in western society.

I'm talking now about the church, the supposed church, before we even start talking to the unsaved. Brothers and sisters, there's a lot of talk about revival, but there is no revival right now in this generation other than very little sporadic things around different places in North America. We are in desperate need of revival.

We are in desperate need of a people who will seek God with all of their heart once again and call the people back to God instead of trying to bring and tailor a Christ that fits the appetites of a carnal and

lukewarm society that we live in. Now, go to the Gospel of Matthew, please, chapter 10. Hallelujah.

If you love the Word of God, you will love this. If you love Jesus, you won't find this hard. These are His words.

I want to talk about some of the conditions now, about eight or nine of them. There are more, but I want to talk about those that God put upon my heart for tonight. The conditions of following Him.

And I know this to be true. Matthew, chapter 10, verse 22. We must be willing to die to our reputation to follow Christ.

You shall be hated of all men for my name's sake, but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. In verse 25, He says, It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, that's the devil, how much more shall they call them of his household? And Jesus said it clearly.

He said, Woe unto men when they speak well of you, for so did their fathers with the false prophets. There are secular prophets in this generation. There are those that call themselves by the name of Christ and all of the world speaks well of them.

But I tell you, brothers and sisters, if you're going to come to Christ and live for Christ and have the fire of God in your life, you've got to be willing to die to your reputation. You've got to be willing to have men cast out your name as evil because it's not you that they hate, it's Christ that they hate in you. There's got to be a willingness, an understanding that if you live for God, people who are in sin are not going to be happy when you come into their midst.

You go into the workplace and they're going to make fun of you, they're going to lie about you, they're going to joke about you. Some of you are smiling, you're experiencing it right now in your workplace. Well, rejoice, the scripture says.

Be exceedingly glad. Jump over a chair and give glory to God. Rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer shame for His name's sake.

If you're suffering just simply because you're living for God, I'm not talking about people who make a nuisance out of themselves, but if you're suffering because simply you love Him, you want to do what's right, you're reaching out with love when others are hating, you're speaking good about people that others are speaking evil of, you're doing acts of kindness when others are trying to rip everybody off, you're walking in honesty when everybody else is dealing under the table, sure they're going to speak evil of you, they're going to cast you down and try to bring you down to the level where they live, face it once and for all, those who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. The Apostle Paul said it, Jesus said it, that settles it in my heart. Hallelujah.

I remember when I got saved and filled with the Holy Ghost, I was a police officer, and I lived on the wild side for a lot of years. And when I got saved, God did a, especially when I got baptized in the Holy Ghost, before I got baptized in the Holy Ghost, I was a little bit shaky as a Christian, but after I got filled with the Holy Ghost, God did such a radical transformation in my life. You'd think everybody around you is going to be happy about it.

One of the very first things that I found is that I couldn't find a partner to work with on the police force, because they knew that I wouldn't lie under oath. That's an awful thing to have to say, isn't it? Now I found some partners who would work with me, but I would level with them. I said no hotels, no girls, no manhandling people, no nothing.

We do everything by the book, and we do it right. And some guys really appreciated that, and others wouldn't work with me anymore. And needless to say, they said some things that were not very nice.

But in the midst of it all, I can't be specific about this, but one time a scandal hit the police force, and there was a person of ill repute that a lot of people had been associating with, and this person threatened to blow the whistle on virtually half of the police force. And I walked into my office one day, and it was in the papers, and everybody was running around. A lot of guys were really sweating, right from the top and down.

And I walked in the office, and one of the guys in the office says, Well, we know at least one person that has nothing to worry about this morning. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

I told him, I said, Guys, if you're willing to live righteously, you too can have a clean conscience in the sight of God and men. Hallelujah. You've got to die to your reputation.

Settle it. Settle it in the workplace. Others are going to get promoted, and you're not, because there's an old boy system.

God can circumvent all of that, but you've got to entrust yourself to God, and die to the desire to be loved by carnal and wicked men, because you're not going to be if you live for Christ. Secondly, Jesus said, you have to have an open-faced testimony. Matthew chapter 10, and verse 33.

Now listen to this carefully. He said, Whosoever will deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Whoever denies me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven.

I see people from time to time, and I've been in restaurants with people who can't even bow their heads and pray in a restaurant, let alone testify for Christ. They make it look like they're wiping the sweat off their brow when they pray. Oh Lord, bless the food.

Amen. Jesus said, if you're going to be ashamed of me, I'm going to be ashamed of you before my Father. We've got to settle the issue in our hearts and say, God, you put this down as a condition of being your disciple.

I didn't make these words up. I didn't say them. Jesus said, whoever denies me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven.

And elsewhere he says, those that are ashamed of me, I'll be ashamed of before my Father who is in heaven. We really must consider this. We're not called, this whole closet Christian thing, I don't even know where it came from.

But I don't find it in the book of Acts. I don't find the book of Acts where it says, now you're saved and filled with the Holy Ghost. No, it just exists and trusts that somewhere down the line somebody in secret is going to ask you for a reason for the hope that's in your life.

That's not what the Scripture says. You're going to be filled with the Holy Ghost and you're going to be witnesses all over the world. In Judea, Jerusalem, and Samaria to the uttermost parts of the earth.

We have to have an open faced testimony. I am a Christian. I've shared with my sons, I've shared with others over the years, I've said, guys, when you walk into the school locker room, put your Bible on the locker.

Don't hide it in the top shelf. The longer you hide it, the harder it becomes to bring it out and to profess before all that you are a Christian. I'm not talking about being obnoxious in Christ.

I'm not talking about pushing people that don't want to hear. I'm not talking about casting pearls before swine. I'm talking about just declaring openly, I am saved.

Before you got saved, people you used to walk into work that were here and you used to boast about, I was drunk all night, Saturday night. I was in such and such a bar. Boy, you should have seen the party we had and you bragged about sin, you boasted about sinful living, you joked about it, and you'd unashamedly open your mouth and tell the filthiest joke that's ever been produced in all of humankind.

You wouldn't even blush. But now, the King of Kings lives inside of your life. The Lord of Lords is within you.

And how is it? How is it that people were so unashamed of sin, now come back into the workplace and people start telling a dirty joke and they get all sweaty and nervous and all shaky inside and won't even at least just get out of the room if nothing else, but be a testimony for Jesus Christ. Now thirdly, in Matthew chapter 22, Matthew chapter 22, verse 37, he says that we must enter into a consuming personal relationship with Him. A consuming.

Do you remember the Scripture when it talked about Jesus going down into Jerusalem, into the temple? Here He has a chance for all the praise of men. The very first thing He does, if they want to take Him and make Him a king, the very first thing He does is goes into the temple, makes a scourge of cords, drives out the buyers and sellers, and totally offends the religious order of His day. Finally, once and for all, seals His own fate.

We must enter into a consuming personal relationship. The disciples remember after that day that it was written of Him, the zeal of Thine house has eaten me up. A consuming personal relationship with Christ.

In Matthew 22, verse 37, Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God. Do you want to know why so many people struggle in their walk with God? Do you want to know why it's so hard sometimes for so many? Because it's a lack of love in that relationship.

When there's love in that relationship. There are people tonight that legitimately can't come out to the house of God. I understand that and I'm not condemning anybody.

But there are people tonight who simply because it's raining didn't come out to the house of God. Now, you think back to the day when you first met that first girl or that first guy and you fell in love and you try phoning somebody up. You try phoning them up and saying, well, it's raining out.

I'm not coming over to your house tonight. The odds are that if that's the person you did marry that you wouldn't be married to them. You wouldn't have married them.

I'd like to challenge anybody to call their boss tomorrow morning and say it's raining. You expect me to come to work? Now, just a question. Are we called to give less to Christ than we give to boyfriend, girlfriend or other human relationships? Or we give our secular employer? Are we called to give less to Him if we love Him with all of our heart and our soul and our mind? Now, that doesn't mean you don't love Him if you miss a church service.

But there's a pattern if you don't love Him. There's a pattern of non-attendance in God's house. There's a pattern of not gathering yourself with other believers.

If there's a lack of love in your heart for God. And that's why I feel good preaching this tonight because I feel and sense and know because I've seen the worship tonight. There's a depth of love in the hearts of many that are in this house tonight.

You come here because you love Him. You come here because you want to raise your hands with other believers. You come here because that's not just something that's written in a book, but it's a truth and a reality that's coming into your life.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. It's a quest for a true believer in Jesus Christ. It's Lord, take out of my heart those things that are keeping me from You.

Take them out of my heart. Even if it's the most precious thing that I hold to be God. If it's stopping that relationship, take it out of my heart.

Search my heart, O God. Lord, with all my soul, with all my emotions, with everything that I have, I want to love You and I want to worship You and serve You and with all my mind. O God, take my thoughts away and give me the thoughts of this book.

Make me a new man. Make me a new woman. Make me a new person.

I want to come into that consuming personal relationship. You see, Jesus made it a condition of those who follow Him. It's the first and foremost of all commandments.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all your heart, all your soul, and with all your mind. If people did that in North America today, there would be missionaries all over the world in this hour. There would be no room in the churches for the number of converts that would come in.

I tell you, it's love. When people see the love, the fact that you love God, when you go into your workplace, there's something that begins to happen because men and women are created by God for God and in the image of God. And when they see you love God, they will begin to come.

I remember on the police force, I wasn't a nuisance to other policemen because I know that most of these men are very, very hard to reach. But in a one year period, at one time, there was about at least seven or more that came to Christ because they came to me. And they just said, I see something in your life.

There's something about the way you work. There's just something in your attitude. Would you tell me what it is that you believe in? I've heard you're a Christian.

Men came and shared these things and I was able to lead them to the Lord. Not because I had everything right. It's simply I loved Him.

I loved Him. And every day when I walked, I said, God, Jesus, I don't want to do this if it hurts your heart. I don't want to go there if you don't want me to go there.

I just loved Him. Do you understand? It's getting into your spirit. It's not how much you know.

It's not how many Bible studies you go to, although that's important. It's do you love Him? Do you love Him? Do you love Him? If you love Him like the Apostle John, you want to put your head on His breast every time, every night, when you lay your head on your pillow, it's like John at the Last Supper. Jesus, speak to me.

Jesus, share your heart with me. What would you have me do? You begin to think about people that He puts on your heart that you work with and He speaks a word into your life about that person's life. And just something you can go the next day because Jesus has birthed it in your heart because you love Him.

And you can go and say to that person, you know, God's able to help you get through. Or if you need any help, just call me. I'll be there for you.

Just little things to show them that Christ is a reality in your life. Hallelujah. Because He is.

Fourthly, this relationship must produce in us a childlike trust in His leading and sustaining power in our lives. Go to the Gospel of Matthew again, chapter 18. This relationship must produce in us a childlike trust in His leading and sustaining power in our lives.

Matthew, chapter 18, verse 3. Listen to what Jesus says now. Now, this is Jesus. Verily, I say unto you, except you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Except you be converted. Now, this is another condition. And become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

A childlike trust. I don't always understand Him, folks. I wish it would be nice as a pastor, if I could get up here in Times Square Church and say I know Him.

I understand everything about Him. I know all His thoughts before He even thanks them. I don't.

I don't understand what He's doing in my life. There are times that I go home. I had one of those recently.

I'm just like you are. There's no difference whatsoever. And I lift up my hands and went, Ah! That's all I could get out.

God! Do something! Do something! With me, I was talking about. God, do something with me! I was just getting tired of feeling the same all the time. Just wanted to change.

But I don't always understand what He's doing, but I have learned to trust Him. I've learned that He is my Heavenly Father. That if I ask Him for bread, He'll not give me a stone.

If I ask Him for a fish, He'll not give me a scorpion. If I love Him and trust Him, I know that He will always give me what is needful and He will give me what is good. I ask Him for things and sometimes He answers in a way that I would never expect.

Like, for example, if you want patience, He's going to send you a trial. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! I remember people saying, I've been praying. I've prayed that God would give me patience with my children at home.

And all it's been is a hassle ever since. And all it's been is a trial, one trial after another. Then you open the Scripture and it says that the trial of your faith.

Then we start to read in 1 Peter and the end result of that is patience. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! If you pray and say, God, teach me to love the way you love, He's going to put the most unloving person on the face of the earth right beside you in your place of work. Everybody loves those that love them.

Everybody loves those that think the way they think. But all of a sudden in walks this person. Even in the church there are people like that.

I call them people with a sandpaper ministry. It's not in the Bible, but they have it. They go around rubbing everybody the wrong way all the time.

Polishing the saints. Rubbing off the hard spots. There are people like that.

I remember when I first got here at Times Square Church, it was intimidating to preach in this pulpit. And it was hard. There was a short period of time that I was really struggling with getting into this pulpit because I was thinking, Oh God, what can I add to the men that have ever been here before me? Some of the best preachers in the whole world have stood in this pulpit.

And here you bring me, Joe Nothing, out of a little town called Riceville, and you want me to preach in Times Square Church. What can I add to the things that they have preached in this church? Of course that was a focus on self, which was wrong. I knew that God chooses the weak, and I knew that he chooses the foolish, but it just didn't make any sense to me at that particular time because I happened to be the weak and foolish vessel that he had chosen.

Hallelujah. And I remember one night, one morning I came here and I was in the back and I was gearing myself up to preach, and I was feeling pretty good about the message. And this lady comes walking up to me and she says, Oh, hi Pastor Carter.

She said, Who's preaching this morning? I looked at her, I said, I am. She goes, Oh. She said, She said, When is Pastor David preaching? I said, Tonight.

She says, Oh, well. And turns around and walks out. And another time I preached.

I got in this pulpit and I felt the fire of God come upon my life and I preached my heart out. And people were weeping and some were shouting and people came to the altar and I walked out and I felt pretty good. I felt, God, you came down.

Lord, you just, you used my life. I'm no different than any of you are. God, you used me.

And I walked out of here and this lady comes up to me and she said, Brother Carter. She said, There was such an anointing in the church tonight. She said, Mickey Mouse could have preached in that pulpit and people would have responded.

Oh. I said, Thank you sister. Thank you.

Thank you. God is able to carry us. God's able to sustain us.

He's able to give us strength. He's able to change us. He's able to mold us into the image of his son.

He's able to enable us to love one another. He's able to love them. He's able to do anything that we would just allow him to do in our lives.

We must come into that child like trust in him. And don't try to reason it in our own strength all the time. But trust him.

Even in the hard times, trust him. Even in the good times, trust him. All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose.

Now, number five. In Matthew chapter 10, please, if you'll turn there. We're going to have to go fast.

Matthew chapter 10. Old family relationships must become secondary to our new relationships in Christ. Matthew chapter 10, verse 35.

Jesus said, For I am come to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. Now, some of you are experiencing this right now.

Now, verse 37 is a solemn warning to those who would follow Christ. He said, He that loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me. And he that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

It seems hard. But I remember at one time leading a policeman to the Lord and God filled him with the Holy Ghost and he loved the Lord. I took him to a meeting.

He got filled with the Holy Ghost and he, on the way home, he jumped out of a moving car. He was so full of the Holy Ghost. Now, this is a policeman, a very hardened policeman up to this point.

He jumped out of a moving car as it was approaching the intersection and ran to a poor man on the street and gave him everything he had in his wallet. God's Holy Spirit was upon him and he was released to give and released to love and he just came alive. Absolutely came alive.

And then he went home and his wife said to him, If you persist in this, I'm going to leave you. A hard decision. He said, I've never had to make that decision.

And he chose to abandon Jesus Christ and to keep his wife. And he turned from God. But Jesus said, He that loves his father and mother more than me is not worthy of me.

And he that loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. We're called to follow him and we're called to give our lives to him. We're to do everything we can to walk peaceably within our homes.

We're not to be obnoxious with the Gospel. And if you've got a husband or wife that doesn't believe, you're not called to go home and ram the Gospel down their throats. The Apostle Paul says, If that person is unsaved or an unbeliever, will dwell peaceably with you, can, then you dwell with them.

Peaceably. But if there comes a choice, if there comes a threatening, if there comes, if somebody says, if you don't lay this down, and it happens, all over, nowhere more so than in Israel at that time. People knew

what that meant.

Very often when a young man or young woman would come to Christ, the parents would have a mock funeral and mockingly bury them as if my son or daughter is now dead and doesn't live anymore because they're not following our traditions. It's a solemn condition that Christ puts before us, before following Him. I remember some difficulty in the early years of my walk with the Lord with my own family.

Now they've come to change and God's gotten a hold of them, but in the beginning it was a very difficult time in walking with the Lord, but I had to make a choice. I was going to walk with Jesus. No matter what anybody said, I was, if none go with me, we sing that song, still I will follow.

If I have to go it alone, I'll go it alone because God is with me. And number six, we must yield our lives. I'm just going to read you these scriptures because I've got too much to get to in too short a time.

We must yield our lives in following Jesus and becoming a servant to others. Matthew chapter 10 verse 38, Jesus said, he that does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Matthew chapter 12 verse 30, and he that is not with me is against me.

And he that gathers not with me scattereth abroad. Matthew chapter 20 and verse 27, he says, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. We must yield our lives in following Christ and becoming a servant to others.

Loving God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and loving our neighbor as much as we love ourselves. Number seven, we must, through Jesus, put an end to a life of self-seeking. We must, through Jesus, put an end to a life of self-seeking.

Matthew chapter 10 verse 39, if you want to turn there quickly, Matthew chapter 10 verse 39, Jesus said, he that finds his life shall lose it. But he that loses his life for my sake shall find it. You remember the rich young ruler who came to Jesus and he said, I've done all these things from my youth up.

And he said, what yet do I lack? And Jesus knew that he had many possessions. And he said, go and sell what you have and give it to the poor and take up your cross and follow me and you shall have treasure in heaven. The Scripture says he turned and walked away.

He was very sorrowful in heart because he had many, many possessions. Jesus knew that his whole life, even with his religious observances, had been for himself. He'd been seeking for himself.

Brothers and sisters, there are many, many people who call themselves by the name of Jesus in this generation who wouldn't even consider giving up this world's goods to follow Him if He said so. If He appeared in person in their room, they'd turn away and go to some place where another Jesus is preached. But Jesus told us that he who seeks to find his life, he who lives for himself on this earth will lose his life.

But he that loses his life, that's losing it in Christ. Losing it in the will of God. Losing it for the purposes of God.

For my sake, He said, shall find it. Hallelujah. Honestly, before God, I can stand here tonight and say I have found my life in Christ.

My life is hidden in Him. If He gives me good things today, then I rejoice in that. If I'm here today, fine.

If He takes me to another place, fine. If I die on the mission field, fine. My life is hidden in Him.

It's in Christ. That's where the true prosperity really is. It's having Him.

It's having His kingdom within our lives. It's having not earthly treasure, but the treasure of the risen Christ within us. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. It's following the One that had no place to lay His head. It's following the One that was dependent on God the Father to just provide for His every need every day.

It's following Him as He calls us to follow in His footsteps. Jesus also talked about the seriousness of putting to death the sin nature. In Matthew 18, let me read it to you.

He said, If your hand or your foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee. It's better to enter into life halt or crippled, in other words, rather than having two hands or two feet and be cast into everlasting fire. In verse 9, He says, If your eye offends you, pluck it out and cast it from you.

Now, it's better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. Now, Jesus is not literally telling you to go out and cut off your hand and pluck out your eye. He's talking a spiritual principle.

He's saying you should hate sin that much that you determine in your heart that this old sin nature is not going to rule over me anymore. I have been saved by the blood of Christ. The power of the Holy Spirit is now within me.

Jesus, you said, If any man be in Christ, he's a new creature. I'm not living this way anymore. I'm not putting wickedness before my eyes.

I'm plucking it out. I'm taking it out of my life. I'm not putting my hand forth to sin anymore.

I'm cutting off the sin out of my life by the power of the Holy Ghost. Lord, I'm going to live a life that brings honor to your name. Hallelujah.

Number 9, He says, We must forgive to be forgiven. That's a condition of following Christ. There are people here today that you've been abused, you've been hurt, you've been let down, you've been betrayed.

There's no end to the harm that mankind does to mankind when we're without God. But there's a parable in Matthew 18 about a man who was forgiven a great debt and then went and found somebody that owed him just ten pence, just a little bit, and held him by the throat and said, Give me what you owe me. And Jesus said in this parable, The Lord was wroth when He found out that He wouldn't forgive those having been forgiven such a great debt and delivered Him to the tormentors till He should pay all that was due unto Him.

He said, So likewise shall my Heavenly Father do unto you if you not from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses. In Matthew chapter 19, after hearing all these words that Jesus spoke about the rich young ruler, for example, He says, When they heard it, they were exceedingly amazed and saying, Who then can be saved? Jesus beheld them and said unto them, With men it's impossible, but with God all things are possible. Hallelujah! In your own strength He's saying, You can't do this.

But with God, if you have the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit and the surrender life, if you cease to try in the flesh to meet every condition, but through relationship with the risen Christ, allow Him to work in us that which is needful. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! It's those who by faith alone are willing to surrender their lives in covenant with Jesus, He promises to us the following. Number one, He says, I'll give you rest.

Those that will surrender to Christ. Those that will walk with Christ. Those that will live for Christ.

There's a call upon your life. Everyone that's in this house tonight. We're not called to be religious.

We're called to be disciples of the risen Christ. We're called to follow Jesus. Let all of religion be put aside and let relationship come into the forefront of our lives and hearts.

He says to those who will give their lives to Me, I'll give you rest. Come unto Me, Matthew 11. He says, All ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take My yoke upon you. Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. And you shall find rest unto your souls.

For My yoke is easy and My burden is light. He says, For those that come unto Me, Matthew 12, You'll have adoption into the family of God. For whosoever shall do the will of My Father, which is in heaven, the same as My brother, My sister, and My mother.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! I am adopted into the family of God. Praise His holy name. He says, Thirdly, You will enter into covenant relationship with Christ.

In Matthew 10, 32, Jesus said, Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father, which is in heaven. The Bible says, and Jesus said in Matthew 18, that He'll give you tools for service. He's not going to send you into the vineyard with empty hands.

He said, Verily I say unto you, in Matthew 18, 18, He said, Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. And whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Hallelujah! If you will surrender your life and abandon your life to Me, the power of God will begin to manifest itself through your life.

You will have spiritual authority over the powers of darkness. You will see men and women released out of the grip of hell itself and brought into the light of Christ. If you will surrender your life.

If you will surrender your life. I was in Jerusalem just recently and I saw the places where Jesus walked and then I had an opportunity to go to Mount Carmel and preach right on the spot where Elijah confronted the prophets of Baal. And right on that spot, God gave me a word for that church.

And I saw Jesus standing before the council and He was before the Sanhedrin, before the leaders of the day, and before Pilate. And you can see Him standing there. And all the Sadducees have got their interpretations of the law and the lawyers have got their legal interpretations and the Pharisees have got their forms of self-righteousness.

They've all got a religion they think is going to bring redemption to Israel and to their mankind at that generation. But it was the power of one surrendered life that was before them, that God was working through. He bypassed all of the theology.

Bypassed all of the learned in their own sight. He bypassed all of the wise in their own sight. It was one surrendered life that brought victory to you and me.

Hallelujah. And that's what we're called to follow. We're called to be a surrendered vessel in the hand of God that the kingdom of God can go through our lives, releasing people from behind prison doors, healing those that have been bruised in heart, giving sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf that they may come to the saving knowledge of Christ.

Even more importantly, He says, Go and teach. Preach the gospel to every creature in Matthew chapter 28. Just let me read it to you.

He says, Go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. What a promise! I am with you! What more do we need than the risen Christ in our lives? What more do we need than the presence of Jesus and walking with Him and His promise that I am with you? And lastly, and most importantly of all, He says, I will give eternal life to those who surrender to Me and walk with Me.

In Matthew chapter 19, verse 28, and He says these words, might as well turn there with me. Matthew 19, Jesus, verse 28, He says, Jesus said to them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory. Now remember when we started out, here's some people that are saying, Lord, Lord.

And He's saying, I never knew you. But now here's the word to those who fully embraced Him and walked with Him. He said, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed Me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

And everyone, now that was for the apostles in verse 29, for us, and everyone, that includes you, that includes me, that has forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, or reputation, if I can add to there, or jobs, or the praise of man, or self-seeking, all of these things, shall receive a hundredfold and shall inherit everlasting life. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

There were two of the disciples that were arguing which was going to sit on His right and which was going to sit on His left hand. And Jesus said to them, It's not Mine to give. It's My Father that makes the determinations.

And He said, Are you able to drink of the cup that I will drink of and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And James and John said, We are able. He was saying, Are you counting the cost of what it's going to take to follow Me? Do you want to sit on My right hand and sit on My left? And that's in the Father's determination. But can you drink the cup that I'm going to drink? And can you be baptized with the baptism that I'm going to be baptized with? He was baptized with the baptism of fire if ever there was somebody at trial, difficulty, but it's through that suffering that you and I were brought to victory.

They said to Him, We are able. I want to ask you tonight, Brothers and sisters, have you truly counted the cost of following Christ? I haven't really touched on all of the conditions nor all the promises. You'll have to get into the Gospel of Matthew and read it all for yourself, the whole thing.

But have you really counted the cost? There are so many people who have not fully counted the cost of following Christ. Firstly, tonight, if you're here and you're not saved, you can be saved. Jesus Christ died for your sins, but count the cost of walking with Him.

Count the cost of following Him before you attempt to build the house, lest you begin to labor and at the end are not able to finish it. Those that have come to this altar, Lord Jesus, I am a sinner. Thank You, Jesus, that You died for me.

You paid the price for my sins. You gave Your life for me. And so I invite You to come into my heart and I give my life to You.

I want to shine for You. I want to love You. I want to trust You.

I want to walk with You. I want to know You. I want You to live Your life within my life, within my heart.

Thank You for saving me. Thank You for giving me strength. And thank You, Lord, You're going to take me home one day.

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. Thank You, Jesus. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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