

Believing the Whispers of God

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing and believing in the whispers of God amidst spiritual exhaustion and the voices of discouragement.

Duration: 48:20

Topics: "Guidance Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on his own experience of encountering God's touch and the difficulty of describing it. He relates it to the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 19, where the prophet, exhausted and vulnerable, hears the voice of a condemning accuser. The speaker emphasizes the importance of recognizing the voice of Jesus in our lives, even in times of spiritual fatigue. He then shares a personal anecdote of his own zeal for serving God and the physical and emotional toll it took on him. The sermon concludes with a reminder to give thanks and praise to God for his faithfulness.

Transcript

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And he said, Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and break in pieces the rocks before the Lord. But the Lord was not in the wind.

And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire a still small voice.

And it was so when Elijah heard it that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entering in of the cave. And behold, there came a voice unto him and said, What doest thou hear? Elijah. Now the prophet Isaiah in Isaiah chapter 30 verses 20 and 21 and speaking to the people of Israel.

He said, Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the waters of affliction. Yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner anymore, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers. And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way.

Walk ye in it when you turn to the right hand and when you turn to the left. Now, here's what the Lord is saying. I'm coming to you and in my presence, even though you may be going through a difficult time.

Even though you might have adversity on every side and affliction might be your portion. At this particular time, you find yourself in. I will not allow instruction to be hidden from you anymore.

If you have an honest heart today, God has come to you with a word that is going to give you instruction. And in this instruction, there's going to be a word, he said. You're going to hear it and it's going to say to you, This is God's voice.

This is the way. Walk in it. When you go to the right hand, when you go to the left, the Lord says, I'm going to instruct you.

Even in this difficult time of your life. And I'm not ever going to let you become prey to the voice of the enemy. Now, the first Kings chapter 19 is a voice, a chapter rather, but an exhausted, righteous man.

He had tried hard to live and act in a manner that brought glory to God. Now, I used to have a lot of theories about Elijah and about why he ran from Jezebel and why he ended up in a cave. And I preached a lot of messages for a lot of years until I experienced it myself firsthand.

Then a lot of my theology went out the window and I began to realize this man was just exhausted. That's all he was. He was a very, very tired man.

He had known an anointing that very few through history to that point had ever known. And this incredible touch of God that had come upon him at one momentous victory. But the touches of God coming upon a vessel for a season can bring about a spiritual exhaustion.

I remember after preaching in the Philippines, and the Philippines was really a miraculous time. We had about 15,000 people coming into the Arenata Coliseum every night. Mostly unsaved Catholic people.

And we saw every night thousands, literally. So many coming to Christ that we had to ask in the last evening for people not to respond to an altar call because they were blocking all of the exit aisles and creating a fire hazard. Isn't that a marvelous problem to have? But I remember it was really a miraculous victory.

The organizers had told us it was ridiculous to rent such a large facility. Nobody had ever filled it. And of course, we heard from the Lord to do this.

We obeyed God. We rented this gigantic stadium right in the middle of Manila. And of course, just prior to our arrival, there had been an uprising in that society.

And people were really afraid. Also, we put banners all over the city saying the Times Square Church Mass Choir is coming. Somehow, the bishop in Manila got the idea that this was a Catholic group coming to say Mass and told his people to go to the meetings.

And so, when we came out on the platform the first night, I remember one of the first services, the first row was all nuns. And I remember thinking, what is going on here? And amazing what the Lord can do. I remember feeling this deep fatigue because it had been a terrible, terrible battle, spiritual battle coming on me.

And the last night, I started to feel, because I've had a serious physical breakdown in the past, and I thought I better not push it tonight. Better hold back just a little bit. But we went out on the platform and you're looking at these thousands of faces.

And many people didn't know what to do. They're not familiar with singing songs or clapping their hands. They've never known the joy of the Lord.

And I remember thinking, I'm just going for broke. I'm not going to hold anything back. Probably preached harder than I had any time in that entire session to see one of the largest altar calls of people coming to Christ in any meeting that we had thus far.

After these meetings were finished, we went to a place where we were supposed to be experiencing a bit of a rest. But all I could do is cry. For about three days, I just cried.

That's all I could do. And all my theories about Elijah were gone at that point. I began to understand what this is all about.

When the Lord has used a vessel and he has touched you with his life, it's poured out through you. There is a season of weeping that can come upon you. I remember in Nigeria, night after night, getting into the van after speaking to crowds and hundreds of thousands, getting into the van, putting my face down in my hands and just crying all the way back to the hotel.

There's nothing more you can do. There's simply this sense of the physical as it is, having been touched by God. And there's no way to describe it.

I had seen it one time happen to Brother Dave. I didn't understand it until I began to experience it myself. And see, this is what 1 Kings 19 is about.

It's about an exhausted man. He's living in a manner that he believed brought glory to God. And it did, in fact.

But in his fatigue, his ears and mind became open to the voice of a roaring and a condemning accuser. And folks, when you are spiritually tired, you are very vulnerable. You need to be very careful what you're allowing to get into your mind and in your heart in these seasons.

Because 1 Peter 5 and verse 8 speaks about your adversary, the devil as a roaring lion, walks about seeking whom he may devour. His voice comes as a roar. His voice comes as an accusation.

His voice will try to drive you out of the prayer closet, cause you to close your Bible, cause you to lose heart, cause you to believe that God himself is speaking to you, and that in fact that God is against you and somehow displeased and disappointed with you. The voice of the condemner will come to try to tell you that you're not going to finish your course. That yes, you started out strong, but somehow you've made a mistake and you're not going to make it to the end and Jesus Christ is not going to be glorified through your life.

Now in this instance in 1 Kings 19, the vessel that Satan used was a person whom Elijah must have believed had the power to carry out a threat against his life. In chapter 19, verses 1 to 3, now this is right after Elijah had had this incredible confrontation with the prophets of Baal. And God himself had come down upon this altar with the fire of his presence.

Now it was indisputable. There's no longer a theological argument being presented. God had come.

And the people who were torn between two opinions now had seen the Christ, the universe as it is, come down upon that altar and consume Elijah's sacrifice and they now knew that the God of Elijah was God. And King Ahab was the type of a leader as it is who has no mind of his own. He is moved upon in one direction on Monday and on Tuesday he moves in another direction.

He went and told his wife Jezebel all that Elijah has done and with all how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. And I just have a sense in my heart that Ahab may have thought this was a good thing at that particular moment. Coming, giving the report, finally, hey Jezebel, we've been led by false voices and I've seen the fire of God and I know this is a man of God.

Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah saying, so let the gods do to me and more also if I make not thy life the life of one of them which would be the prophets of Baal which he had slain by tomorrow about this time. Verse 3 says, and when he saw that he arose and went for his life and came to Beersheba which belonged to Judah and left his servant there. Now, you see, verse 3 implies that he not only, the word saw here it says and when he saw that it implies that he not only intellectually understood the threat towards him but he inwardly felt the force of it.

You can imagine this messenger coming to Elijah and saying, oh, you had to be there, you had to see it. I mean, the queen got off her throne, her eyes were literally bugging out of her head. She was so mad that she was spitting at everybody around her when she was screaming at them.

And this messenger brought this message and it says Elijah understood it but he felt the impact of it. You see, we can withstand the words of the roaring accuser as long as we are secure in our relationship with God but in times of fatigue you can begin to feel as it is that there might be some reality to this roaring, accusing voice that is coming against you and your walk with God. Now, chapter 19 and verse 4 shows us where the reception as it is of the receiving of the voice of the condemner will always lead to a wilderness and an inward sense of powerlessness.

It says, but he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and he came and sat down under a juniper tree and he requested for himself that he might die and he said, it's enough now, oh Lord, take away my life, I'm not better than my father's. Now, you see, he felt in verse 10, for example, he felt I'm the only prophet left. When you go into the wilderness, folks, and you begin to live in this sense of powerlessness, it will always open your mind to a fictional perspective of your situation.

The voice of the condemner, once he's got you, once he's driving you away from God, although he really can't do that because you begin to think he is doing it, but he will push you into the wilderness, he will convince you that you are powerless to change your situation, that somehow now you're being pursued by something that is more powerful than your position in God, and then your mind becomes open to fiction, really. Once the devil has access into your heart, there's no end to the accusations that he will bring against you. And you see Elijah, for example, in verse 10, when God tries to speak to him, he's under the impression that he's the only prophet left.

He says, I'm the only one left, and then he goes on, and he says, and they, at the end of verse 10, they seek my life to take it away. Now, he's referring in the word they to the children of Israel, but really, it's not the children of Israel that are trying to take his life away. As I recall, the children of Israel were saying, the Lord, he is the God.

The Lord, he is the God. It's not the children of Israel trying to take his life away. It's one person, it's one voice animated by Satan himself.

It's one ruler called Jezebel that is after him, trying to take away his strength. Now, let me remind you today that it's complete fiction to believe the devil has any power to take you as a sincere believer from the security of your position through Christ in God. It is complete fiction.

For those who are sitting here who want to lose this battle, somehow you're going to be taken out of the place that God has given you in Christ. The devil has no power to do that. He can only come against you with a lying voice trying to convince you that he has the power to do that.

But in reality, he has no power to do this. Jesus said this in John chapter 10, my sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me. And I give them eternal life and they shall never perish until I pluck them out of my hand.

My Father which gave them to me is greater than all and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. No matter what you're going through today, you need to know before we even move any farther in this message. If you are a sincere, true believer in Jesus Christ, you are secure in the hand of God and nobody can take you out of that hand.

Now, if we've fallen to the voice of the condemner, we need to bring the voice of God again. Now, firstly, Hebrews 13, 5 tells us, He says, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. Settle it.

I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. What if I'm having a bad week? I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. What if I have failed God? What if I have not lived righteously as I think I should have? I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

What if everybody at work is against me? My family is calling me a hypocrite. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say in Hebrews 13, 6, The Lord is my helper and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

God says, I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. Even if multitudes are risen up around you and telling you you're not going to make it, I will not leave you.

I will not forsake you so that you will have a testimony. Your testimony will be In Psalm 120, now just put a marker in 1 Kings 19 because we'll be back there very, very shortly. But in Psalm 120 is a psalm where the psalmist writes these words.

He says, In my distressed, I cried unto the Lord and He heard me. Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue. Now I want you to think about Elijah just for a moment and Jezebel.

I want you to think about those who are sitting here this morning and you are being inundated as it is with the voice of the accuser. Especially, and you become especially vulnerable, many of you, during the holiday season. Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips and from a deceitful tongue.

What shall be given unto thee? Or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? What will God do? How will God defend me? And verse 4 begins to answer that question. Sharp arrows of the mighty with coals of juniper. Now these arrows, Psalm 45 verse 5, this Psalm 45 speaks about Jesus Christ.

And the psalmist says, Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies whereby the people fall under thee. What shall be done to this lying voice? God says, I'm going to come and I'm going to speak a word over this. I'm going to speak a word that has more authority, more power, that is a creative word.

I'm going to speak words of life and not death. I'm going to speak words of encouragement and not casting down. I'm going to come down and confirm my love to the heart to those people who are mine.

I'm going to do it with sharp arrows that are going to pierce the hearts of the enemies of the people of God. And I'm going to do it also with coals of juniper. Now what does that really mean? Coals of juniper.

What's the significance of this? Now back in 1 Kings chapter 19 verses 5 to 7, speaking of Elijah, it said he lay and slept under a juniper tree. Behold, then an angel touched him and said to him, arise and eat. And he looked and behold, there was a cake baked on the coals and a cruise of water at his head.

And he did eat and drink and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time and touched him and said, arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee. You see, God comes down in Elijah's despair and uses the very things around him which he has embraced in his loneliness to remind him that he is still there.

Amazing. Coals of juniper. The scripture says he fell asleep under a juniper tree, which is a bush, it's a desert bush found in the wilderness.

And the Lord comes down through a messenger, an angel, and takes probably one of these dead bushes and makes a fire and bakes bread on it. I can't help but think of John 21 where Peter had so desperately failed the one that he loved. He had cursed himself with an oath denying that he had never known this man.

Gone back to fishing. I'm sure the devil is climbing all over his mind. You're supposed to be the one that holds the keys of the gates.

And here you are holding a fishing rod in your hand or a net. But you're supposed to be the stone upon which the church is going to be built and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. And here you are fishing all night and catching nothing.

And I think of Christ on the shore and calling out to them, have you caught anything? John recognizes it's the voice of Jesus. Peter casts himself into the water because deep down he loved God with all his heart in spite of his failure. Swims to shore, he's the first one to get here.

What does he find? He finds coals on the shore with bread and fish already cooked and baking on it. God himself come in mercy and the Lord begins to speak to Peter and asks him certain questions do you love me Peter? Elijah is not alone and evil is not going to triumph over him. I remember when I was a young pastor I was serving God with everything that was within me.

I was a bit of an extremist in my youth because I really didn't understand how to be carried by grace that we sang about in the choir so wonderfully this morning. And I was out to win the world for Christ. I

preached a message here one time called chopping wood for father.

I was going to cut down forest for my father to get his approval. I traveled thousands of miles from coast to coast went up into the Arctic into South America preaching, fasting, working for God only to find that my natural strength was leaving me. And I remember one time I was standing in church and I was supposed to preach and we weren't on the platform because it was a small church and I could hardly raise my hands and I was so tired and so weary and the enemy was just all over me and all over my mind.

And I remember standing there it was the first time because I was a preacher of you can do it, we can do it, everybody can do it and finally I'm standing in the front row and I'm due to preach in about five minutes and I never thought I'd ever say it but I got to the point of saying God I can't do this anymore. I had my hands about as high as I could get them I was trying to worship with all my heart but I couldn't even worship anymore nothing was coming out of my inward parts and folks I'm not an extremist in this and what I'm about to tell you actually happened and I couldn't raise my hands and I said God I can't do this anymore and I fully intended on resigning. I just said I can't get into that pulpit one more time I just don't have the strength left to do it.

I heard a voice on my right side it was a whisper and it so startled me that I jumped to see who was speaking to me and there was nobody there but a voice came in a whisper and he said I've come to help you that's all I heard and in the strength of that voice I left God into that pulpit and the glory of God touched my life one more time and never turned back from that point I heard God speak to me or an angel or whoever it was say I've come to help you and that's all I heard I've come to help you I thought it was an usher I thought it was an elder in the church because it was a voice that you could hear with your ear and when I turned there was nobody there it's here the Lord begins to encourage Elijah to eat and drink again he says to him you've got to get up and eat because the journey

is too great for you the Lord says I've made provision for you you must not try to win this battle in your own strength you must not think that somehow you can get up with more of a resolve and get through this God says no it's not for you to do this I'm the one who has promised to do it through you you've got to trust me with this David said these words the Lord is my shepherd I shall not want he makes me to lie down in green pastures the Lord is my soul he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his namesake though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for thou art with me thy rod and thy staff they comfort me thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies thou anointest my head with oil and my cup runneth over it's here that the Lord

begins to open his heart again to my voice God says no I've prepared a table for you I want you to come to the table I want you to get up in the morning and if you can only read for ten minutes read for ten minutes I want you to sit down don't turn away from the table of the Lord don't try to do this in your own strength you just get up and I'm going to begin to speak to you and I'm going to anoint your head it's going to be me you just sit at the table with me I'm going to anoint your head with oil and I'm going to carry you along in this journey that you're walking on I'm going to so fill you that your cup is going to run over you're going to leave the table and you're going to have drink to give to those that are thirsty you're going to have bread to spare you're going to have more

than twelve baskets full of bread to spare for those things that I'm going to reveal to you and pour into your heart one more time I am your shepherd you're not going to want the enemy's not going to triumph over you through the valley of the shadow of death it's only a shadow it has no power over you I'm going to

walk with you through your difficult times hallelujah you've got to hear this I know I'm speaking in the spirit to someone here this morning you are not going to be triumphed over the enemy is not going to take your testimony away he is not going to take your life you are not going to be triumphed over God is going to walk with you through the valley of the shadow of death Psalm 25 verse 14 says the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him and He will show them His covenant

it's a secret thing God says the religious can't hear it the self-willed can't hear it the angry can't hear it the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him Elijah most likely feared the anger of God towards his failure you see Elijah had been a man no doubt angry in some measure to the spiritual failure of the people around him he had been driven in some measure at least by natural passions within his own heart but his own natural passions failed him and now he most likely feels that God is angry with him as he had once been angry with the prophets of Baal and in some measure as I said with the failure of the people but God was now about to prove his perception to be wrong I'm speaking to those this morning that you feel that God is angry with you you failed in some measure you

shouldn't go you watched something you shouldn't watch you did something you shouldn't do and you feel now oh I started out so strong I started out with such purpose I started out with such grace but what a mess I've made of the testimony of God even if it's just in the last few weeks the Lord says now and you've now got a perception that God is angry with you but He's not angry with you and the Lord is about to prove that you're wrong in verses 11 to 13 He says to Elijah now go stand on the mountain before the Lord now I'm convinced that Elijah was he was standing he was weak one word of anger from God one word of displeasure I think this man would have been absolutely crushed forever I think he's more vulnerable and this voice of course most likely is trying to tell him that this is God

even speaking and the Lord says go stand on the mountain before the Lord and behold the Lord passed by and a great and strong wind rent the mountains and breaking pieces the rocks before the Lord so there's a display as it is of what God can do of how God can respond of even the hardest places can be taken away but the scripture says but he was not in the wind it was a display as it is but God was not there and after the wind an earthquake but the Lord was not in the earthquake and after the earthquake a fire now I believe these are the ways that Elijah had become accustomed to God speaking to him or his perception of God at least at this point was this kind of a violent dealing with failure as it is don't forget he had just made a hedge off of 450 prophets of Baal but the Lord was not in

the fire but after that a still small voice and it was so when Elijah heard it he wrapped his face in his mantle I see it almost as a bride in a typical wedding ceremony before she goes out to meet her bridegroom she covers her face he wrapped his face he was just so ashamed so stunned so unfamiliar with this kind of voice that comes from God to him and it says he went out and stood in the entering of the cave and then the voice of the Lord came to him and said what are you doing here Elijah in a whisper literally a small still voice I was thinking of the song of Solomon chapter 2 verse 14 the scripture says oh my dove that are in the clefts of the rock in the secret places of the stairs let me see your countenance let me hear your voice for sweet is your voice and your countenance is

comely oh my dove oh my dove I was sitting at my desk writing these words yesterday and I was thinking of the Lord looking out over this congregation today got some kind of a covering to hide some secret thing to hide some sense of failure even from God himself and the Lord reaches out and says you're in the clefts of the rock you're hiding in the secret places of the stairs let me see your countenance let me hear your voice for your voice is sweet and your countenance is comely can you imagine Elijah saying your

countenance is comely I've been running I'm discouraged I'm depressed but the Lord says to you today you may feel that way about yourself but I have placed upon you a covering of my righteousness the image you have is not of where you are it's not an image of what you've been

doing but I've placed upon you the image of my son I've given you beauty for ashes already I've given you a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness I've given you a voice of joy that you can bring back to me and give honor and glory to my name and in chapter 7 verse 11 he says come my beloved let us go forth into the field let us lodge in the villages let's get up and let's go let's get back to work again and this is what the voice of the Lord came to speak to Elijah in chapter 19 verses 15 to 17 and the Lord said to him go return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus and when you come anoint Hazael to be king over Syria and Jehu the son of Nimshi you will anoint to be king over Israel and Elisha the son of Shaphat you will anoint to be prophet in your room and it shall come to

pass that him that escapes the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay and him that escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay now here's what the Lord is saying he said I've called you to be a vessel through whom others will be called and just as you will not be overcome neither will they be overcome there's an anointing I've placed upon you and that anointing is going to flow through you and through that I'm going to call other people into service in my kingdom and just as you will not be overcome neither will they be overcome they will be conquerors they will be victorious you'll not be bringing them theology about self and human effort but your theology is going to be about grace your theology will be about a voice that came to you in the midst of your deepest darkest despair a voice

that spoke tenderly and kindly to you and called you out of this hidden place and said you come to me I want to see your face I want to hear your voice again I'm thinking now of those who you're so condemned you haven't been reading your Bible you're so condemned you can hardly pray the Lord says to you I want to hear your voice again you come to me I want to hear your voice again do not live under the voice of the condemner do not let the devil have the last word of the day in your life I believe Elijah is so unfamiliar with this and so touched by the tenderness of the voice of God that Elijah gets up and begins to walk with the Lord and as you get up and begin to walk with God again everything starts falling back into its right perspective I believe that the Lord says to him in verse 18

oh by the way things are not as bad as you think they are there are 7,000 others that have not bowed their knee to Baal you thought you were the only one you're not the only one you thought you were the only one that has to go through this kind of trial no, the scripture says that the things you're going through are common to all men but God will not allow you to be tested above that you are able in any way to escape that you might be able to bear it you're not the only one going through this you're not the only one that's ever gone through this there have been many others in the past 7,000 others and plus have gone through the battles you're going through right now and they too have gotten up and they too have started to walk with God and they too have come into a measure of the

understanding of the grace of almighty God that puts an anointing upon their lives to tear down powers of darkness and to see men and women released into the glorious freedom and liberty of Jesus Christ the greatest vessel that God can find in the body of Christ is a man or woman who knows they have no strength without Him they too have been crushed they too have been bruised they too have felt like failures but they have been raised from the dead by the power and the grace of almighty God things are not as bad as you think they are hallelujah they're not as bad as you think they are and Elijah gets up again and begins the journey God gave him a friend I remember during the rebellion in this church that we

had back about 12 years ago it was very vicious people said very hurtful things

pastor David and I were both pretty serious about it we were seriously beaten up sister Catherine from Mount Zion was a recipient of much of that as well my children were hurt verbally in this church by the people of that time it was a very very hard time for me and pastor David we were five services a week there were only two of us left and in the midst of all of this there were so many questions and I remember one day going to Starbucks across the street and there was a young pastor that he had been visiting here as a guest and I finally just couldn't take it anymore and I broke down weeping at the table and said I just don't know if I can do this much longer the weight is just so heavy and he said to me I'll help you his name was pastor Tim Delina he said you can count me in I'll fly

here on a Tuesday I'll fly here on a Friday I'll fly here on a Thursday I'll give everything and he held to that commitment he still holds to it even today comes in on a moment's notice and has been such an incredible blessing see this is what God did for Elijah he says not only will I touch your life he said but I'm going to give you a friend and it was the beginning I guess it's not fun to get beat up spiritually but you do make some good friends in the long run you find out who your friends are and then shortly after that and the other pastors that were already here pastor Patrick and Rosa and the elders God began to gather all kinds of Elishas started coming into this church godly men and women godly friends and we began to understand the value of Christian friendship and I want to

tell you something if you get up and just walk again not only will the Lord walk with you but he'll give you a friend first of all the Holy Spirit is the one that says I'll stick closer than a brother to you but then the Holy Spirit is manifested through people and the Holy Spirit will give you a friend now you have to get involved in ministry a friend's not going to fall on your head I hope out of a high rise building here in the city you've got to get into the church that's part of the walking you've got to get involved in ministry and you'll find a friend I promise you you'll find a friend but a friend somebody who's believes the word of God walks in the word of God I remember one time in Canada I'm not going to sing all my woes to you today but I was I'm going to end up sounding like

I've never walked in any kind of victory here I was very discouraged one time and this friend drove for a long long way came to my house and he said the Lord sent me here sit down and he put his hands on my shoulders and for one hour went to the throne of God and the burden that was trying to get on me lifted I never forgot that I never forgot it I was very tired the other day very very tired I've been battling with sickness again in some measure and I was sitting in my office and this friend's name is John Halliday and I haven't seen him for years and I was praying in my office I said oh God if ever I had a John Halliday moment it's right now I wonder what happened to this man he used to come to my house and my secretary comes in and puts a piece of paper on my desk said you got a phone

call from a man called John Halliday felt a burden for you felt the Holy Spirit telling him to call see God gives you friends all the way through this Christian life I'll carry you I'll sustain you all the days of your life I want you to know that today God wants you to know that you have a friend first in Jesus he's not forsaken you the devil is not winning the battle over your life and the Lord doesn't come to you in a roar to get your attention he comes to you with a small still voice he begins to speak to your heart again and says come on get up let's walk together again in this Christian life I'll cover you and I'll teach you and your teachers will not be hidden in the corner anymore I will speak clearly to you and I'll tell you which way to go and I'll give you the power to do it I

am speaking today to the spiritually exhausted the Lord says to you today take off the covering and you don't have to be ashamed in my presence anymore talk to me and your heart will open again to my whispers I'll whisper to you on the street today when you leave and I'll whisper to you in the subway in spite of all the noise that goes on you'll hear this voice it says you know I love you I'm with you and I will begin to whisper to you when you go home and through the holiday season when you're sitting at these delightful family gatherings that we all have to go to at Christmas time I'll whisper to you when everyone else is arguing in the living room I'll whisper to you and you'll have this strange smile on your face in the midst of all the commotion around you and when you feel all alone

you'll know you're not alone I'm with you I'll whisper to you if you have to spend Christmas Eve by yourself on Christmas Day you see it's not about a day God says I've always been alive I'll walk with you I'll be your friend let your heart open to my whispers again for the spiritually exhausted the Holy Spirit's been speaking to your heart and if that's so as we stand I'm going to ask those in the sanctuary to make your way to this altar in the education annex if you could stand just between the screens please momentarily and we're going to pray together and let's believe God for a release from the burden if we could stand together please in the balcony just make your way to any exit you can make your way down here and as we sing that song you don't have to worry and don't you be afraid

with Jesus I can make it with Jesus I can make it the exhausted just the exhausted people you're in such a battle the enemy's roaring against your life Jesus said come to me you who are weary and heavy laden and I'll give you rest come take my yoke upon you learn of me I'm meek and gentle and hard and you will find rest for your souls and he said do you love me feed my sheep do you love me feed my lambs do you love me let me lead you let me lead you Peter let me take you where you can't go let me make you into the kind of a man you could never be in your own strength just let me lead you now hallelujah I'm just going to pray for you today Father I just thank you that only takes one word from heaven and the lies of generations can come crashing down into nothing thank you Lord for the

great truth that we are loved with an everlasting love you said through the prophet Isaiah I've engraved you in the palms of my hands I will never forget you God thank you that you are tender you are compassionate you are gracious you are full of mercy you are easy to be entreated your mercy endures forever God thank you thank you Jesus that you promised to love us to the end you promised to keep us you've interwoven your name with our name and God it's your honor and your glory to keep that which is entrusted into your hand oh Jesus thank you that you have one more time defeated the voice of the enemy one more time put to flight this roaring lion God thank you that you touched Elijah again and you are touching these who have come to this altar and those who are standing in the education

annex God you've touched us all again you give us renewed life you give us renewed vision you give us renewed hope you give us right thinking you give us a proper perspective you send us out in the love the empowerment and the strength of our God Lord Jesus that your name might be glorified through our lives in our generation God thank you that for these who have come to this altar you have anointings that you're going to flow through them you're going to touch people's lives in this generation and as they will not be triumphed over those that are led to Christ through them will also know what it is to walk in life and in victory Lord Jesus we receive this we receive the life we receive the love we receive the forgiveness we receive the freedom we receive the covering we take off the

covering and we stand and meet you face to face because the glory we have is your glory the righteousness we have is your righteousness the hope we have is your hope the future we have is your

future it's all about you Jesus you are the Alpha and the Omega the beginning and the end you're the author and finisher of our salvation God thank you thank you Jesus thank you Lord just give him praise now this is the conclusion of the message

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