

Breaking the Heart of Obedience

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the importance of obedience to God, even in the face of hardship and uncertainty, highlighting biblical examples of faithfulness.

Duration: 39:11

Scripture: Genesis 12:1-3, Matthew 17:4, Matthew 17:14-15, Acts 8:5-26

Topics: "Obedience"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the resistance to change that many people experience, especially when it involves hardship or loss. The speaker shares a personal experience of being on vacation with family and questioning why things have to change. The sermon also references Peter's desire to stay in a good place and the journey of Philip into the desert, highlighting the ways of God that may not make sense to the natural mind. The importance of obedience to God's voice is emphasized, using examples from the lives of Abraham and Paul.

Transcript

I want to talk to you about breaking the heart of obedience. Breaking the heart of obedience. Now, Father, I thank you with all my heart for the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

I thank you for the strength that you give that can only come from God. I thank you, Lord, that your word will find deep resonance in our hearts and will be life-changing to many. Thank you for the simplicity of the thought that you've given.

And I know I'm heard from heaven for this day. And help me, Lord, to minister to this congregation. I ask you in Jesus' name.

Amen. Acts chapter 21, beginning at verse 8. And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed and came to Caesarea. And we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven, and abode with him.

And the same had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet named Agabus. And when he had come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

And when we heard these things, both we and they of that place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

Now, beloved, we are all resistant to change, aren't we? Especially when it involves what we perceive to be hardship or loss to ourselves or to someone else that we love. Have you ever found yourself saying, Why do things have to change? You know, a couple of years ago, I was on vacation, and my grandson was there with me. And a lot of our family and the joy of the Lord was in our home.

It was just a lot of laughter, a lot of fun times. And I found myself saying that once again, Oh, God, why do things have to change? Wouldn't it be nice to just live here this way forever? Or at least for the rest of our sojourning here on planet Earth, why can't we just stay in this place and be happy like this? Why can't everything just stay the way it is? You know, that was the cry of Peter in Matthew chapter 17 and verse 4. He said, Lord, if it pleases you, if you will. He said, this is a good place to be.

Now, let me build three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah. You know, on one hand, Peter is on the top of a mountain. He's seeing the Son of God absolutely transfigured.

Moses and Elijah are there. And on the other side of the mountain was a man with a lunatic son, begging somebody somewhere to help him with mercy and with deliverance. Now, given the choice between the two, which one do you and I honestly naturally gravitate towards? If you and I could live in a place of revelation, wouldn't that be wonderful? If we could live in a place where the scriptures are just constantly being unlocked and we're seeing new depths and measures of God, we're understanding the heart of God in a deeper and a more profound way than we ever have in our entire lifetime.

You and I want to stay there. It's a rightful response in the sense of the human heart. It's in your heart and it's in my heart.

There's nothing in me that wants to gravitate towards difficulty. And there's nothing in you. As a matter of fact, in the Western world, in our generation, we have formed a Christian theological perspective that avoids difficulty.

Uses God to avoid every hard place, every difficult place. And it is an anemic Christianity. It is a Christianity that is leaving this world without the true influence of Christ and in a tailspin in our generation.

I want you to go to 2 Timothy, please. Go ahead in your Bibles, chapter 2 with me. Where Paul is exhorting this young man, Timothy, and telling him, you know, Timothy, it's not going to be easy.

Timothy was somewhat of a fearful young man. Paul was his mentor. Timothy had been there.

He had seen and known how difficult the life of the Apostle Paul had become through times and seasons. And Paul is exhorting this young man now, just as the Holy Spirit is speaking to us today. He says in chapter 2 of 2 Timothy, verse 1. Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that wars entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who has chosen him to be a soldier.

In other words, he does not become so bound to this world and to this world's ways of thinking that he's of no value in the hand of the master. And if a man also strive for masteries, yet he's not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits.

Consider what I say, verse 7. And the Lord give thee understanding in all things. Paul says, Timothy, the husbandman that labores must be first partaker. There's no great strength in my preaching to tell you that Christ can bring you through the storm if I've never had to go through the storm.

If I'm living in an ivory tower, lying in a hammock, chanting songs and anointing myself with the sweetest oils of this world, where's my authority to tell you that Christ will take you through the storm? I have no authority unless I go through the storm first. Paul says, Timothy, the husbandman that labores must be first partaker of the fruits. If you're going to be there, Timothy, if you're going to tell others that they can get through the difficult days that we all have to face, then you're going to have to go through them.

And Paul was a living example to others that having chosen to follow Christ to the end was not a bad example to leave for those that were coming behind. I want you to think for a moment of how hypocritical it would be for us as pastors in this church if we exhorted you to follow Christ as he leads, and we're not willing to do it ourselves. How hypocritical it would be if we stood in this pulpit and said, now you find the will of God and what God tells you to do, you obey him.

And we all just sort of built a tabernacle. We love the revelation, we love the church, we love the presence of God, we love the praises of God. But yet in our hearts, we'd come to a place where God couldn't speak to us anymore.

That we would exhort you, yes, but not follow where the Holy Spirit wanted to lead us. And I want to applaud you, Pastor Neal, Sister Nolene, for having the courage to take that step today. Having the courage not just to preach it from the pulpit, but to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Now to put your hearts at rest as well, I'm not aware of any other pastors on this platform that have a leading to go anywhere in the world at this point. Least of all into the Ukraine. Go to Acts chapter 8 please, if you will, with me.

I want to show you some stories where people radically obeyed God when it didn't make sense sometimes to the natural mind. Even to people around them. Acts chapter 8, beginning at verse... Oops, I'm in the wrong book.

Acts chapter 8, beginning at verse 5. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and he preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them.

And many were taken with palsies, and that were lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city. Verse 14.

Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John, who when they were come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost. Verse 17 says, And they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. Verse 26.

And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go towards the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. Verse 27, first five words. And he arose and went.

That's an incredible story, really. I mean, you've got to understand, this evangelist Philip goes into a place in the world where the people are demon-possessed. There's very little knowledge of God.

He goes into that city, and miracles begin to abound. Healings are happening. People are being delivered.

God's kingdom is moving with such incredible power that word of it comes to the original apostles. They send Peter and John down. So he's in a ministry, in a sense, that's got the notice of the established authority of the church of his time.

They come down, lay hands on people, they're receiving the Holy Ghost. And the book of Joel, as it is, is being fulfilled right before their eyes. And Philip, if Philip were part of today's, some of today's ministry, I'm telling you, he would become so entrenched.

He'd become the man of God in Samaria. Almost unmovable. A ministry, in a sense, that a lot of preachers might aspire to, where God is really doing something profound.

There are miracles happening every day. The altars, no doubt, are filled, and people are coming to Christ, being touched with the Holy Spirit. Then the angel of the Lord, or the word of God, comes to Philip and says, Arise, go down to the way that goes down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

Arise, Philip, and go to the desert. Now, can you just imagine the people around Philip at that time? As Philip is packing his suitcase, or whatever he traveled with at that time, he's putting his possessions together, and people are rushing in saying, Philip, isn't it marvelous what God is doing? The altars are filled. The word of God has come.

There's joy spreading throughout the whole city. Incredible things are beginning to happen. By the way, what are you doing, Philip? I'm packing up.

Where are you going? I'm not quite sure. Into the desert, I'm told. Well, what's there? I don't know what's in the desert.

I just know that God has spoken to my heart, and I'm supposed to go. Can you imagine the people at the border of the city as Philip with his stick, and whatever he had over his shoulder, heads out from that city, with a small little entourage, heading into the midst of a desert? It doesn't make any sense to the natural mind. The kingdom of God, the way of the cross, is to those who are perishing, foolishness, the Scripture says.

But to those of us who are saved, it is the power of God. God's ways are not our ways. His ways are higher than our ways.

We want a way with God that we fully understand. We want a plan that we can map out. We want a 10-year plan with God.

Virtually, we live in a generation where most everybody does. But God's ways are not our ways. And when you and I learn to walk in the ways of God, if we learn to follow the voice of God, that's where the miraculous begins to happen.

That's where things begin to unfold that do not come from committee meetings. They do not come from satellite imagery, or Google Earth, where we're looking down and saying, well, I'm just going to go to my computer and have a look at what's in this desert that God's sending me to. And if he had had the technology, he wouldn't have seen anything at that time.

Just a desert. A few bramble bushes, a couple of cactuses here and there, the odd small caravan perhaps making its way, doing some trade. But the interesting thing about this is that from the moment he obeys, the pen of God records his journey in intimate detail, while nothing more is spoken of the revival in Samaria.

Isn't that amazing? It speaks to me about something of heaven. God says, I'm not looking at the big players and the big pictures and the big ministries, but there's something being recorded in heaven about your life and about mine, and it's about the little obedience and how precious that is in the sight of God. And he gives us a little glimpse into this in the book of Acts.

We're no longer, it's not now about the miracles, no longer about the apostles, it's all now about this man, Philip, who heads into the desert for the sake of one man who's got influence in Ethiopia. And he's in a chariot reading from the book of Isaiah, and he's got a question in his heart. Who's Isaiah writing about? Philip joins the chariot, leads him to Christ and baptizes him.

And this is the first record in the New Testament that we have of the gospel of Jesus Christ going into the continent of Africa under the obedience of one man called Philip. And God saw it was so precious, he says, I'm going to record it, and people are going to speak about it. For years to come, even this morning in this church, we are speaking about the obedience of this one man that was willing to leave the place of the multitudes, and the accolades, and the glory, and follow God into a place that he didn't know where exactly he was going.

It speaks to me about how precious, obedient, and trusting people are in the sight of God. It's always been about obedience to God. Abraham, get up from where you are, leave your family, and go into a place that I'm promising to you.

And Abraham, I'm going to make your life a blessing, and people throughout the world are going to be blessed. And as Abraham leaves his family and familiarity, the people around him must have thought that somehow, are you sure this is God? Are you sure that where you're going, is there going to be hardship there, Abraham? It's not going to be easy. You're going to encounter enemies.

There are hostile other clans of people that are going to attack you. There are difficulties and famines, and you're going to be in desert places. Are you sure, Abraham? And you can see Abraham talking to his family and friends, saying, I only know this one thing God told me.

Somehow, he's going to make my life a blessing to the earth if I will obey him. And aren't you thankful he obeyed today? Because through him came the patriarchs, and through them came Jesus Christ, and through Christ came the church, and through the church came you and I. Praise be to God. We wouldn't be here today were it not for the obedience of one man who said yes to God.

In the same way, Paul's journey is intimately recorded by the Holy Spirit. It's amazing. God found an obedient man in Paul, and there were a lot of people in the church.

Now, I know some of the stories are recorded for God himself to speak about throughout eternity. But God recorded the life of Paul. And not only did he record the life of Paul in intimate detail, but also God recorded through the hand of Paul his own intimate thoughts towards his church.

And I thank God for that. Obedience, beloved, is a tender and a sweet story. Now, back to Acts chapter 21, if you will, where we started this morning.

The title is Breaking the Heart of Obedience. Acts chapter 21, verse 10. And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judea a certain prophet named Agabus.

And when he was come to us, he took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. Now, Agabus is a man of God. He's not a false prophet, he's a genuine prophet.

He's a well-meaning and a compassionate man. And there is no doubt that he loved Paul. But he saw hardship ahead for this apostle, for this beloved man of God.

We don't necessarily want to go into hardship ourselves, and we don't want those that we love to go into hardship. The Ukraine is a hard place, folks. If you've never been there or in its proximity, it's a hard place.

It's not going to be an easy road to hoe. It's going to be, there are going to be lonely days there for Pastor Neal and Sister Nolene. It's going to be hard at times.

Agabus knew this. And Agabus came to Paul and he said, I see difficulty ahead on your journey. I don't think it's going to be easy for you.

And verse 12, Luke is writing this, who wrote the book of Acts. He said, and when we heard these things, both we, he includes himself, and they of that place besought him not to go. Paul, don't go.

Paul, it's going to be hard. Paul, think of the good that you could do here. Paul, so much is happening, and you've got such revelation, and you've got so much to give us.

Why would you throw all of that into the hands of the Gentiles? Why would you take this revelation and waste it in Caesar's court, and in places where people don't care about it, and they're not going to listen to it? Why would you willfully go, Paul, to these places? What good? You see, in the natural, we look and say, well, what good? They really did have the word from the Lord, but they did not have the full word from the Lord. They didn't have the complete picture that God had for the Apostle Paul. And he responds to it in verse 13, and it says that Paul answered, What mean you to weep and to break my heart? Paul's saying, I have a heart to follow and to obey God.

And with all of your pleading, do you intend to break that? Are you trying to break that heart in me? Folks, can you imagine if they had succeeded? Could you imagine if their argument had prevailed over the leading of God in Paul's life? How spiritually poverty-stricken we would be this morning, because we would not have the great revelations that the Holy Spirit was able to give to the Apostle Paul while he was in prison, while he was going through hardship and difficulty. That's where the revelation comes. You never get revelation from anybody who lays in a hammock, folks.

Revelation comes from those who walk the pathway of God. Revelation was given to the Apostle Paul. Revelation was given to the Apostle John, not when he was leaning on the breast of Jesus at the Last Supper, but when he was in prison on the Isle of Patmos for the Word of the Lord and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Thank God for those who are willing to follow this journey. I've had to go through this. I know what this is all about.

There are well-meaning people all along the journey. When you get a word from the Lord and you know in your heart, Pastor Neil and Sister Nolene are not novices, and they waited two years from the time that the Holy Spirit first began to speak to their hearts before finally saying, Yes, God. The Lord is never in a hurry.

He doesn't speak to you Monday and expect that you're going to pack up on Tuesday. He'll wait. He'll wait till you know, until your heart is firmly confirmed in that where He is leading you.

And I remember having to get through this constant gauntlet. Just like Elijah, when he's following Elijah, and the prophets keep running out. These little groups of prophets keep running out of the city.

And all they can say to him is lost and heartache on this road. You're going to lose your master. It's going to be difficult.

It's going to be hard as they kind of toddle out of the city and they kind of look until they can see them fading into the distance. Then they run back in to go and study the Scripture some more, to get some more revelation. But there's so few willing to undertake this journey of obedience into places that the human heart and its naturalness just doesn't understand.

But the power of God is there. I remind you that Elijah came back over that river in the power of God and made a difference in his generation. Starting to follow the Lord in the young years, I had older Christians come to me and talk to me about, oh, it's foolish if you're going to leave your employment just in the beginning.

You're going to be poor. Your children won't have a good education. You'll never have a nice house and all of... As if these things are all that matters in life.

And I remember looking at many of them incredulously and saying, but God is calling me to preach the Gospel. It stunned me in a sense that many were not willing to consider this. Perhaps at some point they had been given the Word but had not obeyed it themselves.

I really don't know even to this day. I don't fully understand it. In 1994, when the Lord called me to come and help Pastor David here in this church, I was pastoring a church that was in revival, folks.

The glory of the Lord was in the church. In the summertime, we had to sit people outside to hear the Word of God. We had a huge missions program.

But in spite of all that, the glory of the Lord was there. And we were a family. It was nothing for people in that church to come into your house and go into your refrigerator before saying hi to you in your home.

And the Sunday that I got up, it was a shock because nobody knew and announced to the church that I would be leaving shortly. I didn't know why, but I knew there was an urgency. Well, I didn't know why, but I knew there was an urgency that I had to get to New York quickly.

And I got up and it shocked people. There was a lot of tears in that congregation. But I knew in my heart that God was calling me.

And people came to me and tried to stop me. But there were people who loved me. You have to understand, it was out of the sympathy and the empathy of a human heart that says, things don't have to change.

We've got the glory of God here. We're finding Christ in a way that we never dreamed we could find Him. And some people were driving 100 miles to come to church Sunday morning.

And they were exasperated. And I can understand what happened with Paul. I'm not a Paul, but I can understand what happened with Paul.

And people tried everything they could. Are you sure you're hearing from God? And then the word started coming, the forebodings about hardship and difficulty. I had one person tell me that you're going to lose a child.

It's going to cost you a child to go to New York City. And folks, I knew that wasn't God. It was coming from a person that was desperate and wanted to stop me from coming here.

Somebody had just found what they wanted. They found the church they wanted. They found the friendship they were looking for and felt it was in jeopardy.

So, took it upon themselves in their own humanness to say whatever they had to say to stop me from coming here. And folks, that thing sat with me. Don't think I didn't have to fight that thought.

I knew it wasn't from God, but I had to fight it, folks. Had to fight it. Both my sons have had car accidents that should have been or could have been fatal.

And both of them, God's grace, have walked away from these things. I remember carrying my daughter into the emergency while she's turning blue. Hardly able to breathe from the asthma attack that had come on.

Don't think I haven't thought of these things. The loss of a child. Another person came to me and said, I don't know what lies ahead of you, but if you follow this path, I see death ahead of you.

We're just talking about coming to New York City. But there was another person that has a prophetic gift, is a pastor today, that I deeply respect, who came to me. Not of the same spirit, but said to me, you know, on this journey it's going to be difficult.

I see a picture, God showed me a picture, and at the end of this journey in New York City, I saw you sitting with your guitar, and you could barely draw enough breath to sing. You know folks, that person was most likely given a true picture. I think of that quite often as I gasp for breath some days.

Now there's two ways you could look at this. You could look at the picture and say, it's going to cost me this to go to New York City, so I best not go. If I'm going to suffer in my breathing for some particular reason, then maybe I should just stay home.

Maybe I should continue to minister here where I'm strong and healthy. Why should I go there and run the risk of losing my health? And so you can look at hardship that way. And sometimes when we're thinking of

people going into hard places, there's something in our heart that just wants to say, well don't go there, why suffer hardship? We're all going to heaven anyway, right? So why suffer hardship on the journey? But there's a second way that I often look at that picture that was given to this particular person.

The fact is, I was still singing at the end of the journey. Still had the guitar, a little short of breath, but still singing. Praise God, still singing, still praising God.

Still giving God glory with whatever I had left. Whatever has breath, the psalm says, let them give praise unto God. The question I guess we ask ourselves is, do we avoid change because it might be hard? Do we live our Christian life avoiding the hard places? Do we try to build a tabernacle where we are? Do we search out a fellowship that we think meets our needs and say, okay, I'm here for life.

Now some people are. Some people are called to a specific place and that very well may be your life. But as you and I seek God, that may not be the case.

He may begin to speak something deeper and further. The scripture that Pastor Neal used today, in the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord. It was a difficult year.

It was a hard year. It was a year that seemingly hardship had come into the nation. But God called somebody out of the crowd and gave him a revelation.

And then Uzziah was able to hear the voice of God. And God was asking himself a question. Whom shall we send and who will go for us? It's not like he asked him directly, but he began to hear something in his heart.

And Uzziah stepped out of the crowd of angelic beings at that time and said, here am I, as unworthy as I feel, as untalented as I feel in the presence of a holy God. Lord, you have my life. And would you take me and use me for your glory? And think for a moment if Uzziah had not responded.

The Lord told Uzziah, you're going to go down to people who are not going to listen to you. By and large, they're going to push the message away. And you're going to preach to them until they're spiritually deaf, dumb and blind, because it's a society under judgment.

But I'm going to give you the purest word and revelation, Uzziah, that that particular generation you're going to speak to have ever had. But they will reject it. But for your efforts, I'll give you a tenth.

One in ten people you speak to will turn to God. You think maybe Uzziah would have been wise to avoid it because it was a hard ministry, a difficult place? How poor we would be today. If he had avoided it, would we have Uzziah chapter 53? Would we have those wonderful chapters that say, comfort my people and tell her her warfare is accomplished? How poverty stricken we would be today.

Would we have the chapter that tells us that, behold unto you a child is born, unto you a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Oh, I dare say, if Uzziah had not gone, we wouldn't have that word of God. And folks, if you don't go and I don't go, if we are not willing to be what Christ calls us to be in this generation, there will be a lot of people around us that will be a lot poorer when this journey is all over.

Oh yes, we'll make it to heaven. But we'll have missed so much that could have been done. So much of God's heart could have been conveyed.

So much revelation of Christ could have been realized, not just by us but by people around us. If we were just simply willing to make the journey and not avoid the hard places. We live in a generation that avoids the hard places.

And folks, that's why it's anemic. That's why there's very little voice. And I'm telling you, in the days that are coming, much of what is purported to be God's thing of the hour is going to be blown like chaff to the wind.

There's no substance in it. But folks, those who are willing to go, those who are willing in our own frailty, our own struggles, our own trials, our own nothingness, to let God be everything, for the honor of God and for the souls of men and for no other reason, Lord, here am I, send me. Pastor Neil Nolene, we applaud you both for having the willingness to obey God.

That's why we stood today. That's why we applauded. You've had the willingness to obey God and go to that place that you feel that the Lord is leading you.

My question to everyone here today now is who has the courage to say just as they have, Lord Jesus, if you clearly speak to me, I will follow you. Who has the courage? It's going to take that courage today. You and I have to have that resolve in our hearts that we're not going to avoid the hard places.

Now let me talk to you about the hard places just for a moment. The hardest place of all sometimes is right across the table from the people you sit with at night and eat dinner. Who will have the courage to be humbled and to go to the other side of that table and to reconcile wrong? Whether or not you are the offender or the offended.

The hardest place can be across the hallway in your apartment building. Matter of fact, by God's grace, I have come to experience this rather recently myself. Remember the husbandman that labors must be first partaker of the fruits.

There's a fellow near me that plays music that I just detest with all my heart. We've had some discussions about these things in the last little while. Who's willing to go across the hall and be kind and Christ-like, compassionate? Who is willing to go to the hard places? Who's willing to be led into areas of ministry that you're not familiar with, that don't fit your resume? That in the natural you say, I have absolutely no qualification to do this.

God says, but who made your mouth? Remember Moses? Who gave you life? Who gave you your eyes? Who created your voice? Who's allowing the heart within you to beat, even right now? I'm not looking for your abilities, I'm looking for your willingness to go. See folks, we don't really know the miraculous until we're willing to go into the hard places. There's an old, old song we sing, where he leads me, I will follow.

I'll go with him, with him, all the way. Now, I thank God for the lesson today that some people will never get out of their seats and respond to an altar call like this because they feel that by Tuesday things will have to have changed. Remember it was two years that the Holy Spirit spoke to Pastor Neal.

Two years. I remember before going into ministry, the Lord spoke to me a considerable amount of time. There was an inner fight, but God knew that if I fully knew it was His voice, I would obey Him.

Who will go into the hard places? Who will go where nobody else but God could? Who will be a willing vessel to say, Lord, here am I, send me. If that's you today, as we stand in a moment, I'm going to ask you to get out of your seat, come to this altar, and I'm going to ask Pastor Neal and Sister Nolene to come and pray for you. And pray God give you the strength to obey Him, where He calls you, that you will follow Him.

Let's stand together, please. Just slip out and make your way here, please, if you will. Those that can honestly say where He leads me, I will follow.

I will follow. Yeah, I know you will. Praise God.

I know you will. Hallelujah. Just make your way, move in close, please, if you will.

There will be a lot of people coming in the annex. I think you best stand between the screens, if you don't mind, in the annex. There's going to be a lot of people here.

This could be life-changing for you, folks. This can set a course for your life that will truly bring honor and glory to God. Let's worship as you come.

Let's pray. Father, this morning, I want to pray for every single woman that has come forward to this altar. Lord, You know what is in their hearts.

You know the things that You have spoken into their hearts, the secrets that You have told them, that only they know. Father, I pray that they would have the courage of their convictions as they hear the Holy Spirit speak to them, that that next step of obedience they would take. If it is just to go across the hall and speak to a lonely person, if it is just to make reconciliation in their homes and their families, with family members, Father, I pray that they would just take that step of obedience.

Every single thing that You're asking them to do, step by step, I pray that You would lead them. And Lord, the fears that accompany us as we just get on our knees and we pray, Lord, how's my life? I'm willing to go. I'm willing to do whatever You would have me to do.

Lord, I know that there's lots of fears to overcome, but Father, I thank You that we never, You never ask us to do anything in our own strength. You never ask us to go places that You will promise not to go with us. And Father, I thank You for that.

I thank You that we can have confidence in You, that whatever You're asking us to do, wherever You're leading us, Lord, we never have to do it in our own strength, and we can have that confidence. God, You are with us. And Father, I do pray for every single lady that Jesus, You would just heal hurts in their hearts, that Father, hurts that are stopping them from going forward in relationships.

I pray a healing. I pray that as they give those to You, Lord, You can pour Your Holy Spirit into them and touch them and heal them, that they can be vessels fit and ready for the Master's use. Lord, bless the ladies this day, I pray in Jesus' name.

Continue to speak to their hearts, to lead them, to direct them, and to know that, Father, You have promised that whatever You ask them to do, You will equip them to do what You have called them to do. And Father, we give You the honor and the glory in Jesus' name. Amen.

Just raise your hands towards heaven right now. Father, I thank You that I believe today that there is something that is going to be broken over the lives of men in this place. God, You are doing a supernatural

work by them taking the step of faith to say, God, I want to go with You.

Lord, You are breaking something off of their lives, something that they have not wanted to yield up or to go in that journey with You, not willing to leave the past. God, I know today, as You have spoken through Your Word, that You are doing something of a supernatural nature. You are doing something so powerful today.

I pray for all these men, Lord, as they raise their hands towards heaven, that You have placed Your hand upon them. You have called them. Lord, it was You who touched them that day when they responded to You, to accept You as Lord and Savior.

And it is today that they surrender one more time to You, that You will do that miracle work in their lives. Lord, I believe that there are chains falling to the ground, chains of addictions falling to the ground right now, as these men respond to You by faith and say, God, where You lead, I am going to follow. We break the fear of man off of so many people here today.

God, we thank You that You are a God of the supernatural. We pray, Lord, that You have not given us a spirit of fear, but a power, love, and of a sound mind. Lord, some of these men have felt they were crazy, but God, that is not true.

You've given them a sound mind. This decision that they've made today, to go all the way with You, is a decision of Your Holy Spirit. It's a decision that You have been drawing upon them for maybe many, many months.

But today, God, we proclaim victory. We proclaim deliverance. We proclaim freedom.

We proclaim today, God, that Your men shall rise. They shall stand and be counted as men. That, Lord, this something is happening today, that these men will turn the city upside down for God, that You are putting upon them a Holy Ghost anointing, that there is a Holy Ghost power coming upon the men of this house this day in the mighty name of Jesus.

God, we thank You that if they can turn the known world upside down in their day in the first church, then surely, God, in this city, You can take these men and these women, and this city can be turned right side up for God, in Jesus' name. Hallelujah. And, fathers, we give You thanks.

Now, we give You praise with all of our heart, with everything within us. Jesus, we give You glory. Jesus, we give You praise.

Jesus, we exalt You. Hallelujah. Jesus, we give You praise today in the mighty name, in Your mighty name.

Give Him praise, beloved. Give God a shout of praise. He's an awesome God and a mighty king.

Hallelujah.

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