

# Children of Light in a Fading Society

by Carter Conlon

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*Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the need for Christians to be children of light in a society that is fading away from God's truth and values.*

**Duration:** 51:21

**Scripture:** Isaiah 3:16, Isaiah 61:1, 1 Corinthians 10:11

**Topics:** "Holiness"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of being a witness for God in a society that is rapidly degenerating. He emphasizes that people will be drawn to God when they hear reports of His work in the lives of believers. The speaker uses the example of Paul standing on a ship in a storm, trusting in God's word despite the impossible circumstances. He also highlights the increasing hostility towards Jesus Christ in society and the need for believers to stand firm in their faith. The sermon concludes with the speaker sharing personal experiences of God's love and fearlessness in sharing the Gospel.

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## Transcript

If you'll turn in your Bibles to Isaiah chapter 3, please, if you will. I want to talk to you today about the children of light in a fading society. Children of light in a fading society.

O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain, for purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain. America! God shed his grace on thee. And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea.

O beautiful for pilgrim feet, whose stern and passionate strength hath earned the fair for freedom in the cross of everness. America! America! God mend thine every flaw. Confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in law.

America! America! God shed his grace on thee. And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea. Father, I thank you Lord God.

I thank you God for the anointing of your Holy Spirit. I thank you for mercy and I thank you for grace. God Almighty, give us ears to hear now.

Give us eyes to see our future. Help us, O God, to worship you with understanding. I ask for an anointing, O God, upon these words that they cannot be dropped to the ground.

They would make a deep impress on every person's heart, who would be listening in the generation that we're part of. God help me today. God help us to hear you, to walk with you and to honor you.

And I thank you for it in Jesus' name. Amen. Isaiah chapter 3, beginning at verse 16.

Children of light in a fading society. Moreover, the Lord saith, because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet. Therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts.

In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, their calls and their round tires like the moon, the chains and the bracelets and the mufflers, the bonnets and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands and the tablets and the earrings, the rings and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles and the wimples and the crisping pins, the glasses and the fine linen and the hoods and the veils. And it shall come to pass that instead of a sweet smell there shall be a stink, instead of a girdle a rent, instead of well-set hair baldness, instead of a stomacher a girding of sackcloth, and burning instead of beauty. Thy men shall fall by the sword and thy mighty in the war, and her gates shall lament and mourn, and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

Now this portion of the scripture tells us how God Almighty Himself once dealt with a nation that for a season had known His favor on the earth. It's such a tragedy, my friend, that history seems destined to repeat itself over and over again. And it begs the question, sometimes it ought to be asked, why can't we learn from the past? What is it about humankind that we will ignore the warnings, we will ignore the patterns, we will ignore the clear testimony of scripture and the clear evidence of history, and pursue a similar course? 1 Corinthians 10, verse 11, the apostle Paul in the New Testament writes to us telling us that all the things that happened, now he's speaking specifically about when they came out of Egypt and walked through the wilderness, but it also has an application to what we're reading here.

All things that happened to them are recorded that you and I might learn from them, especially those of us, Paul says, upon whom the ends of the world have come, especially those, he says, who live in the last days. From God's perspective, this society had fallen into ruin. Verse 8 of chapter 3, Jerusalem is ruined, Judah has fallen, because their tongue and their doings are against the Lord to provoke the eyes of His glory.

They freely spoke against the Lord and openly flaunted their sin. The show of their countenance doth witness against them. They declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not.

Woe unto their soul, for they have rewarded evil unto themselves. Say to the righteous that it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Verse 11 says, Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

They flaunted their sin, even the worst forms of immorality. They scoffed at the thought that God would even consider judging them. Verse 16 tells us that they had become proud, unsatisfied, and self-directed.

Now this is speaking specifically about the women, of course, of that society in this portion of Scripture, but it has a blanket covering for the whole of what God's people of that time had become. In spite of having known His presence, in spite of having been blessed above all nations on the earth, the end result is that they became proud. And they walked with a lust or a longing in their eyes, unsatisfied they had

become and self-directed.

They had been blessed above all people on the earth. They had known the favor of God, but it just simply wasn't enough for them. And now there's a pride, there's a lifting of the neck as it is, and there's a lust in the eye that is constantly driving them to something that they don't understand or a destination that they don't fully comprehend.

They had an image of self-righteousness, which God was about to strip away and expose before the world what they had really become. All nations were about to see it. He said the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts.

All the hidden things, the truth of what they had become. They had an exterior image of righteousness, don't misunderstand it. They had all the garments, they had the temple attendance, they had the history, they had the text of scripture that was available to the world at that time, was in their hands.

But they had become something else beneath the garments. And essentially the Lord was saying, I'm going to strip off the garments and I'm about to expose my own people. I'm about to expose this nation that I had set apart for myself and for my glory in the earth.

This nation that had been blessed above every nation in its generation had been given wisdom, divine order, judgment, blessing, protection. I'm about to take away the image. I'm about to remove the covering as it is and I'm going to expose this people and all the world will see it.

And all the world will begin to laugh. And of course that was fulfilled when you read the Psalms. It talked about the nation shaking the head and saying, are these really the people of God? Are these really the people that God blessed in the earth as they were drawn away captive into the nations of the world at that time? Verse 18 tells us that their bravery will be taken away.

And the word bravery means their name, their reputation, their rank among the nations of the world, their renown, their report for the achievements that have been done in their midst and all of their boasting would be shamed openly and publicly before all so they could see it. Verse 22 tells us that their property would be lost. Their prosperity, in other words, would be lost.

The changeable suits of apparel means there was plenty and abundance. It would all be taken away and it would be lost. Verse 24 tells us that their land would become an undesirable place to live in and her decaying health would become visible.

It shall come to pass instead of a sweet smell there shall be a stink. Instead of a girdle of rent, instead of well set hair, baldness, instead of a stomach or a girding of sackcloth and burning instead of beauty. Verse 25 tells us her military might would fail.

Thy men shall fall by the sword and thy mighty in the war. Verse 26 tells us that she will find no way out. She will ponder what she has done and she will sit down in despair.

And her gates shall lament and mourn. And she being desolate or left alone shall sit upon the ground. And behold how these words were fulfilled.

Do you remember the psalm that says by the willows, by the rivers of Babylon we sat down. We hanged our harps, we lost our song. And they that carried us away captive required of us a song saying sing us

one of the songs of Zion.

That means a blessing. The time that God was your strength. And the psalmist said how shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land.

Sitting down, pondering in despair. And so is the future of all people and all nations who once knew and have rejected the living God. History does repeat itself.

In this country, the United States of America we formed an image of ourselves which no longer conforms to truth. I have made a personal study over the years. One of the things I studied in college was sociology and anthropology.

The development of a culture and society and such like and behavior patterns. And it's only from this perspective that I have been in this country for 20 years and have observed some things about this society. You'll often hear the statement we are Americans.

And when the statement is made it's somewhat of a boast and it follows through with a list of things that America used to be. It means that we are virtuous. It used to mean America is a virtuous people.

We are hardworking. We are moral. We stand on the side of what is right.

We are defenders of the oppressed. We are benevolent towards the diseased and the poor. That's why the Statue of Liberty sits in this harbor inviting those that nobody else wants to come and dwell on the shores of this country.

And that benevolence came because the word of God in measure, at least in small measure, but in measure, the heart of Christ was at the center of this society. And the heart of Christ is to receive and to bless those that have no helper. We're a people who gave place to God and respected his word.

And this is the image when people say on the news while we're Americans. It used to mean something, but it doesn't mean that anymore. We've changed.

We've changed radically. We've changed drastically. In reality today, as a society, we want no restraints.

We've become proud, unsatisfied, and self-directed as a people. We've wanted freedom without restraint and pleasure without consequence. We have destroyed 50 million lives in the womb and we have arrogantly called it choice.

We live without commitment. We speak without truth and deny the existence of Jesus Christ. I am appalled at the liars now that are publicly lying and there's no accountability for it any longer.

We live without commitment. Our homes, our families, the numbers of people who come to altars and make their sweet promises till death do us part, but it means nothing anymore. If there were virtue, it would mean something, but there's no virtue any longer.

We deny the truth and deny the existence of Jesus Christ. Our society has come to the point where atheists in New York City put a huge poster of Jesus Christ on the cross in Times Square last Christmas and called it a myth. And almost nobody raised their voice against it.

We openly declare, parade in the streets, and celebrate our sin just as Sodom did. We don't hide it anymore. Our children, which have lived, are becoming more openly and increasingly violent and despondent.

Just on the news, just on the way in this morning, just a report of a bus pulling up to a stop, a group of 12 young people getting onto the bus, and if it weren't for the bus driver, they would have beat a teenager to death who was sitting on that bus on the way home by himself. This is what our society is becoming, folks, and very quickly degenerating before our very eyes. As a nation, we fulfilled the words of Jesus Christ in Luke chapter 19 and verse 14.

The scripture says, He spoke this with His own mouth, but His citizens hated Him and sent a message after Him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. We have once again joined the crowds of Luke 23 and 21, saying, Crucify Him. Crucify Him.

Jesus Christ is fair game, open to be mocked, seemingly without any fear of repercussion in this society. And so, as Israel once was, we as a nation are being allocated to the wilderness, where those who reject the word of God have always been destined to dwell, may I say it this way, and I say it with a broken heart, I say it with tears, the United States of America is fading now quickly into the pages of history. Her gates shall lament and mourn and being desolate, she shall sit upon the ground.

And so, as this society heads into the wilderness, I thank God with all my heart that finally, after all these years of mixture, after all these years of America producing its own religion that produced nothing more than a confused people. Just enough of God to be uncomfortable with the depravity and just depraved enough to be uncomfortable in the house of God. But thank God, as America heads into the wilderness, there is another people who are on their way out of the wilderness and I thank God for that with all of my heart.

For many of God's people, it's not been an easy journey. Living in a Godless time is never easy for those who love Jesus Christ. Many have had to make their way to Him in a very confusing and dry time and they should never backslide, folks, without taking its religion with it.

We allowed the pursuit of life, liberty and individual happiness to become the theology of the Christian church. It weakened us. There was no longer any talk of the blood, the cross, the sin, repentance, turning, living for God, missions work.

All of these things were thrown out and replaced with surveys, coffee and foolishness in the house of God. And it produced a mixture that has no power. It produced a mixture though claiming itself to be in the majority is being led away captive, seemingly powerless to stop this journey into the wilderness.

Being dictated to by what's supposed to be a minority in the country in the case of understanding the ways of God. But I thank God with all my heart that there's a question going to be asked in this generation. It's the one in Song of Solomon chapter 8 and verse 5 where the people said, Who is this that comes up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved? This is a people who have just not been satisfied with the powerlessness of their testimony in this time of declension.

This is a people who said, Listen, if there is a God, I'm going to find Him. I'm going to lay hold of Him. I want to know Him.

I want to walk with Him. I want to serve Him. I want His life to become my life.

I don't care if I have to do this alone. It makes no difference if nobody comes with me. I'm not going through this world confused and bewildered and powerless.

By God's grace, as the scripture says, Malachi said, In the last days, the people of God are going to return and discern who serves God and who doesn't serve Him. Daniel said, Those who know their God are going to be strong and do exploits and they shall shine as lights in the heavens. The prophet Joel said, The Lord God will send His Spirit in the last day.

Yes, I know that began on the day of Pentecost but it will finish the way it began. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy. Your own men shall dream dreams.

And on my servants and handmaidens I shall pour out of my spirit, says the Lord. No, no, no, no. God will have a people in this generation.

No, no. She has sought Him. I thank God there's a stirring.

I thank God with all my heart that there are people all over this country now that are just not satisfied any longer with three-point, three-word rhyming sermons on Sunday that do nothing to stir their heart. The prayerlessness in the house of God. They're sick of the screen showing football games downstairs in the church of Jesus Christ.

They're tired of it all. They're tired of the powerless fellowship. They're tired of the prayerless church.

And even if they have to get together in their living rooms they're going to begin to seek God and say, Lord, I'm going to lay hold of you again. As one group heads into the wilderness shamed and exposed and that's exactly what's happening to this country now before all the nations. We're becoming the laughing stock of the world at this particular moment.

But there's another people, the bride, the church of Jesus Christ coming out of the wilderness covered, virtuous, truly turning to God, truly trusting Christ. Her sins have been forgiven. Her future is good.

Her strength is firm. She's going from image to image and glory to glory even as by the Spirit of the Lord. She's being called to do something at a time when she's being desperately needed.

As Esther was in a time where there's a law of death written over society, she's going in and she's beginning to petition the king. She's fasting, she's praying just as we are as a church, saying, I'm going in and I'm going to talk to the king and if I perish, I perish. I throw my life into this ring.

I can't let these people die when there's a chance that my life can make a difference. Our privileges, children of God, in a feeding society is to be fully clothed with everything that Christ has for us and to glorify Him in this hour. Oh, the things that He has for us.

Oh, the heights. Oh, the depths. Oh, the strength.

Oh, the power. Oh, the gifts of God. Oh, the callings of God.

Oh, the power He's willing to put in our speech and the light He's willing to put in our eyes. The firmness He's willing to put in our grasp. Oh, what God is willing to do for those who are willing to call out to Him.

Oh, I thank God. I thank God for this moment in history. I've said it to this church many times.

A lighthouse is only a tourist attraction until the storm comes and then it's no longer a tourist attraction. Its light is essential to the survival of people who are trying to find their way home in the midst of a storm. In this way, we will truly become a light that shines in the darkness.

It's my privilege and it's yours to press in and say, Jesus Christ, Son of God, I want everything that you bought for me on that cross. I want every triumph. I want freedom in every area of my life.

I want not only to be free from the past, I want to be free to move into the future. I want the strength. I want the glory of God in my life.

I want the Christ who rose from the grave to animate me and guide me and give me the strength. Oh, God, because history does repeat itself. There are three Hebrew boys that go into a furnace in the midst of a declining kingdom.

There is a Daniel that endures a lion's den rather than give in to prayerlessness or wrong-focused prayer. Oh, thank God. There are 120 people who went into an upper room.

All failures. I thank God. If I would have been there, there would have been 121 in the upper room.

All failures. Nobody with the power to stand. All boast into the dust knowing that if there's going to be victory, it's going to be Christ's victory in us, that it's going to be the victory.

Knowing that if there's going to be strength, if there's going to be freedom, if society has a chance to change. This was a society, folks, that had just crucified their master. This was a society that had gathered by the thousands and said, crucify him.

These are the people who said, we will not have this man to reign over us. But yet he had 120. It's amazing.

You look throughout all history. What did he have? To set his people free from Egypt, he had an 80-year-old man and an 83-year-old brother. To set the people free in the day of Gideon, he had 300 soldiers who were willing to undertake what looked to be a spiritually suicide mission.

That Jesus Christ, that God in the earth might be glorified one more time. Look throughout history. And Paul says, consider your calling.

Not many mighty, not many noble, not many of royal birth. No movers, no shakers in this kingdom in a worldly sense. Thank God, coming into him in our poverty, coming into him in our need, coming into him saying, Lord, I know you have strength for me.

I know you have victory for me. I know you have freedom for me. My God, I can't represent you if I'm half stuck in captivity myself.

But I know because you told me. You spoke so clearly. This is what your word said.

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me because he has anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the present to them that are bound. That's from Isaiah.

I'm reading this. But Jesus stood in the synagogue and read these words and said, this day this scripture is fulfilled in your ears. And so God, if this is my portion, this is where it begins.

It begins by me getting out of prison. It begins by me having sight to see. It begins by me stopping to rehearse the wounds of the past and accept the healing of God that he bought for me on Calvary.

It starts by believing that though I may be captivated in some area of my life, he has opened the door to that which binds me. He openly triumphed, the scripture says, over the powers. He made an open display over all of hell's power when he died on the cross.

You don't have to live in captivity. You don't have to live in spiritual poverty. You don't have to live with your head hanging down every day.

You and I have victory in Jesus Christ. We have victory. We are a free people.

We have the light of God inside of us. Glory to God. We can make a difference in our generation.

To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God and to comfort all that mourn. To comfort all who have lost their sense of virtue. To comfort all who are headed into the wilderness.

To comfort those who have no helper. To comfort those who will be soon sitting on the ground and mourning the loss of everything they once held dear. To comfort those who are mourning, thinking there's no hope and there's no future.

What a glorious future there is for the church of Jesus Christ. To appoint to them that mourn in Zion. To give them beauty for ashes.

The oil of joy for mourning. The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. That they might be called trees of righteousness.

The planting of the Lord. That he might be glorified. This is your portion and it's mine.

You don't have to go into the wilderness with this society. You can turn around and head the other way. Head back.

Remember when Sodom and Gomorrah were about to perish. God sent angels into Sodom. They took Lot, his wife and two daughters by the hand and said, get to the mountain.

Get to the mountain. There's safety in the mountain. Folks, right now get to Calvary.

Get to the cross. There's safety in the cross of Jesus Christ. And it's in that place that you will find beauty for your ashes.

You'll find joy for your mourning of the things you thought you lost but yet you only lost a few things that you weren't going to keep anyway. You'll find the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness that's so blanketing our whole society now is heavy. Goodness sakes, man.

You can't listen to the news for 15 minutes without depression wanting to sit on your spirit now. That they might be called trees of righteousness. Who will call them that? People who see them.

People who witness your life. They see that you are standing in the storm. There's something about you that still bears fruit when everyone else has lost theirs.

You're standing in the wind when everyone else is caving and falling and like tumbleweed being blown into the wilderness. You are standing in the strength of God that he might be glorified. Not we.

He might be glorified. And they shall build the old wastes and raise up the former desolations and repair the waste cities and the desolations of many generations. Don't misunderstand me.

I don't think America will ever look like it once did. No. It's not about saving sandcastles.

It's about people now. Paul stood on the deck of that ship in Acts chapter 27 and he knew the ship was about to fall to pieces and they were about to land in a place that was strange to them. The society they were about to land in was one with which they were not familiar.

But Paul had a word from God. I picture Paul as a tree of righteousness standing on the deck of that ship taking communion, glorifying God for the keeping power of his word even though everything around him was impossible. Folks, if you've ever been on the ocean you know the waves that were about to break that ship into pieces had to be as high as this balcony, maybe higher.

And the odds of getting ashore when waves are that big are zero. You can't. The undertow pulling back into the ocean is too strong.

Even if you had a boat, you couldn't get to shore. But Paul had a word from God and Paul said, if you listen to the word that God's given me, I'm going to stand before Caesar and God in his mercy has given me everyone here who sails with me. They were going to be given an opportunity to come to safety and to witness the power of God and I have no doubt the chance to make a decision as to whether or not they were going to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

I hope to God, the scripture doesn't record it, but I hope to God that many did have the sense to make that decision. You and I are going to have to stand now as lights in a fading society. You are the light of the world, Jesus said.

A city that's set on a hill cannot be hidden. A city that has come to the cross for her strength. A people that know what Jesus bought for them and long for it with all their heart.

A people who have an intense desire to come out of mixture and come out of powerlessness and come out of that which captivates us and renders our testimony so ineffective in this generation. It's in this way that we become light that shines in the darkness. I think of in 1 Kings chapter 10 verses 4 and 5, listen to this now.

The queen of Sheba came to see Solomon. Now this is Israel in the days when God's hand was upon her. This is before she vacillated.

This is what God wanted to do. This is the favor he puts on people and on nations. His glory was in his house.

His glory was among his people. It wasn't just the temple. The scripture tells us the glory of God came down as a cloud literally in the temple.

But it wasn't just the physical temple that experienced the glory. The people were touched by the glory of God. That means the word in the Hebrew means the weightiness of God.

It means that which God uses of himself to bring through us his own name into reputation. And so the queen of Sheba comes in. Here's a woman who's achieved what the society thinks is going to bring happiness.

She has status. She's in a place of power. She's given glory in measure because of her office that she's holding.

And yet there's this deep abiding question in her heart because she's heard of something that is greater than anything she's ever known. She's achieved wealth, power and status. But her heart is still empty.

And so making a long journey, she hears a report of something happening that only God could do. And I happen to believe that in our time, many people are going to hear a report of something happening in the house of God. And among God's people.

People in your workplace are going to hear a report about what's happening in the life of sister so-and-so or brother so-and-so. People in your apartment building are going to hear a report. And some are going to come to your door.

And others are going to come to your desk. And some being too shy will phone you after hours on your cell phone and say, could you tell me where you find the strength you have? And where you got that song from when ours is crumbling and fading? Where did you get this song? Why are you smiling most of the time? And when you go through hard times, why does it seem to not have the power to take you down with it? Why can you stand in the midst of the fire? Why doesn't the roaring of the lion bother you? What is it about you? And it says, when the queen of Sheba had seen Solomon's wisdom and the house that means the family, the compassion that he had built and the meat of his table and the sitting of his servants and the attendance of his ministers and their apparel and his cupbearers and his assent by which he went up into the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her. In other words, there were no more arguments about the reality of God.

The only thing that remained now was a desire to be a partaker of what she had seen. She had seen the divine order of God that comes into a life that is living and dwelling in his presence. Wisdom, the ability to build something that can't be built by the hands of men.

She saw his wisdom. She saw his house, the house he had built. She saw the meat of his table.

In other words, that which gave him strength and that which was provided for him by God. The sitting of his servants, the attendance of his ministers and their apparel. In other words, it wasn't just Solomon.

It was everybody in the temple. I had a college professor visit here one time about three years ago. I believe it was three or four years ago.

He was an influential man in this particular secular college. He happened to visit. I ended up talking with him.

I took him on a tour of the church. When we were done with the tour, I said, do you have any questions? He said, how do you do this? He said, as we walked around this church, he said, everybody seems to be

moving with purpose. Everything is so clean.

Everything is so orderly. He said, everything here runs like a clock. How do you do this? Now, here's a guy who's part of an institution that probably has thirty times the budget we do.

And maybe six times the staff. But he had never seen anything quite like the divine order that God brings into some world when he is in control and he is in charge. You should have seen the look on his face when I said, I don't do anything.

We pray and God's Holy Spirit puts people in their positions, in the body as it pleases him. And they do what they do as unto the Lord. That's why the cleaners in this church, you'll notice quite often, they sing all day while they clean the floors.

They sing and they worship all day. I love that. I love walking through this church and hearing the maintenance guys singing.

That's why there's such a decorum upon the ushers. You'll notice it today in the hospitality ministry. There's a decorum.

There's a sense of order. Nobody is barking orders at them. They seem to know what to do.

It's amazing when people begin to walk in divine order. And when the queen of Sheba saw this, there were no more arguments about the reality of God. There's only a desire left to say, wherever you got that, I'd like some of that.

Now the scripture does say, I don't know how it all played out, but the scripture does say that Solomon gave her all her heart's desire. She must have said, I want some of that. Whatever it is, we were having the last session of the effective authentic Christian leadership with Brother Vest at the end of the session.

There was a gentleman, he might be here this morning. If you are, God bless you. He lives in the area.

He's retired. And he thought it was a church service, although it wasn't. So he came in, he sat down, and at the end of it, now Brother Vest is preaching his heart out about authentic Christian leadership, talking about methodologies, especially in the last session.

And at the end of the service, this man walked up to me, and he's about my age, and he said, how do I get to be what you guys are? He said, whatever you are, I like that. And I'd like to be that. I said, well, we're Christians.

He said, yeah, okay, if that's what you are. He said, now, how do I get to be one of those? I like what I see. I like what I've felt.

Having come into the house of God, having seen the passion God puts in the heart, having had the experience of sitting where there's a hundred nations together that could never be together apart from the Spirit of God, having been greeted and treated well, even though he's really not part of the meeting that was here. He's not part of the people that actually even should be here. He's allowed to sit down.

He's allowed to be part. He's greeted in a friendly manner and comes to the conclusion, whatever you have, I'd like to have that. He wasn't even sure what it was.

He said, but I'd like it. I'd like to have that. I'd like that to be part of my life.

I led him into sinner's prayer to Christ and told him about New Believers class. I said, I'll be there. You can count it.

I'll be there Friday night. I'll be in New Believers class. Thank God.

Oh, praise God. Oh, praise God. We have a glorious opportunity to be the church of Jesus Christ, to be a light, children of light in a fading society.

But we ourselves have to step out of where we shouldn't be. We have to step out of known sin. We have to step out of a mixed value system.

Half in the things of this world and half in the kingdom of God. You'll never have a vibrant testimony if that's where you live. And may I also suggest you get off of ChristianMingle.com the young people that are here.

Might I suggest you begin trusting God. And pray. One thing I can promise you, if you don't pray and you marry somebody, you will pray then.

You'll pray like you've never prayed before. You'll be here Tuesday. You'll be here Wednesday.

You'll be here Friday night. You'll be here Sunday morning. What an opportunity we have to be lights that shine in this darkened world.

What an opportunity to grow in grace. What an opportunity to be that bride that comes out of the wilderness and say well this whole society is determined to head into this godless utopia that they think is going to bring about freedom. And it's only bringing about despair, foolishness, nakedness, and violence in our society.

But there have to be a people now who are willing to say I'm not going there. I'm simply not going there. I'm going to turn and go the other way.

I'm going to lay hold of everything that God has for me. And if I'm in prison I'm going to get out. If I'm captivated I'm going to get free.

If I'm wounded I'm going to get healed. I'm going to get everything that God has for me that I might be whole and then I'm not stopping there. Once I'm whole I'm going in to get everything he has for me that I might become a testimony in this generation.

I'm not going to say no to God. I'm not going to limit God because of my own image of myself or my sense of unworthiness or lack of ability. No I'm coming out covered.

I'm coming out empowered. I'm coming out with the living Christ in the center of my heart. I'm coming out saying God I'm asking only one thing of my life is that you glorify the name of Jesus Christ through my life.

God almighty let fruit be born for your kingdom. And give me the power to comfort those that mourn in this generation. Give me the power to be planted by this river of life unmovable bearing fruit and to be one of those who comforts those who have lost everything they thought was dear.

Thank God this is an incredible moment if you can hear it. For those who can hear not only in here but Canada, Europe Australia, all over the world this is an incredible moment in the future of this planet for those who can hear it. God almighty is coming soon for his church but he's giving us an opportunity now before he comes folks I'm not looking to just escape here.

I'm not looking just to get out. I'm not looking for an easy fix. I'm looking to take lost people to heaven with me.

I'm looking to make a difference in this generation. There has to be a point in your life when a measure of gravel gets into your gut no matter where you've been or what you've done and you just say by God's grace I'm going to make a difference. By God's grace Christ in me is going to become my hope of glory.

I know I can't do these things but I also know the Christ in me can. The Christ who created the universe can. The Christ who empowers the weak can.

The Christ who sets free can. The Christ who gives gifts can. The Christ who sent two old men into Egypt to bring three million people out can.

He is still the same today as yesterday and forever. Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. Thank you Lord.

Jesus can. Glory glory glory glory glory glory to God I refuse to sit on the sidelines of this game. I'm getting into this game and I'm going to go for the goal line and I'm going with everything that God has given me and believing that Christ will be glorified in my life Hallelujah to the Lamb of God Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Glory Glory to God Glory to God.

Folks we don't have 15 years to get this right. You have to understand this now. This is a defining moment in the history of this nation.

If you and I are going to move into the life of Jesus Christ that he has for us we've got to move in that direction now. This is not a situation where we can put it off put it off put it off put it off because one day the door will close and the rains will come I want I want everything that God has for my life and that's my altar call. I want out of everywhere I shouldn't be and I want into everywhere I should be with only one prayer.

Father glorify thy name let me and my ambitions and dreams fall into the ground and die that my life may bear much fruit for the kingdom of God it begins folks with a decision years ago I was in a church I was a young Christian and I really didn't understand or maybe I didn't even listen to the message because I don't remember it I just remember that I felt a drawing in my heart that was impossible but I remember getting out of my seat I was sitting close to the back in the center aisle and I remember going to the altar of that church and got on my knees and I began to weep and I said God I don't have much I don't think I have much of anything to offer you but if you see something in my life that you can use I give it to you Lord I just have a heart that wants you I have no abilities

ready to give you but I have a heart that wants you and if you can take that and if you can use that for your glory I give that to you and I remember weeping and weeping and weeping and weeping before God and folks that's where it all begins it doesn't begin with a plan it doesn't begin with a bargaining session it doesn't begin by coming to God and laying out a litany of what we think we can offer his kingdom it just means coming in our emptiness in our captivity in our struggles our trials our battles and saying I'm just not willing to live on the sidelines of this great kingdom something should be happening if I'm reading it correctly in scripture there should be something supernatural happening in my life and I'm not willing to sit

on the sidelines and just watch everybody else go by

or pick up books and read about those who believed it in the past I ask you Lord that you may do this through my life too and as feeble as my prayer was God heard me it has been an amazing journey it has been a journey beyond anything I can I don't have the words to explain it to you it's been awesome it's been incredible I just don't have the vocabulary to tell you how God took a man out of a life of fear of nine years of fear of being afraid of being in a room that was closed of being afraid of being in a crowd of ten people and being singled out of running out of rooms for years and stood in front of hundreds of thousands of people in the most difficult of places without a shred of fear in my heart only the love of God which the Bible says casts out fear it's true it's true it's just

the love of God for people it's a desire to see them saved it's standing before Muslims after the Kosovo war even though the deputy mayor of the town was so afraid he shook the whole platform and the whole time I spoke he kept punching me in the side trying to get me to stop he was afraid we were all going to get killed I wasn't afraid I loved these men and they knew it that's why they started to cry perfect love does cast out fear the word of God is true thank God I'm not saying you're going to go to Kosovo and preach to Muslims but what I am saying is you're going to start standing up in your workplace at least that's a great start and whatever standing up means you're going to make a difference in your family you're going to make a difference in your community and let God just take it

from there where it needs to go and if that's the cry of your heart if that's the cry of your heart we're going to stand in a moment in the annex you can stand between the screens in the main sanctuary balcony I'm going to ask you to invite you to join with me at the front of this auditorium at home you can get on your knees in your living room in Roxbury you can step between the screens as well and as a people let's just go to the throne of God now and say Lord everything everything everything God you have for my life that's what I want would you stand please in the balcony go to either exit just come hallelujah hallelujah thank you Jesus who is this that comes out of the wilderness leaning on her beloved it's us Lord God almighty thank you for mercy not just for us as your people but

for people in this nation Lord we meet every day people who are losing their dreams their hope their families their security their sense of well being God you set us there as trees of righteousness that can offer shade and fruit and hope and strength for other people put a tenderness in our hearts of God that can only come from your Holy Spirit and guide us into victory help us to be like Paul who just broke bread and faced the impossible help us to be like Daniel who believed that God could save him help us God to be like Moses who said I'll go in spite of my weakness help us to be like Esther who said I'll go in even if I die God give us strength help us Lord God to finish in the strength of our Christ we thank you Lord we believe for freedom from oppression bondage imprisonment

captivity of the mind every force and weapon of hell we take authority over you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ Satan I rebuke you in Jesus name I rebuke your attempt I rebuke your attempts to hinder the body of Christ and to destroy the testimony of Christ and his people stand against you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by the authority he has given and the power of his victory God almighty let every prison door open here let every blinded eye see let every wounded heart be healed let the poor in spirit have the treasure of Christ open to every heart and every mind Father I thank you Lord I thank you for freedom freedom that was bought for thank you for the power to make a difference bless you for it in Jesus name Hallelujah

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