

Everything Can Change In A Heartbeat

by Carter Conlon

This sermon emphasizes the theme that 'Everything Can Change in a Heartbeat' based on Acts chapter 2. It highlights the power of prayer, spiritual awakening, and the impact of God's intervention in transforming lives and situations. The message encourages believers to seek God's empowerment, step out in faith, and be willing to pray and act boldly, trusting in God's mercy and ability to bring about change.

Scripture: Acts 2:1, James 5:16, Romans 12:2, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Ephesians 3:20

Topics: "Transformation", "Bold Faith"

Description

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Transcript

The book of Acts chapter 2, if you'll go there, the message title that God's given me this evening is Everything Can Change in a Heartbeat. Everything Can Change in a Heartbeat. Praise God.

Father, thank you, God, for your word. Oh, Jesus Christ, I love you. I thank you for your mercy.

I thank you for your grace. I thank you, God, for the covering of your blood. I thank you for the empowerment of your Holy Spirit.

I thank you, God, that you have taken us and raised us from death unto life. Thank you, God, that you've given us as your people a reason to live, something to speak, a song to sing, oh God, vision before us in our eyes and hope for eternity. Thank you, God, for destroying the power and the penalty of sin on the cross.

Lord Jesus Christ, we are forever and eternally grateful to you. We thank you, Lord, tonight that your word clearly tells us that your mercy is from everlasting to everlasting, no matter how far away we might get from you, yet you are still willing to be God. You're still willing to show us incredible mercy.

That's just who you are. That's what the cross was all about. Lord, tonight we ask God for an anointing.

I ask you, God, for a touch from heaven to speak these words, and Lord, we need an anointing to be able to hear them. Otherwise, they just become an accumulation of knowledge, but our lives become a denial of the power of God that you are so willing to give to anyone who calls out to you. Tonight, Lord Jesus Christ, help me to convey the truth that's on your heart.

Thank you, Lord, for a spiritual awakening this coming year. Thank you for mercy, a mercy moment coming to this nation. God, something you've spoken to my heart about for over 40 years now.

Oh, Jesus, you spoke the word revival to me before I even knew what it meant. God, thank you. God, thank you.

God, thank you for what you're starting to do, and we give you the praise and the glory for this, oh God, in Jesus' name, amen. Acts chapter two, a familiar portion of scripture, beginning at verse one to verse four. And when the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord and in one place.

And suddenly, there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Everything can change in a heartbeat. Let's look at the scene. In this room are people who had been raised under oppression.

They had been raised in a nation that's been occupied by a foreign power called Rome. Their religion was marginalized, and as we shared during the Christmas season, they were herded like cattle, just for the sole purpose of counting them and taxing them. They were told when to stand up, when to sit down, what to believe, what not to believe, where they could meet, where they could not meet.

All the rules for the people of God were being dictated by this dominant, godless, sneering power called Rome that had come in and conquered the Holy Land. You know, the thought must have been in people's hearts, is there anything that can ever make a difference? And if difference ever does come, will it take a generation? Will it take five years? Will it take 10 years? Will it take 15 years? I'm sure that many, many thoughts were in many, many hearts. But they were told by Jesus Christ after he had been raised from the dead to go and gather in a certain place and wait there until they were given power from God to be the full expression of what God had determined their lives to be on the earth.

The Bible says they were with one accord and in one place. I think every person in that room made the decision, I want my life to count for God and I want my life to count for good. I know that I can't do this in my own strength.

Everyone in that room knew they had failed. Most had run when they were most needed by Christ himself. They found that their hearts, even though their lips were boasting, their hearts were filled with cowardice and they knew they couldn't do this on their own.

But they had a promise from God that something was going to be given to them that was going to make a difference in the earth that they could not do in their own strength. And they came to that one place and that one place was an upper room and that one place realistically was a prayer meeting like tonight. That's where they were.

They were no different than you and I are today. We're living in a world that is being dominated by darkness. We're living in a day when evil is being called good and good is being called evil.

We're living in a day when religion is sneered at and people who believe in God are somehow seen as fallible, somehow seen as deficient in society, losers of this present enlightened age that doesn't even know if it's male, female, up, down, or what it is. They have no idea. But somehow we have become the ones with the problem.

But they came to one place, a place of prayer, which we are tonight. And if you've come into this prayer meeting online or you've come into it physically, you've made a good choice tonight because this is where God is. This is where the power of God is.

This is where the change of God comes. This is where everything's begin to change. And as we see from the scripture in a heartbeat, everything can change.

They started to pray. I don't know what their prayer was like, but if I was there, I would have been praying like this. God, I can't do this without you.

I don't know what to do. I tried and I failed. I tried to be different.

I can't. I tried to be brave and I'm a coward. I tried to speak truth and I ended up lying.

I tried to confess your name and I ended up cursing and saying I never knew you. I just know what these people were feeling like because that's what we feel like, many of us in this generation we're now living in. But they came to one place and that place was God.

You promised to be our strength. You promised that we would be your people. You promised that through us your name would be brought to glory and reputation one more time in the earth.

So here we are. We're not mighty. We're not noble.

We're not of any great report. We don't have 16 certificates on our wall. We don't have a list of great feats that we've done in your name.

But nevertheless, here we are calling out to you to do what only you can do through each of our lives. They decided to take a stand. They decided to pray even though resistance against their forward motion was significant.

There was a bloodlust in society at this time. They had just crucified their Savior and their Lord. And the people were in no mood for their followers.

And they knew it. There was a significant resistance against any forward motion in these people just as there is for you and I today. They prayed knowing that Christ had promised them power to turn the tide of resistance against his offer of salvation.

We pray tonight believing that mountains can still be moved. We pray believing that with God all things are still possible. We pray to the one who can calm the storm, still the waves in the wind, who could raise the dead four days in the tomb.

We pray to the God who has all knowledge, all power, and through the cross has clearly shown us he has all mercy for us even in our deficient condition. They believed that even one soul was worth any cost that might come their way. Don't, let's not fool ourselves for a second.

Everyone in that upper room knew that to fully come out this door and profess Christ could be a death sentence to them. We today could lose our jobs. We today might be snickered at by a sneering society.

We today might be canceled. We today might find ourselves on the losing end of some social system that wants to shut down the voice of God. But they knew that when they stepped out of that upper room they could be put to death for following a savior that the society of their time was in no mood to have resurrected in their midst.

Last Monday, we saw a type of this, I suppose, in our generation of what this may have looked like. 10 million people went to a football game and ended up in a prayer meeting across the nation. If you're not aware of it, there was a football game on Monday and which typically people from all over the country, they estimate 10 million people were watching it on television when a 24-year-old professional football player called DeMar Hamlin had a heart attack and his heart stopped beating and he fell and hit the field.

The medics and people, the medical people that were there worked on him for nine minutes before the ambulance could arrive and take him off the field to a local hospital. And in those nine minutes, when they were trying to restart his heart, they were giving him CPR, they were shocking him with the electric paddle devices. In those nine minutes, players suddenly formed a circle of both teams, arm in arm, kneeled, many of them weeping, and began to pray.

In those nine minutes, people poured out of the stands by the hundreds, if not the thousands, began to kneel in the field and began to cry out to God for this one man, this one soul. In the subsequent minutes that followed, they began to gather outside the hospitals, in the parking lots, they held candlelight vigils, they prayed, they believed that God was able to raise this young man back to life again. Even an NFL team of three commentators live on television, seen by people all over the country, they bowed.

And one of the commentators, an ex-pro football player himself, he said, he just basically, I don't remember his exact words, but he said, I'm gonna pray and if anybody here wants to join me, you're welcome to do so. And the whole panel bowed their heads on live television, seen right across the country. And here are his words.

He said, God, we come to you in these moments that we don't understand, that are hard because we believe that you're God and coming to you and praying to you has impact. We're sad, we're angry, we want answers, but some things are unanswerable. We just wanna pray, truly come to you and pray for strength for Demar, for healing for Demar, for comfort for Demar, to be with his family and to give them peace.

We believe that prayer works. If we didn't, we wouldn't ask this of you. God, I believe in prayer.

We believe in prayer. We lift up Demar Hamlin's name in your name, amen. And for those who didn't see the clip, it was amazing that the rest of the team, there was a young lady in the center, she lifted her head and said, wow, that was powerful.

And the other gentleman on the other side says, I respect you, man, for doing that. It's a type in my heart of what spiritual awakening is going to look like. In a heartbeat, everything changed.

People went to a football game. They've had the tailgate parties. They painted themselves various colors. They brought their cheering mechanisms into the stadium. They're anticipating this great game, but one heartbeat stops, one heart stops, and it changes everything in a moment of time. Suddenly, the value of one life comes into view, and that's what spiritual awakening looks like.

Couldn't they just have said, hey, there's dozens of other players. Get them off the field. We want the game to go on.

But that's not what happens in spiritual awakening. That's not what happens in the church when God comes. When God comes, every soul is valuable in the sight of God.

Every one Jesus Christ personally died for, and it starts to become a reality in every heart. When God comes, every barrier and every hesitation collapses. That's what happened that day.

Years and years and years and decades of people saying you can't pray. Even in college, players would be suspended if they went into the end zone and just pointed heavenward to give glory to God. They could suffer a suspension for it.

Years and years of all the godless theories being propagated on this society, all the rules being put into place. You can do this, you can do that. You can stand here, you can't stand there.

You can pray here, you can't pray there. You can do this, you can't do that. Suddenly are gone, all the barriers are gone, and people stream out onto the field, go to their knees and begin to call out to God.

Suddenly the NFL players don't care anymore, and every player is on his knees. People are crying openly saying God, have mercy on this young man. Spare his life.

That's what spiritual awakening looks like. And it all came in a heartbeat. And as they began to pray, oh thank God, his heart started to beat again.

His heart had stopped, folks. And as they began to pray, and as the medics worked on him, the combination, faith without works is dead, you understand, his heart began to beat again. Yes, he's still in ICU, and he still has a ways to go, but he's got life ahead of him.

And tonight I wanna pray at the end of this message, God, raise this young man up, and give him a voice for righteousness. Make him a testimony of the power of prayer in this generation. People started calling out to God, and they didn't care about the cost.

There's nobody thinking about what's the commissioner going to say? What's this law going to say? What's this atheistic group gonna say? Nobody cared anymore. Everybody came out in the field, and everybody started crying out to God. Oh, hallelujah to the Lamb of God.

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. In a heartbeat, everything changed. And that's what spiritual awakening is going to look like in our generation.

As suddenly, it says, and suddenly, there came a sound from heaven. Not gradually, not over a period of 16 to 60 days, but suddenly, suddenly, God heard the cry. Suddenly, this rushing mighty wind, which was God himself coming in the form of the Holy Spirit into that room.

Suddenly, God said, I've heard your prayer. I've heard your cry, and I've come down to deliver you. I've come down to empower you.

I've come down to take you out of your smallness, and bring you into a place that you could never go in your own strength. And it filled the whole house where they were sitting, not half of the house, not part of the house, not back of the house, not front of the house, the whole house. Well, if you were in the back, you got filled with the Holy Ghost.

If you were in the front, you got filled with the Holy Ghost. And I believe if you're in the lobby, you got filled with the Holy Ghost as well. There appeared to them divided tongues as a fire, and sat upon each of them.

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now, these other tongues were known languages. It was a festive season in Jerusalem, and people had come from all over the known world, and were worshiping God according to whatever their understanding of God was at that time.

These 120 people, empowered by the Spirit of God, came out of seclusion, and walked into the marketplace as it is. And in languages that were understandable to people of different parts of the world at that time, they began to speak about the wondrous works of God. The things that God is able to do.

And the crowd stopped and looked and say, how's it possible that these people are speaking our languages? Because they're Galileans, they don't know, they were never taught the languages that we know, but yet by the power of God, they're communicating this great works of God to us clearly in our own tongues, in our own languages. And then they said, what must we do to have a relationship with God like that? May God grant us a moment like this in our nation today. May God give us a season like this, where you and I, as the people of God, and those that are listening online, no matter your condition right now, would just start crying out to God and say, Lord, God Almighty, I want to live for you.

I want my life to count. I want my words to have power. When these people stepped out of that room, their words had power.

They weren't just an argument about God. They were actually God was speaking through them to the people all around. As the people cried out on Monday afternoon, this young man's heart started beating again.

I'm thinking of all the people in America tonight who feel dead. All the people around the world that, maybe you're listening online tonight, and you just, you feel dead. You've lost heart, may I put it that way.

We have so many prayer requests like we heard tonight. I can't take another step forward. But as the people began to cry out, his heart started to beat again.

And this is our cry for you tonight, those that are online, those that have come in with your prayer requests, those that will be listening in a few days or tomorrow in the future. We cry out for you tonight that God would raise you. God would give you hope again.

That your heart would start to beat with an understanding of God's willingness to forgive you. If you can just admit that you need forgiveness. That in your heart there would be this infusion of life to believe that you could be forgiven, that you could have a new life, that you could be given a purpose on the earth, and an assurance that when you die, that heaven will be your home.

We cry out for you tonight that God would begin to give you a voice as we ask for this young man that God would give him a voice as well. Lord, we ask for Demard tonight, God, that you would raise him up out of intensive care, Lord, and you'd give him a voice, God, that people will listen, actually, because he'd be known as the player who died in the field and the football was brought back to life. God Almighty, we ask, Lord, he's already got a heart for children.

He's already got a heart for good works, Lord. We do pray, God, that you would spare him and raise him, Lord, and use him for your glory. And God, if football is or isn't part of his future, Lord, it doesn't matter, God.

You are, you're with him, oh, God. Give him strength, give him courage. Give his family courage, oh, God.

We thank you, Lord, for those who have poured into his life and we pray, my God, that you give them comfort as well at this time. Jesus Christ, we ask, Lord, that you would just take these words that have been shared tonight and cause others to say, I'm gonna get up too. I hear you crying out for me.

I'm gonna get up and I'm gonna let my heart begin to beat for God tonight. I'm gonna go with Christ. I'm gonna trust him for the power.

I'm gonna step out of seclusion. I'm gonna go into the public marketplace and begin to speak about what he has done for me. Oh, Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, may this be a season, Lord, where we see you in revival power like we never have even believed we could in our lifetime.

Oh, God, all the years of repression in Israel, all the years, Lord, of somebody else setting the rules came to an end on the day of Pentecost. And even mighty Rome eventually bent its knee to the lordship of Christ. God, we thank you, Lord.

God, we thank you. Here we are one more time. This is our upper room.

This is our moment. This is the prayer meeting or one of the many prayer meetings that you're establishing throughout the world where saints of God are just coming together. We know what we are and we know who you are.

And we're crying out for you, for your mercy and for your power, not for ourselves, Lord. It's not about us, Lord. It's about others.

It's about people laying dead, heartless, oh, God, in this world that don't have a hope without you, Lord. Oh, God, we ask for mercy. And, Lord, we ask for the courage to leave the bleachers and come out on the field ourselves.

We ask for courage, Lord, to get on our knees in the public and pray unashamedly, Lord. We live on the side of truth. We have nothing to be ashamed of.

God almighty, God almighty, God almighty, be God almighty to us again. Jesus Christ, son of God, son of God, son of God, son of God, empower your church. Empower your people, oh, God.

Empower each one of us, oh, God, to be more than we could ever hope to be in ourselves. Oh, Jesus, I wanna thank you, God, for just the picture, Lord, of all these professional athletes, all the trainers, all the sideline people, all the people who just carry the water buckets, everybody on their knees crying out to you, and you started this young man's heart beating again. Oh, God, we give you glory, we give you glory.

God, do it a million times a million over, God, in the nation, Lord. As we begin to pray, oh, God, let people's hearts beat for you again, Lord. Jesus Christ, bring healing into families, marriages, homes, our teenagers, oh, God.

Oh, Lord, destroy the powers of darkness. Destroy the addictions and the hopelessness of this generation. God, raise up a people that will bring glory to your name.

We ask, God, one more time, one more time in this nation and many others, Lord, to be a song of glory raised to you, oh, God, a song of glory before you come and take us all home. Oh, Jesus, Son of God, we wanna sing to you like we never have before. We wanna glorify you in a way we never could without your Holy Spirit.

Jesus, we're not ashamed to call you Lord, and you're not ashamed to call us your people. So come, Holy Spirit, come, Holy Spirit, and do the work now that only you can do. We ask it in your precious name, amen.

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