

Excluded From the Land of Promise

by Carter Conlon

The promised land is a type of Christ, representing God's presence, provision, and power, and the church is called to represent God's image and character.

Duration: 1:00:15

Scripture: Exodus 17:5-6, Numbers 20:12, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Land Of Promise"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of speaking to God and believing in His power to release living water into our souls. The sermon references Numbers chapter 20, where Moses was instructed to speak to a rock to bring forth water for the thirsty people. The speaker highlights the significance of referring to the rock as 'his,' suggesting a deeper spiritual meaning. The sermon also emphasizes the power of Christ to break the bondage of sin and transform lives, emphasizing that salvation is by God's grace alone. Throughout biblical history, God's people have been continuously led to Christ, and the sermon encourages listeners to learn from Moses' example and trust in God's plan for redemption.

Transcript

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The title of my message this evening, rather, is Excluded from the Land of Promise. Excluded from the land... I never cease to be amazed at how the Holy Spirit speaks to us all day. If you were here this morning or this afternoon, I'm really the third part of the same message that the Lord has been speaking.

Teresa and I have a habit of not speaking to each other about what we are going to speak on Sunday, so that we're not influenced by what God wants to speak through. And I could have sworn this afternoon that she snuck into my office and stole my notes. But she assures me that it's not so.

Father, I stand back and I'm in awe of your goodness. I'm in awe of the fact that you choose frail humanity to work through. Lord, I thank you for the anointing of your Spirit, and I pray for deeper understanding in the days ahead of what it means to be walking in the Spirit.

God, you alone now, Holy Spirit, can open the Word and open our hearts and our minds. I ask you to drive from us preconceived notions about things, Lord, that may be not correct according as you see them. I'm asking for victory and deliverance from every weapon of darkness that's formed against every life that is in this house.

I ask you, Father, in Jesus' name, that the kingdom of hell suffer great violence in this house tonight. I ask, Lord, that walls come tumbling down, that prison doors open, blinded eyes see, wounded hearts be healed. I'm asking, God, that the fortifications of the devil that he has built against the testimony of God's people be destroyed.

And I'm asking to do it, that it be done simply but powerfully through the speaking of your Word. Lord, I know that I have no wisdom of myself. Everything I have comes from you.

I'm asking for a quickening now of my mind and body, a quickening of your Word and a quickening of our hearts. The cry of our hearts tonight is, let your kingdom come. Lord Jesus, come.

We are your church. This is your body on this side of eternity. Lord, it's no testimony of glory to you if the body be weak or emaciated or overrun by the powers of darkness.

You say that your church is to be a conquering church, a victorious church. Now, Lord, show us how. Give us understanding.

Give us hearts of faith. God, lead us now into something, Lord, that we can lay hold of, that your life might become our life. I know that's your desire.

That's what sent you to a cross. Let it become a reality now in each of our lives. And Father, I thank you, God.

I thank you, Lord, that through the frailty of this vessel, you're going to multiply the thoughts you've given to me and feed those that have come into this house. Jesus, be glorified. There's no other cry in our hearts.

There's no other cry in my heart but that you be glorified. Be glorified through your church in this last hour of time. Oh, God, have a testimony.

Have a testimony in the earth that brings honor and glory to your name. Let every knee bow now. Every tongue confess now that Jesus Christ is Lord.

God, do a work in us that will confound our enemies, oh God, that will confound the unbelievers, that will confound the powers of darkness. God, do a work in us, Lord, that the devil himself would have to step back and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord. My God, we ask for this, no less than a miraculous work.

And Father, we thank you for it in Jesus' mighty name. Excluded from the land of promise, Numbers chapter 20, verse 10. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock.

And he said unto them, Here now, you rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand with his rod, and with his rod he smote the rock twice. And water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because you believe me not to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

Excluded from the land of promise. Now this message is about Moses not being allowed by God to go into the promised land. Please don't confuse it about his entrance into heaven.

You and I have to draw the distinction tonight, or you'll not completely understand what the Holy Spirit has given me to speak on. Now I have quite often pondered over this passage of Scripture. Seems to be such a severe judgment.

Here is a man who has walked with God, he has obeyed God, he has endured the failings of the people of God for years. He has, or not years I guess at this time, but for a lengthy period, he has endured this. The failings of the people of God, they have built a golden calf, they have murmured, they have rebelled.

There has been such heartache and headache has come to this man of God, but he's stood in the gap, he's made intercession for them, even to the point where God had to tell him, leave me alone. He had such power with God. God wanted to consume the whole of the children of Israel, and Moses stood between the children of Israel and the wrath of God, to the point where God says, I have to say, leave me alone.

Amazing, can you imagine being in that close of relationship where God wants to do something and you're standing between him and his wrath. And now, nearing in a sense the end of his journey, after all the years of faithfulness and everything that he's gone through, he makes seemingly a mistake that we look at it, and considering what others have done, it's seemingly an insignificant mistake. God tells him to go and speak to the rock.

And he says, from the rock is going to come water for the congregation. And Moses was angry. Now, the New Testament tells us that he was angered at his spirit, and because of it he spoke unadvisedly with his lips.

And he went with the rod and says twice he hit the rock with his rod, twice he smote it. And even in spite of his error, water came out of the rock and gave drink to the thirsty among God's people. But God then speaks to Moses and says, because you did this thing, you are not going in to the promised land.

Now, incredible when you consider it. Now, as I said earlier, the promised land is not to be confused with his entrance into heaven. The promised land in the Old Testament was a place of promise.

This was a land that God said, I'm going to give to a people who are mine. And in this land is abundance, it's provision, it's protection. Everything you'll ever want or require to live life in a manner that honors God will be found in this land.

So, in effect, it's a land of promises. It's a type of a place that you and I are promised in Christ Jesus. You're going to go into this land, this promised place, this land of promises.

It really is what it was. It was a promised land, but it means a land of promises. In this land, it was all that God had ever promised the children of Israel, which obviously came from himself, is to be found in this

place.

The land was just land, that's all it was. It was God's presence that made it the promised land, if that makes it more clear. Without God, it was just another piece of land that would be as prone to drought and rebellion as every other piece of land on the face of the earth.

But God said, no, my presence is going to be there. And my promises are going to be there. That makes it the promised land.

And so, Moses is called to lead the people in. And because of this thing that he did, he's not allowed to go into this land of promise. Now, he still goes to heaven.

This is where it doesn't get tricky, but it's confusing for some. Matthew 17, chapter 17, verses 2 and 3 tell us, for instance, when Jesus took Peter, James, and John up into the mountain of transfiguration, Jesus appeared, and on that mountain he was transfigured before them, and there appeared with them, with Christ and Peter, James, and John, Moses and Elijah. Now, Moses was in heaven at this point.

Moses was in the paradise of God. He was not excluded from eternal life, as you and I come to define it, through faith in Jesus Christ. Now, Paul says in 1 Corinthians, chapter 10, verses 11 and 12, he says, all these things happen to them for examples, and they are written for our admonition.

The word admonition in the Greek means a correction or training of the mind. In other words, if our thinking is a little off, these things happen to them to help straighten our thinking about God and about God's purposes for His people. Upon whom, he says, the ends of the world are come.

So, these things happen to them. Now, Paul is speaking about the things that happen to the children of Israel. Now, we can include in that even the things that happen to Moses.

They're included for our instruction to bring us to an understanding of something, especially, Paul says, those upon whom the ends of the world are come. In verse 12, he says, therefore, or wherefore, let him that thinks he stands take heed, lest he fall. In other words, Paul is saying, be very careful that you don't just gloss over certain truths that are in the word of God from the Old Testament times, because the Old Testament times were all leading to Jesus Christ.

They were all a type and shadow of Jesus Christ. God has not had a duality of plans in His mind from before the foundation of the world. He had only one plan, a redeemed people that would be redeemed through a Savior.

And He knew it from even before the foundation of the world. That's why He made a covenant with His Son. Now, these things are so.

Now, what is the lesson that we can learn from this instance with Moses today? Now, first of all, throughout biblical history, all of God's people, as I said earlier, have been continuously led to Christ. In Exodus chapter 17, if you'll turn there with me very, very quickly, Exodus chapter 17, we're going to see an absolute type of the cross. Exodus 17, verses 5 and 6. The Lord said to Moses, Now go on before the people and take with thee the elders of Israel, and thy rod wherein thou smotest the river, in thine hand, and go.

And he says, Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Oreb, and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. Now, He said, the people are thirsty.

In order to satisfy that thirst, I have a plan. There is a rock in a specific place. And He says, I want you to go there, and I want you to take the elders of Israel with you, and I want you to smite the rock.

Smite the rock. And, of course, the inference is, slay it, in a sense, but you can't slay a rock. But it's a type of Christ.

If you look in Matthew chapter 27, I'll just go there because it's going to take too long for everybody to turn. But in Matthew chapter 27, and verse 41, it says, Likewise, also the chief priests, mocking Him with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others, Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him come down now from the cross, and we will believe Him.

Remember, God said to Moses, Take the elders, smite the rock. We see in Matthew chapter 27, at the cross, on Calvary's hill, were the elders of Israel. They were there, taken to that spot where the rock Jesus was smitten.

And in verse 6, in Exodus, He says, Thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it. John chapter 19, verse 34, says, One of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, that is Jesus, and forthwith there came out blood and water. These things came out of the side of Jesus.

Paul sets it to rest once and for all. In 1 Corinthians chapter 10, in verse 4, speaking of the children of Israel, he says, They all drank the same spiritual drink. Talking about when they were traveling through the wilderness, God fed them, God gave them drink, and He says, For they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.

Paul sets the record straight. 1 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 4, he says, The rock that followed them. There were physical types in the earth, but there was another rock.

It was not a physical rock that gave water, as much as water did come out of a physical place. He says, No, there was another rock, unseen at that time to the naked eye. But that rock followed them, and it was that rock which gave them drink, and the name of the rock was Jesus Christ.

Amazing when you begin to see it. Isaiah says in chapter 53, He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities.

The word transgressions is pasha. In the Hebrew text it means revolt, trespass, premeditated rejection of God's law and authority. The word iniquities means depraved actions, sin, guilt, crime, fault, which brings separation from God.

If you want to put that in a modern translation, it means, He was wounded for our revolt against God, our trespass, our premeditated rejections of God's law and authority. He was bruised for our depraved actions, that we have committed our sins, our guilt, our crime, our fault. That's what we have done which has brought separation between us and our God.

And Isaiah goes on and says, By His stripes we are healed. By the bruising, by the wounding, by the smiting of the rock we are healed. The total penalty and power of death and iniquity is broken over our

lives.

Christ was smitten. The rock was smitten. And because the rock was smitten, you and I are healed.

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. Hallelujah, hallelujah. Thanks be to God.

And just as water came out of the side of that rock, the Scripture tells us that when the soldier pierced the side of Jesus, living water came out of him. John chapter 7, verses 37 and 38, Jesus stood on the last day of the feast and He said, If any man thirst, let him come to Me. He that believes on Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

This river of life was given to us. It was opened to us through the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. It was not happenstance that sent Jesus to the cross.

It was the plan of God Almighty Himself from before the foundation of the world. It was pre-planned that Jesus should be born of a virgin, that He should walk among men, that He should die a sinless sacrifice to pay for all the depraved actions of humanity, that whoever comes to Him now could be cleansed of all of their sins. It is so significant that out of His side came blood and water.

The blood for the forgiveness of our sin. And the water is this new stream of life, this living water that is now open to us. This life of God that is ours in Christ Jesus.

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. This is the promised land, beloved. The promised land is Christ.

It's His life. Jesus says, I will come and make My abode with you. This is not just a flippant statement on the part of God.

It's not an allegory being something that is a type of a truth, but it's not really the truth. He says, no, I will literally come and live with you. I'll live inside of you.

You'll become the temple of the living God. I will be in you. And I will be your promised land.

The promise of God is all in Jesus Christ. It's not about a place. It's a person.

It's a personal relationship with God because of His sacrifice on Calvary. My heart opened to Him when He revealed His love to me, and I received Him as Savior. And the living water of God was poured not over me, but also into me and through me.

And I stepped into the promised land. Hallelujah. Hallelujah to God forever.

Oh, God. No wonder Jesus skipped and danced and said, Father, You've hidden these things from the wise and prudent in their own sight, and You've revealed them unto babes. You've revealed them to those who just know what they are and know who they need.

And they just reach out by faith and receive it. Thanks be to God. Oh, it would be to God, the church of the living God, could lay hold of these truths again in our generation.

You can be a torn-down drunk. You can be confused. You can be drug-addicted.

You can be - your mind can be saturated with pornography. You can be confused and confounded. But the moment you come to Christ, the power of the sin is broken.

The rock was smitten. Water pours out. And you stand as a living testimony of the fact that God is alive.

A miracle of grace. A miracle of God's power. Not by works of righteousness.

Not by any man of study. But by God's grace and by God's grace alone. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Peter says, according as His divine power - this is 2 Peter 1, verse 3 - according as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him that has called us. Now, I want to just back up a little bit.

His divine power. His divine power. Not our works.

Not how long we read our Bible. As important as that might be because you can't get the knowledge of God apart from reading the Scriptures. But it's not these things in themselves.

No, it's His divine power. It's His life that is in us. And according to His divine power, He's given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

In other words, everything I need is in Him. It's through the knowledge of Him. You see, this is where it comes.

It's through the knowledge of who Christ is that has called us to glory and virtue. This is the call of the Christian. It's your call.

It's mine. Glory means doksa. It means that which represents the image and character of God.

In other words, He has called me to represent His very image and character. And that which people may recognize Him for who He is through us. That's what doksa means.

That Christ said, I've called you so that I can reveal myself through you to this generation. Otherwise, I would just take you home. Otherwise, we'd have an altar call for salvation and it would be just really.

If there were no other purpose to be here, you'd give an altar call, you'd receive Christ and disappear. Gone. Off into heaven.

And God could do that. No, but He said, I've left a testimony of my love and my power. And it's called my church.

And the church is made up of those that are not wise. They're not smart. They're not educated.

They're not strong in themselves. They don't have royal lineage and royal blood. Oh, there might be a few who maybe qualify for some of these things.

But by and large, it's the foolish, the unlearned, those who were captivated, bound. We heard at three o'clock, it's the Rahab harlots that live on the wall. It just says, hey, I throw the cord down.

I'm going to trust you, God. You're going to take my house right out from under me. But I'll trust you.

Lord, you got something better for me. It's the foolish. It's the ones who finally say, hey, this world's got nothing to offer me.

Look what they've made me. Look at look at what I've become. Look at look at what they called me.

And I'm just it's those who become part of the church of Jesus Christ. And he gives them divine power. And then that divine power forms the image of Christ in them.

And we're called to virtue. And the word in the Greek means moral excellence or that which is pleasing to God. It means the excellency of God revealed in salvation, which really is his salvation.

It all just points to a church, a victorious church that becomes a testimony of the divine power of God through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit comes and changes us constantly. That's why Paul says, as we just Peter says, as we were Paul or whoever he says, as we behold him.

I'm 50 now. And it's just you have to bear with me. I should know this.

I've preached this a hundred times. It's Paul. It's all right.

As we behold him. As we behold him. We are changed.

As Peter says, it's through the knowledge of him. As we just simply behold him. It's that heart that says, Jesus, I want to just know everything about you.

I want to. It's because you're not only out there. You're not only at the right hand of God.

And you're not only omnipresent, which means that God is everywhere, but you're also in me. And so I want to know who you are. I want to understand how you work.

It's that hungry heart. And that hungry heart begins to get the revelation. The eyes begin to be opened.

And God begins to reveal himself. And religion just falls by the wayside. And all pretense falls away.

Why should I fake it when I can have the real thing? Oh, my goodness. How foolish it is to fake joy when you can have joy. Then he goes on.

Peter, he says, this is we've been called by his divine power to be these things. But then in the next verse, 2 Peter 1, 4, he says, now he tells us how this happens. He said, whereby are given to us exceeding great and precious promises.

That by these you might be partakers of the divine nature. Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And the word lust in the Greek means the diseased condition of our soul.

That is our soul without God. So God has called us. And he's given us power.

And he's called us to represent him on the earth. By allowing his life to be lived through us. And he's given us great promises.

That by these promises, believing these promises, we reach out by faithfully hold of them. And we become partakers of the divine life of God. Amazing.

That by laying hold of the promises, we escape the diseased condition of our soul. We escape the flesh by simply laying hold of the promises of God. Every promise of God is yea and amen.

He cannot lie to me. He cannot lie to you. If he says it's yours, it's yours.

You reach out by faith and say, God, make this a reality. And if the devil is oppressing you in that area of your life, say, God, make it a double reality. That I can stick it right in the devil's face for the rest of my life.

If the devil is telling me that I'll never amount to anything, make me something, oh God, that hell has to reckon with. Be glorified in my life. Be glorified through my life.

You see, it's simple. For the New Testament Christian, the promised land is a place where Christ speaks, we believe, and he performs it. That's the New Testament.

That's the new covenant. Christ speaks. It's for the honest heart, obviously.

I don't have to go there because I think you know that. It's not for the foolish who just play games with God. It's for the honest heart that comes in and he speaks, we believe, he performs.

You follow Old Testament Israel, that's all he ever wanted from his people. That you would just simply believe. Remember, he said to Moses in exasperation, he said, oh, how long will it be before these people believe me? For all the signs and wonders he did still, there were so many that wouldn't believe him.

In Exodus chapter 17 again, going back to the beginning, in Exodus again, chapter 17, we see the progression. In verses 5 and 6, Moses was told to take the rod. He was told to smite the rock and out of the rock would come water that the people may drink.

Now, that is a complete, absolute type of Jesus Christ. This was leading to Christ. And Paul, remember I told you, concludes it by saying it was Christ.

And removes all doubt about this particular illustration. Now, from this place, immediately the children of Israel go into battle. Immediately.

In verse 8 it says, then came Amalek and fought with Israel in Rephidim. Right after the smiting of the rock, right after this miracle of strength, now comes a battle. And Moses said to Joshua, choose out men and go and fight with Amalek.

And tomorrow I'll stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in my hand. And Joshua did as Moses had said to him and fought with Amalek. And Moses and Aaron and Hur went up to the top of the hill.

And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed. When he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. You see, this is the type of all that opposes the Christian.

When you've come to Christ, you've received Him as your Lord and Savior. When the life of God has now become your life, you better believe the enemy is going to come against you with everything he's got now. Because the devil himself knows what happens when even one person rises up and finally realizes what it means to be saved.

And have the power of God upon them. The devil's been around a long time. He's lived through revivals.

He's seen the Moody's and the Wesley's of history. He knows what can happen when one insignificant person somewhere just lays hold of this and says, Wow, I see who I am in God. I see who God is in me.

I begin to realize something and stands up and begins to proclaim the message of Jesus Christ again. The devil comes out and fights. And Moses lifts up his hands.

It's such an absolute type of faith. It's not lifted up the sword. He just lifted up his hands to God.

And as he simply believed him, Israel prevailed. But when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. And Moses' hands were heavy.

And they took a stone and put it under him. And he sat on it. And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side and the one on the other.

And his hands were steady till the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. Now the Lord said to Moses, He said, Now God said, Moses, write this down and rehearse it in Joshua's ears.

Because the enemies are going to always oppose you from generation to generation. Now Joshua was not going to live forever. And so it was not just for Joshua.

It even applies to you and I today. The enemies of God will always oppose those who are coming to life in Christ. Fears without, Paul says, fighting within, demonic powers, unsundered tongues, every weapon the devil can find and fashion, he will send against you to stop you from believing and understanding that you have now the life of God inside of you.

Enemies will oppose, but faith will win the battle. Faith will always win it. When you keep your hands raised to God, that's what the whole thing was about.

I can see Moses telling Joshua, Amalek came in like a flood. We have just finished drinking the water, experienced this wonderful miracle of the smitten rock. And then the enemy, as the people were strengthened by this seeming living water that came out of the rock, the enemy came in like a flood to devour that which God was doing among his people.

But Joshua stood and I raised my hands to heaven. And when I raised my hands to heaven, praising God and trusting God for everything he'd ever spoken into my heart, Israel prevailed. When I let down my hands and began to look at the circumstances, Amalek began to prevail.

And God told me, this is the way it's going to be from generation to generation, Joshua. It will never change. When God finds a man or a woman or a people who are simply willing to raise their hands in faith, the enemies of righteousness will have to flee.

They will be overpowered. They'll be overpowered by the praising heart, by that trusting heart and that praising voice. Now in Numbers chapter 20, where we started this evening, one more time the people were thirsty.

In chapter 20 and verse 8 again, the Lord told Aaron and Moses again, go to the rock. And he said to them, speak to the rock this time. He said, in verse 8, and speak ye to the rock before their eyes, and it shall give forth his water.

I find that very interesting, the word his in there. You normally don't refer to a rock as he. The rock shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock, and so shalt thou give the congregation and their beasts drink.

And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, and he gathered the congregation together and said, here now you rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock? Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he

smote the rock twice. And the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake to Moses and to Aaron and said, because you believe me not to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.

And you know, I have preached this verse several times, I guess, over the years, and I've preached it from different angles, different perspectives. And I don't suppose any of them are absolutely incorrect. But there's something that I feel that God has shown me in this verse of Scripture lately.

And no matter what translation you look at, it says the same thing. And really in verse 12, the Lord spoke to Moses, and he said to him, because you believe me not. And really the root of Moses' behavior was unbelief.

At that very moment, in the character and the integrity of God. In the New Living Testament, this is the way it reads. He says, because you did not trust me enough to demonstrate my holiness to the people of Israel, you will not lead them into the land that I am giving them.

Now beloved, in this there's a lesson for every preacher, every parent, every leader, every Christian. Here's the lesson. The lesson is just simply this.

You did not believe that I would be good to the people in spite of their failure. You did not believe in my integrity. The rock was smitten once.

And I told you now that you're not to smite it again. You're to speak to the rock this time. The writer of the book of Hebrews tells the Jewish Christians that he was writing to.

He said, I'm going to paraphrase this, but he said, if you've been made a partaker of the things of God, and you've tasted of his power and the good world to come, and he said, if you fall away, it's impossible to renew you to repentance. He said, because you've crucified Christ afresh, and you've put him to an open shame. And you see, the Jewish Christians, their problem was not about totally rejecting Jesus, but there was a deep abiding mistrust in the integrity of the message that God had given through his son.

The integrity of the message is simply that it is Christ's sacrifice is sufficient to pay the price, once and for all, for all of our sins. That's the integrity of God. To doubt that is to doubt the integrity of God.

God said, if you come to me, if you have an honest heart. Now, I want you to understand that what I'm about to say has absolutely no bearing to the hypocrite, to the religious game player that's just content to play their little game and come in the house of God. It has no bearing for you whatsoever.

This message is for the honest person that can honestly say, God, I have trusted in Christ for my salvation. I struggle, yes, I battle, and Amalek is against me on every side, trying to crush and destroy the testimony of God in my life. Now, this message is for you.

The Hebrew Christians were always in danger of pulling back and not believing that the sacrifice of Christ was sufficient to pay the price for their sins. It would always become Jesus and some duty we had to do. Something I had to perform.

I must be struggling because I'm not doing this enough. I'm not going there enough. I'm not performing this enough.

And so, it would be Christ and something else. There was an unbelief in the heart. And really, the root of performance to gain acceptance with God is a deep root of unbelief in the integrity of the character of God.

It's as if we say, well, yes, we realize that Christ was smitten for my sins. And I have believed that He paid the price for my sins. But then there's a drawing back.

There's a drawing back in the heart that says, somehow I just don't believe that this time I'm forgiven. And folks, I want to tell you something. If God marked your iniquity, who could stand? There's something that needs to be understood in the heart of the sincere Christian.

God does not mark your sin against you. Yes, we should come and we should say, Lord, I'm sorry for this attitude of heart or this particular action. Because it cuts us out of an understanding of that living relationship He wants to have with His church.

But it does not cut you off from God. Unbelief is the only thing that can cut you out of this place of promise. There is a land of promise, but it requires a heart of faith in God.

The integrity of God. God, I've had the worst day of my life. I've had the worst week of my existence.

But You are still confessing my name before the throne of Your Father. I am still the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. If I die in the middle of the worst week of my life, I am still going to heaven for all of eternity.

That's why Paul says, who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who can charge you? Who can stand against you? Who can condemn you if God has justified you through Jesus Christ? I am in Christ. If you've trusted in Him, you are in Christ. You are seated with Him, Paul says in Ephesians, at the right hand of the Father.

Seated together, the Bible says, with Him in heavenly places. That's how I know I'm more than a conqueror tonight. Because you cannot separate the head from the body.

I am the body. He is the head. He sits at the right hand of God.

I am in Him. He is in me. I have to walk through fire.

I have to walk through flood. I have to fight the amulets of this generation. But I'm already more than a conqueror.

I'm already seated at the right hand of God. The Bible calls that my standing. But I live here.

My standing is here. But I live here. This is my state.

And you see, that's why the Holy Spirit comes, the Spirit of Truth, to lead us into Christ. It's by the knowledge of Him, Peter said, that we become partakers of His nature. I am in Christ.

I am righteous. But I live here on planet Earth with all my struggles and enemies and fears and failings and weaknesses. This is where I am.

But the Holy Spirit now... See, you have the Father in heaven. You have the Son at the right hand. I am in the Son.

The Holy Spirit now has said, Who is the Spirit of Christ? Really, it's all Christ. And the Holy Spirit comes and He indwells me. All my life, He is lifting my state in line with my standing.

Paul says, I've not attained, but I press on to the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. He's not talking about His salvation. He's talking about what God had destined Him to be in Christ.

He says, I've not attained it. I'm pressing on. I want to lay hold of it.

It's something of God. It was not His salvation. He based His very life in existence.

Every argument Paul had in his heart was against those who were trying to preach Christ and something else for salvation. He said, no, it's Christ. It's Christ alone.

The rock was smitten once. He need not ever be smitten again. All my life I've been lifted.

Changed. And when I fail, I have an advocate with the Father. Can you see it? Do you see it? The devil can't condemn you then if you see it because we're not presenting ourselves before the throne of God.

I'm not coming to church and presenting how good my week was. It's got nothing to do with me. It's all about the rock that was smitten by God for me.

He was wounded for my transgressions. He was bruised for my iniquities. I'd gone astray and the Lord laid on Him all of my iniquity.

And by His stripes I am healed. I'm healed. The power of sin is broken.

Death has no longer any victory. The grave has no sting. It's over.

It's finished. You see what Moses did? He smote the rock again. And it's the person who just doesn't believe that the sacrifice of Christ once and for all was sufficient to cover your sins.

It's the person who doesn't believe that He will provide as much of Himself as we need or will ever require. It's the person who just simply doesn't believe that God will be merciful when we fail Him. Or that God has already decided to be merciful.

Paul says it clearly in Romans 6. This is not a license to be light with God. If anything, it should produce a desire to be holy, to glorify God. You see, God said to Moses, because you didn't believe Me, you can't go in to the land of promise.

Remember at the beginning I said, don't confuse this with heaven. There are many, many Christians who will go to heaven, but all their life will be outside of this miraculous life that God wants to give us in Christ. Standing at the border forever, looking in, but never a partaker of the life.

Studying, but never coming to this intimate knowledge of what they're learning. Beholding Him, but He somehow just can't get a hold of them. And I do believe that many will end up in heaven, but they will not have accomplished, they'll not have lived in the promised land on this side of eternity.

So many spend their lives in an endless cycle of sin and confess. Sin, confess. Sin, confess.

And that becomes the whole relationship with God. The lamb tucked under their arm, coming into the temple one more week, smite the lamb. Go away feeling good for half an hour, and then sin again, grab

another lamb, come back into the temple.

Their whole Christian experience is sin, confess. Sin, confess. Always trembling about this invisible little line that they're going to cross one day, and be doomed and damned forever from the presence of God.

Unbelief in the integrity of God. It's rank unbelief in the character of God. And it cost Moses the promised land.

Then Paul said, these are examples for us. You see, God had to set the issue straight so we would understand how important this is. People come into the house and they smite and re-smite the rock.

They doubt that the price was paid once and for all. The devil, their hands are down. Amalek is prevailing.

Swallowed one more time by all of the iniquity that's all around within and without. Come back in and, oh, I guess I'm just not doing something that I should be doing. I've got to read my Bible a little more.

That's a good thing, but that will not make you free. You see, it's belief in what you're reading that sets you free. Or you run out and you get one of these formulas from one of these churches and they tell you, just say this, and so you run around and just quoting all the Scripture.

It's so foolish, folks. You see, the heart that has come into the promised land is at rest. He's absolutely at rest.

He can sleep in the storm in the back of the boat. You see, because he was going to the cross. There was no problem.

I'm not going to drown. I'm going to the cross. I know what my Father sent me to do so I can just sleep in the storm.

And the soul that trusts God is at rest. That's why at the end he could say, into thy hands I commit my spirit. You see, the command now is the same as in Moses' day.

The rock was smitten, but he says, now, if you're thirsty, speak to the rock. Speak to the rock. If you're being oppressed by your enemies, speak to the rock.

You don't have to smite it again. You don't have to live on this treadmill of feeling like a failure in the kingdom of God. Just speak to the rock.

Jesus said it this way. He said, I say to you, ask, and it shall be given you. Seek, you shall find.

Knock, and it shall be opened. Everyone that asks, receives. And everyone that seeks, finds.

And him that knocks, it shall be opened. If a son will ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? If he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If he shall ask for an egg, will he give him a scorpion? He said, if you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him? He said, if you have a need, ask. If you're weak in an area of your life, speak to the rock.

It's as simple as that. That's why he told Moses, people that just keep doing this are not going to go into the land of promise. You have to not doubt the integrity of what I have accomplished for you two thousand years ago in Calvary.

You must not doubt the integrity of God. If you have a need, ask. Speak to the rock.

Come to an altar somewhere, whether it's at home, a church, it doesn't matter where it is. Jesus, You said, if any man believes, he will never thirst. I thirst.

God, fill my belly with another river of living water. Lord, You said, my enemies would never triumph over me. God, I'm in the battle of my life.

I'm asking You now, living Christ, I'm asking You now to give me the Holy Spirit. Empower me in this area of my life. Raise me up out of this area of death.

For I believe that sin has no more dominion over me. God, raise me and make my life a testimony in this area. Oh, Jesus, let the devil himself have to stand up and take notice when he sees what You do through me.

He said, if You know how to give good things, how much more will Your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit? And that really just means the enabling power of God. How much more will He enable you if you have a need? Speak to the rock. Amazing.

Speak to the rock. You're backslidden. Speak to the rock.

You're struggling in your mind. Speak to the rock. You're oppressed by your enemies.

Speak to the rock. He says, I've already given you a promise. You don't have to remind God.

You just have to remind yourself that God's already spoken it. Come by faith. You're struggling.

You're failing in an area of your life. You can't seem to get the victory. Speak to the rock.

Get off the sin-confess cycle. Stand by faith. And say, God, I'm justified.

I'm the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. That has to be the truth. It has to be.

God, You've not rescinded it because I have a struggle in my life. This is the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. O Jesus, come now in the power of the Holy Ghost and make my victory a reality.

Give me victory over my enemies, O God, that I may praise You, that my life may be a glory to Your name. You've given me promises, and by these, I am to be a partaker of Your divine life. O God, O God.

Thank You. Hallelujah. That, beloved, is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

That is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Hallelujah. Praise God.

If you have never come to Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, you can come to Him tonight, and He will forgive you. He paid the price for all the sin that you've ever committed. The price was paid.

You see, many people don't come to Christ because they say, well, it's hopeless. I'll never get free. No, you see, it works the other way around.

Jesus said, I'll forgive you first, and then I'll set you free. See, the devil always wants people to believe that, oh, you've got to be free before you can come to Christ. That's the devil's theology.

Theology of Christ is, you come to me just as you are. Just as you are. I will loose you and let you go.

And there's others tonight who just need victory over the indwelling power of sin. You are struggling. The devil's on your doorstep, and your hands are getting weary.

Tonight, my challenge to you is speak to the rock. It so delights the heart of God when he has a people who just trust him, even in their worst struggle, who sit in this house and say, oh, if you only knew. Well, God already knew.

He knew before you got here what you're going through. And he's saying to you, if you only knew. If you only knew the victory that could be yours tonight.

If you only knew the power that I would give you. If you would come, accept my sacrifice as complete to break the backbone, the record in the backbone of sin, and you would just speak to me. We'll meet face to face now.

And I will fight for you. And you will know that I am God. Hallelujah.

Let's stand. The Holy Spirit drawing you tonight for salvation, victory, freedom. Balcony, you can go to either exit.

Education annex, make your way over here. The ushers will help you to get here. Main sanctuary, slip out of where you are.

Make your way to the altar. We're going to pray a prayer of victory tonight. Just absolute victory in Christ.

I want the people who are struggling tonight. You are really struggling. You're struggling with the reality that Jesus Christ paid the price for your sins.

You're struggling with that whole notion. Can God really receive me? Can He really keep me? Can He really forgive me? Is it really that good? You come. You come.

And those who are lost in your sin. Folks, don't go to hell when you have an opportunity to receive Christ. There is a hell.

The hell is the absence of God and everything that entails. Those who refuse Christ are going there. If you don't receive Christ, you are going there.

You're playing Russian roulette with eternity right now if you've not received Him, and yet you're sitting here and you're hearing about the depth of His love for you. I want to encourage you to slip out. You make your way here.

God holds His hands out to you. They're nail scarred. It says, I paid the price for your sin.

I took it all on myself that I might forgive you. Give you a new life. A new life.

Amazing. When it finally gets into your spirit, you have a new life. A life that is indwelt by the power of God.

That changes every day. Morning by morning, the Scripture says that you'll see new mercies as God continuously begins to work in your life. If you are here tonight and you're without Christ as your Savior, I've stepped into this pulpit tonight to fight for your soul.

But I'm only a representative of one 2,000 years ago that came into this world to fight for your soul. And He fought for you down to the last drop of blood. The last drop of water that was in His body.

There's no other way that your sin could have been paid for. And there's no way He could have more fervently showed you the depth of His love for you. If you believe that He took your place on that cross and received His sacrifice as the full payment of your sins, trusting that He will save you, the Bible says tonight the devil's legal claim over your life for all of eternity will be broken.

His lawful right to guide and govern and attack you will be demolished. And the new life of God, the new law of life in Christ will become yours. And the very life of God will come into you.

And that will be the evidence that your trust has not been in vain. 1978 is when I received Christ as my Savior. And my prayer was simply, God, if this is true, I want this with all of my heart.

And He proved it to me because His life came, saved me, but His life became my life and made me into another man. Tonight, I'm going to ask you unashamedly, why should you be ashamed? God holds His hand out and offers you eternal life. There's not something to be done in the closet, bowing our heads and closing our eyes as if we're ashamed of the living God.

He died on a hill publicly for you. He died for all to see. And it's not been a hidden thing.

He was wounded, bruised, beyond recognition. He was naked as far as that generation was concerned and put to open ridicule. He did it for you.

And if He did that for you, you can make a public declaration of receiving Him. I'm going to ask unashamedly tonight for those who want to receive Jesus Christ for the first time as Lord and Savior, it doesn't matter what you've done, He will forgive you. And the forgiveness is once and for all.

He forgives your sin. He will convince you and convict you when you are walking in a wrong way, but if you have an honest heart, He will forgive you tonight. Your name will be in a book called the Lamb's Book of Life in Heaven.

The price is paid for all the wrong you've done. God will receive you to Himself tonight. This is more sure than the air that we breathe.

Tonight if you want to receive Him for the first time as your Lord and Savior, would you raise your hand now with me? All over, balcony. Go ahead, raise it high. You want to receive Him as your Savior, raise your hand up high.

Don't be ashamed tonight. All over, raise your hand up. Praise God.

Hallelujah. I'm going to lead you in a prayer and if you believe this tonight, you will be saved. Pray with me now.

Those who raised their hands, those who want to pray with them, Lord Jesus, I am a sinner. I have willfully and morally violated the laws of God. I deserve to be punished, sent to hell for eternity.

But you so loved me that you became a man, took the weight of my sin and my punishment on yourself. And Jesus, you paid the full price for all of my sin. I'm sorry for living in sin.

I'm sorry that my sin sent you to a cross. Today, I make the decision to want to live a different life, a life that is pleasing to God. Jesus, I reach out my heart and tonight I receive your offer of forgiveness.

I believe that you are the Son of God. You died for my sins. You were raised from the dead as living proof that my trust in you tonight is not in vain.

At this very moment, you have forgiven me and you have promised me new life here and for all eternity. For this, Jesus, I am forever grateful. Hallelujah! Thank you for saving me.

Thank you for saving me. Saved! Saved! Saved by the blood of Jesus Christ! Saved! Hallelujah! Now, for those who have received Christ, we have a new believer's class every Friday night. Make sure you get there at seven o'clock.

There's probably a hundred people or so there. And you can ask questions. We'll give you a Bible.

We'll help get you started. You're never asked to join anything at any time. Attendance at times for church is always voluntary.

Not for the rest who've come. The word to you tonight is speak to the rock. So, it would be wrong for me to lead you in this.

You've got to do it yourself. I'm going to ask the choir to just sing us a nice song. Can you sing us some kind of nice faith-building song? And while they sing, I want you to speak to the rock.

Would you do that? I want you to tell Jesus, with a heart of faith, what you need. What you want Him to do. Just tell Him.

Tell Him, this is what I need. Here's where I'm fighting. Here's where I'm struggling.

Here's where I'm weak. Jesus, and quote, if you know a promise, say, here's what your word says. I'm speaking to the rock.

And God, I'm believing that you're going to release living water into my soul tonight. He's going to do it for you. He's going to do it.

Talk to Him now. Talk to Him. Speak to Him tonight.

Tell Him. Tell Him. Don't wait.

Tell Him. I know, I know, He's my... This is the conclusion of the message.

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