

From Captive to Captain

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the transformative journey from being spiritually captive to becoming a leader through faith in Christ.

Duration: 41:58

Scripture: Ephesians 1:9

Topics: "Bondage"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by expressing gratitude for the anointing of the Holy Spirit and asks God to speak deeply into the hearts of the listeners. He emphasizes that our faith should not rely on human wisdom but on the power of God. The speaker then turns to the book of Ephesians and reads from chapter one, highlighting the apostle Paul's passion for the souls of men. Paul's proper embracing of Christ led to a revelation that few others had, and the speaker encourages the audience to seek a deeper understanding of their purpose in their Christian journey.

Transcript

From captive to captain. Father, I thank you, God, with all my heart, for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Lord, I'm asking you today, God, to speak something so deep into the hearts of the people that are gathered here, deeper than can be spoken by the reasoning of man.

Paul said that our faith is not to rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Lord, your ways are not our ways, and your thoughts are not our thoughts. And when we try to reason this Christian journey with the natural mind, we always come out with a lack of understanding.

God, you have to help us to understand now. You've got to take us into some things that are so deep that only you can reveal them to the heart. Lord, show every man, every woman, the purpose for this journey.

I thank you for it with all my heart, in Jesus' name. If you'll turn to the book of Ephesians, chapter 1, please. Ephesians, chapter 1. I'm going to read to you the words of a man who is God-gripped for the souls of men.

I suppose that's what defined the life of the apostle Paul above others, not all others, but some others that were his contemporaries. There are always people who will embrace Christ for what they can get from Christ. And perhaps we're living in a generation where that seems to be abounding.

But Paul had to embrace Christ for another reason. He embraced Jesus Christ because of the passion for God for the souls of men. And because of this proper embracing of Christ, there was this revelation given to him that I think very few around him had.

Ephesians 1, 17. Paul says to the church of Ephesus. Now, keep in mind, in Revelation, this is the church that was testing and proving and trying apostles.

And some they esteemed to be true and others to be liars. They were working and laboring and doing everything in the name of Christ. And a lot of commendable things.

But they were also a church that was in danger of losing something. Losing this passionate love for the Savior that gave them that witness of his life in the first place. This is what Paul says in verse 17.

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, power, and might, and dominion, every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And he's put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that fills all in all. Oh, there is so much in these verses of Scripture.

Do you realize that no matter what you're going through, that you have within your life, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, if you've been born again by the Spirit of God, you have the one who reigns over every name that is named. I'm talking about depression, despair, darkness, suicide, a sense of hopelessness, everything, every name that can be named from the minds of men. Jesus Christ has dominion over this.

You have victory over this resident within you if you know him as your Savior. As I said earlier, Paul was God-gripped for the souls of men. And it's in this being gripped by God that he got this revelation.

He was on a journey that doesn't make sense to the natural mind. Remember, Paul himself spoke these words. The preaching of the cross, or that journey of the cross is foolishness to those that are perishing.

He said elsewhere, the natural mind, the natural man, the man or woman who is governed by what they can see and think and feel don't understand the things of the Spirit because they are spiritually discerned. Paul allowed himself to be carried along on a journey. And his particular journey he's carried largely by the spiritual ignorance of the society around him.

It's an entire society that is in effect moving far, far away from the heart of God. And Paul, rather than ignore that society and ignore the peril it was in, chooses to follow the pathway that God has for his life. Acts 27, 13 says when the wind blew softly, it carried them along.

And Paul went along with this journey. We're living in a society today where men have been led, as it is, by whatever wind seems the softest, away they go. Even tragically in some measure in the house of the Lord.

And Paul allowed himself to go on this journey. He could have opted out. He could have said at any time I'm not getting on this ship.

He knew this ship was headed for disaster, folks. He knew it before he got on it. He could have used his former influence and authority.

He could have sent a note to somebody perhaps in government with a Sanhedrin. He was a Roman citizen. We know that from the Scriptures.

He could have used that authority. He could have said, I've changed my mind. I don't want to, I don't feel like appealing to anybody in government.

I'm not going on this journey. But he chose for the sake of Christ, for the sake of the will of God that was on his life. He chose to walk this journey and to finish his course trusting in his heart.

Firstly, that I can do all things through Christ. And folks, that's where you learn you can do all things through Christ. It's in the storm.

It's where you and I are led into places where the natural abilities that we have cannot sustain us. Our natural love, our natural ability, our natural wisdom cannot sustain us. This is a storm that's too big.

It's a journey that's too hard. It's something that has to come from God. That's why even Elijah had to be spoken to by a messenger from the Lord that said, Arise and eat.

This journey is too great for you. We've got to now eat of some truth because the journey ahead of us is too great for us. You and I will not make it through this journey that we're going to have to face if we have not eaten of the understanding of why God would allow his people to go through some of the difficult places we are going through and in great measure many of you are going to have to go through even more difficult times.

We have a choice. We can stay on the journey or we can opt out. Elijah had a young protege called Elisha and Elijah said to him one day, I'm going on a journey.

And he said, Elisha, you're free to come along on this journey or you're free to stay where you are. And Elijah, many believe and I agree, is a Christ type. It's a type, if you follow Elijah's life in a sense you're going to see and measure the Messiah or you could say it's the type of another generation or a godly man, a godly woman who has known the anointing of God and is taking this final step of the journey and as it is passing on the baton to somebody who's coming after.

And there are many who have gone before. Paul pleaded with the Corinthian church. He said, you're in a time now where you've garnered many teachers to yourself.

He said, and they're teaching you all kinds of things but they're not bringing you into a place where you're going to know the power of God. He said, you're now resting on the wisdom of man. But Paul said, I didn't come to you in the wisdom of man.

I stood before you with fear and trembling and I preached to you and Paul said, even though my preaching was not as eloquent as others and I didn't have this ability to mesmerize you with fables and men's wisdom. He said, when I preached to you there was an invisible hand that engraved something of God in your heart and he said, Corinthians, you know this. You know this.

You were brought into the kingdom of God because I have preached to you in the power of God and I have not neglected the journey that God has called me to. Elijah said to Elijah, as you and I need to say to

the Lord today, God, I'm not leaving this journey. I'm not opting out.

I'm not going to look for the easy way. Surely, there's got to be a purpose in this. Where do you think that Paul got the learning that all things work together for good to those that love God and are called according to his purpose? He got it because he went on a journey that doesn't make sense to the natural mind.

And even at the end of his journey, imprisoned and having good, well-meaning people along the way trying to stop him from going the full course of what God had prescribed for his life. And these words that they, the inference they were making, even Agabus in the book of Acts, a prophet who put on a demonstration of captivity and said, Paul, this is what's going to happen to you if you carry on in this journey. And Paul said, what, are you trying to break my heart? Are you trying to turn me from what God has for my life? I'm willing not only to die in Jerusalem, but I'm going there to testify of Christ and I'm going to go wherever God calls me.

And Paul had this inner assurance in his heart that God is in full control of my life and everything he allows to happen to me is for a purpose, it's for a divine reason that I may understand and I may not understand on this side of eternity. When he was imprisoned at the end of his life and all he had was a few guests allowed in to see him. I can see people maybe that had seen Paul on this journey and they, along the way and they say, poor Paul, we tried to warn him, but here he is now captivated and robed and there he is sitting in jail with soldiers on either side and he's allowed only a few guests.

Think of what he could have done had he just listened to us and not gone to this level, not gone to this extreme, not embraced this hardship in his life. And I can see Paul sitting there, the Holy Spirit come upon him and say, well, I can't go to Corinth now and I can't talk to Timothy and perhaps Ephesus could use some words of encouragement. Can you give me a parchment, please, and a quill? And he begins to write.

How could he know that a divine hand was over his hand? That he was writing a lot and most actually of what we know to be our New Testament today that he was writing into your life and writing into my life. There are purposes of suffering that you and I know so very little of today. Elijah said to Elisha, you're free to stay where you are, you're free to come with me.

So many will get to the throne of grace one day only to find out what we could have been, what God could have done through our lives had we not chosen to opt out of the journey. They went to Bethel together and Bethel speaks to me of the place of the historians, because there were prophets, young prophets in Bethel. I'm sure they could tell you that the man that God chose to bless, the man who wanted the blessing, Jacob.

We can show you where we feel he laid his head on a stone. We can show you the ladder that he saw in a vision that extended to heaven. They probably figured out how many rungs were on the ladder.

They probably measured the distance that he was looking at. They could tell you how many angels were coming down and the messages perhaps tucked under their arms for not only Jacob but for humankind. I'm being a bit facetious, but they study and invent and create a great big picture about this journey.

But you see, Jacob was on the journey to the blessing of God. So they can tell you in Bethel all about the journey. Oh, they're incredible scholars.

But here goes a man right by their gates who's on the journey. He's following Elijah, a man who's truly in touch with heaven. Elijah's right on the coattails and they get word that they're passing by the city.

So they come running out of the city and they run up to him and say, do you not know that you're going to lose your master this day? In other words, you're on this journey, but we're not willing to undertake this journey with you because this journey is going to result in loss. There's going to be hardship on this journey. Your heart's going to be broken on this journey.

And so they can study it. And they can historically know it. But they won't take it.

They won't undertake the journey. And there are many, many, many, many people today and throughout history who will spend a lot of time in the scriptures and they will study and actually see it and they can tell you about it but they won't take the journey. They're historians in a sense in the house of the Lord, but they will not go to where the blessing of God really is.

And after this, they pass by Jericho. And Jericho, of course, is a place where there's former victory. It speaks to me of people who camp around what God did back in 1964 in your life.

And if asked for a testimony, they'll stand up and say, back in 64, back in 71, I remember. And it all died there. It's a story.

It's a testimony. And it may be wonderful, but folks, we're not called to camp there. We're not called to build a wall around and experience and stay there.

It's the type of people who perhaps just, they feel they've arrived far enough and they build a nice big wall around their church. And they say, well, we have a lot of good things here. We have a history here.

We have a testimony here. Let's just build a wall around it. Let's just camp right here.

And stay right here. It's the type of Laodicea, for example, in the book of Revelation. When Jesus came to a church, and he called it a church, he said to the angel of the church of Laodicea, and he knocked on the door.

They had a nice big wall built around this church. And they said, we are wealthy. We are increased in goods.

And we have need of nothing. Oh, we got a big parking lot. We got a nice building.

The bills are paid. We've got it all together. We can sing wonderful songs.

And here's Jesus on the outside knocking, trying to get in. Trying to bring them to something deeper than they've understood. But it's doubtful that they'll open the door and let him come in.

More prophets from Jericho come out, and they say to Elisha again the same words. Do you not know that on this journey, you're going to lose your master? Do you not know that there's going to be lost? Do you not know there's going to be heartache? I can't tell you the number of people who don't make the journey. God calls them, but they won't go.

They'll go to an altar, or they'll go into their Bibles, and there's a stirring. The very purpose for which they were created, the Holy Spirit brings to the forefront. But they won't make the journey.

They won't go. They'll choose to stay and study, or they'll camp around and experience, or a present as they see it, reality, and say, this is enough. We've gone farther than others, perhaps, so we don't need to go any farther.

They kept on this journey, and they finally came to Jordan. And it says when they came to Jordan, which typifies dying to oneself, to live again in Christ. The Bible says that 50 of the students of the prophets came and far off viewed this.

It's those who are willing to look at, they're willing to read the biographies of others, they're willing to examine the life of the Apostle Paul, but they're not willing to go there. So they stand quite back. They don't want it to be evident that they're not willing to cross over into the life of God through Christ.

And so they stand quite far off just to make it look like we're on the journey, we're not quite there yet. And they watch Elisha and Elijah. Elijah parts the waters of death as it is and goes over.

Elisha goes with him. And when Elisha is lifted up into the air, the mantle falls from him to Elisha. Elisha, it's a type of Christ when he was raised from the dead and he rose up into heaven, the Holy Spirit a short time later descended on the day of Pentecost and the mantle was picked up on the day of Pentecost.

This mantle of God's life, this mantle of God's grace, this mantle of Christ's sufferings was picked up by the original 120 that were in the upper room. He comes back over the Jordan only to face ridicule and it's a good sign when a backslidden society begins to ridicule you because Jesus himself said it's evidence that my life is in you. Immediately he walks over, they see the Jordan part and he runs into a youth group as it is that says, go up you old bald head, go up you old bald head.

In other words, if you've got the power of God on you now, let's see you go up like Elijah just went up. God looked after this mockery, it's his problem to look after these things. But you see, this is the man who went back into Jericho and in Jericho were these prophets who wouldn't make the journey.

And they said to Elijah, they said, as you can see, the city is pleasant. This is a nice place to dwell. But they said the water is barren and the water is not and the ground is barren.

And historians say that there was something in the water that was causing trees to bear fruit but the fruit would be cast off the tree before anybody could be nourished by it. Others take it a step further and say there was an evidence of miscarrying wombs as well and they blamed it on the water in that particular society. Elijah now after this journey with Elijah is the man who's able to come into this place where people are brought to hope but they can never bring forth.

Oh folks, how much of that goes around? How much of what is spoken in God's name are just empty promises in our generation? There's no weight in them and people are made to hope but before anybody can eat of that hope it falls to the ground. They're made to feel like new life is within them but before the new life comes forth it dies in the womb. And finally this man who's gone on this journey like the apostle Paul is able to come in and he brings a new vessel and there's salt in the vessel and that salt brings not only healing but it brings thirst.

Oh if you are truly in Christ there's got to be a thirst created in people's lives through you. There's something in us who know God that creates a thirst. If my preaching this morning is not creating a thirst for something deeper of God then I have missed the mark then and I need to go back and get back on the journey again because it's got to be creating a thirst in you for something of God if it's coming from the

Holy Ghost.

I wish we could see says Paul we could see him in the belly of the ship Paul is on this journey now it's not an easy journey it's a hard journey and he stands up at the beginning of this journey and says sirs I perceive that this is going to be a journey that is going to be filled with disaster not only for the ship but for the lives of the people but nobody will listen to him and I know that many of you when trying to speak to your families for example you speak to your kids as they're going out the door and you're saying listen where you're going and who you're hanging around with is not good.

It's going to bring you to a place that you don't want to be but they won't listen to you because the wind is blowing softly and the sailing seems to be smooth and they have this vision that it's going to be just endless joy before them in the coming days and you're warning them you're speaking to them but they're not listening and so Paul gets on this ship in spite of the fact that they won't listen he allows this ship to carry him as well as the others and can you imagine how it must have been in the bottom of that ship they were in a terrible storm he's in the belly of the ship as it is he's not traveling first class folks he's a prisoner and there would be people chained there the water is coming in the sides of the ship the mariners are trying to hold it together with ropes and helps

and every available thing that comes from the natural mind they're trying to keep this all together but it's falling apart and everybody knows it's falling apart I think we're living at a time very similar to that right now every device that we know to keep everything together and keep us on this journey that's gone so far away from God is all starting to fall apart all around us and now the helps are coming and now the undergirdings are starting but there's a storm here now and nobody knows Jesus said it's going to lead us to a place where men's hearts are going to fail them for the fear that's going to come upon them and you see Paul down there and the ship has probably got a foot or more of water in it there's excrement and all types of refuse in it floating around it would be people

who haven't had a chance to bathe just unspeakable hardship and Paul do you not think he had a right to be bitter do you not think he had a right to be in the belly of that ship and just all of a sudden all around him the slaves would be saying if we can just get free we're going to kill these people that brought us into this others are ranting and raving about the fact that they're not guilty they shouldn't be here and others are blaming and all around all of this would be going on and it would be so easy for Paul just to join the chorus of discontent down in the belly of that ship in unspeakable hardship and when you are found in that place if you are there right now beware that kind of a spirit doesn't get a hold of you that would poison you and everyone around you I can see Paul now

beginning to pray he's the only man that I know down there who's just makes the right choice and he begins to pray he begins to seek God he wouldn't be in this place if it weren't for the ignorance of man and many of you now are in places and you can point to somebody somewhere that has caused this pain and caused you to be on this journey that you shouldn't be on at this time I see Paul praying for deliverance for the slave for the sinner for the spiritually ignorant and for those who had brought him into such hardship Paul praying God please help them God please be merciful you've shown me that this journey is going to end in disaster I pray God be merciful oh folks Jesus said pray for your enemies pray for those who spitefully use you pray for those who through their own ignorance

are on a journey that is going to cost them not just in time but perhaps for all of eternity and God answers Paul's prayer with an unbeatable storm a storm that cannot be beaten except for the power of God and

quite often the Lord will answer prayer oh folks in a way that you and I never anticipated Elijah started turning to God oh God turn the nation back again and it's as if God says you really want that to happen yes oh God I do well you're going to have to live beside a brook for a few years because I'm going to stop the rain Elijah the only way I can get these people's attention is I've got to stop the rain I've got to dry up the crops and there's going to be a cry come into the nation but you have to be willing to go through it too as well so that you can be there when the hearts of

the people begin to turn I know many of you are in the belly of hardship in midst of families in the midst of ministry in the midst of the workplace in the midst of your environment you're caught in the belly of this society that's traveling so far away from God you have to go into work and you have to face the most unspeakable evil now dirty vile jokes disgusting remarks about your Christ people who seem to be such God haters and they're moving in a direction that you know is going to bring about disaster and all of a sudden the storm comes and we're now there folks we're coming to a storm now a storm is arising in America a storm is arising all over the world we're coming into the last days the way Christ spoke about them and with the storm came you know the scripture says in Acts I

think it's 27 after long abstinence Paul appears on the deck well he just didn't appear on the deck folks I mean a few things are passed over when you look at the scripture Paul was a prisoner prisoners just didn't appear on the deck hello how's everybody doing up here that just didn't happen that way the way I feel it happened is the captain said when he realized this whole thing is going to go down he finally came to his senses and said listen get me that man that man when we were in the port that man that said we shouldn't be taking this journey that man that warned us we were going to be in this mess not too long into the future I want to hear what that man has to say praise God and suddenly Paul finds himself on the deck and folks I bring this as a prophetic word to you who are here

today suddenly suddenly suddenly when all hell is breaking out in this world as we know it those who have rejected you your neighbors who laughed at you your kids who thought you were old fashioned suddenly they're going to come to your door and said listen I'd like to hear again what you have to say praise be to God Acts chapter 27 tells us that all of a sudden he's no longer the captain of the ship he's giving all the orders praise God he tells them listen if you don't stay with what I'm telling you you're going to perish but if you stay here everything's going to be fine a few soldiers head to the front of the ship trying to pretend like they're going to put down some more anchors Paul knows that they're going to cut the boats off and they're going to head for sure and try to make it

and he tells the centurion cut off the lifeboats imagine cut off the lifeboats no back door folks to this journey no easy way out cut off the lifeboats it's a trust in the word of God that's going to get you through all schemes all plans all natural abilities gotta go only the power of God is going to get you through you must listen to what God is speaking and you can see the centurion says do what he says and they head over with their swords they cut the ropes listen off go the lifeboats there is no back door anymore in this journey praise God then he begins to give the instructions he says those of you who can swim when I tell you you jump overboard you make for sure you're all going to make it he said if you listen to me not a hair of your head is going to perish and he said those of

you who can't swim there's going to be lots of wood to go around in the very very near future he said you just grab a piece of wood and kick with your feet and you're going to make it to shore everybody's going to make it to shore and the message of this last generation is going to be there's the cross is big enough there's lots of wood on the cross you lay hold of that cross praise be to God there is the fullness of God's

redemption all that you could see Paul said that you could see the exceeding greatness of his power who rose from the dead sitting on the right hand of God far above every name that is named above all power and principality and he is the fullness he's the one who fills his body called the church of Jesus Christ praise be to God that you could see he's above every name

he's above fear he's above disaster he's above all the concerns about the future he's above all of these things all you and I have to do is hear from him and know what it is that he is saying praise God then Paul does something incredible in Acts 27 I think it's verse 35 he takes bread in the midst he distributes food first of all whatever is left on the ship he says now take this you're going to need it you're going to need some strength and folks I'm telling you now with everything in me you start from Matthew to Revelation and the Psalms and Proverbs and take this get your strength now get strength now you're going to need strength this journey is going to be tough from here on in but get your strength from the word of God praise God then he takes bread and the scripture says that in

sight of them all what Paul has his own communion service scripture says he broke the bread and gave thanks they did communion right on the ship oh God you can feel it the waves are crashing the ship is going up and down the tackling is gone all hope except for what God offers is overboard it's finished the ship is done for and they all know it and here's Paul all five foot seven of him according to historians standing there with a loaf of bread breaking God in heaven thank you for your faithfulness thank you God not only am I still on the journey but you've given me all these souls oh God that are sailing with me that have chosen to obey the word of God they're all coming through to victory all that had abused Paul all that had mocked Paul all that had hated Paul all that had made fun of

Paul here they now are all Paul is giving thanks God thank you God thank you God thank you Lord that this had to happen for these men and perhaps women to be able to hear the word of God again praise be to God I think of when he spoke to the Corinthian church and he said on the night that Jesus was betrayed he took bread and he broke it and gave thanks and said take eat this is my body which is broken for you I wonder now if God has a church if God has a church in this generation that he can say to this generation look this is my body which is broken for you this is my body that has endured your abusive comments this is my body that has endured your spiritual ignorance this is my body that has suffered abuse at your hands but this body allowed her own plans and her own strength and her

own dreams and her own ambitions to be broken on this journey of a society that's living in spiritual ignorance and this body allowed herself to be broken for you I wonder and I know that God will have a body in the last stage that he can point to and say this is my body which is broken for you praise be to God praise be to God go and get the strength that you need now we need strength you and I are going to have to have strength for the coming days there is a body and I thank God for the journey he's taken me on I thank God I've learned more in the hard times than the good times folks that's just the way it is I thank God that by his grace he's bringing me through to a place where I can have compassion on all men not just some or not just those that I like or like me or not just those

that I agree with but all men as much as is within you Paul said do good to all men praise be to God praise be to God the only way that you and I can ever see the purpose in this kind of a journey is that the souls of men are worth it the souls of men are worth God becoming a man traveling through this world for 33 years suffering at the abuse of spiritual ignorance the only way we can say it's worth it is that his body was broken for us praise be to God praise be to God the Lord give you Paul said to Timothy understanding in these things he wrote to Timothy and said the husband men that labors must be first partaker of the fruits

he said Timothy the Lord give you understanding in these things Paul had been speaking to Timothy in the context of suffering Paul said Timothy God has brought

me through a lot of things that he has kept me and there's a divine purpose in everything God has allowed into my life Timothy you have to go through it first if you want to preach that you can get to the other side of the storm if you want any weight in your voice when you say these words you have to go through the storm first Timothy you have to be the first partaker of faith when that's all you have left is faith you have to be the one who goes through it praise be to God you are in the midst of the storm that you're in this morning because the Lord's about to point to you very soon you'll no longer be the captive you're going to be the captain that's what the Holy Spirit gave me to speak to you this morning very very soon very soon the knocks are going to come on your door the people

in your office who are desperately afraid of losing their jobs are going to come over to your desk they're going to ask for a reason for the hope that is in you you'll no longer be the captive you'll be the captain you'll be able to say here's the way out here's what you need to do here's what God says oh beloved seek to know Him in this strength now above everything in your life seek to know Christ in this strength and learn to thank God for the hard times thank Him for the pain thank Him for the places you don't understand and you can only thank Him when you fully believe that there's a purpose there's a reason nobody is triumphing over you you have in you the Christ who sits already above every name that will ever come against you you're already on the victory side the only reason he

would leave you where you are is for the sake of others I want to give an unusual altar call this morning and it's for those who could come to this altar or in the annex could stand between the screens and the overflow rooms just go forward in whatever room you're in and could say Lord this is my body which is broken for you and God I just want to let Paul give you thanks for allowing me to go through hardship for allowing everything that's come into my life was it the ideal will of God for these people to take this journey obviously not ideally if they would have repented in their initial harbor then this whole disaster could have been averted but men don't always walk in an ideal way and quite often when they don't you and I are dragged through all of the misery that they will bring

upon themselves and all of the society around them we're now living at such a time historically and many of you are living it personally because of the just what people have done to you but if you can stand before God here's the freedom and you say Lord thank you can you imagine Paul he's standing there it must have been awful having come up from the situation he was in I mean you can imagine his clothing the smell the your mind and mine can't fathom it only by the power of God you see where did he get this vision of Christ how did he know I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me where did he see this magnificence of God that he wrote about to Ephesus I want to suggest to you it was in situations like the belly of the ship that's where he saw it that's where he got to know

this caring power and Paul could stand there in the storm break the bread and rejoice and give thanks and some of you I'd like to be able to say to you that you know that you're going to snap your fingers and you're going to come down and pray a little prayer and everything's going to be fine you're going to forget all your sorrow no you're not no you're not it might even be beginning in some people's lives but if you can't say Lord thank you this is my body if you're part of the church of Jesus Christ you're part of the body so you can't say that this is my body which is broken for you Lord God thank you out of this thing that should kill me you're going to bring life you're going to do something God that is going to be a blessing to others Lord God just open my heart and my mind to the

souls of men and the purposes that you have for me and for eternity God help me to see the way you see I thank you for it Lord with all my heart all I'm going to say to you is when you do this there's a release that comes into your heart there's a release of faith and trust and you'll all of a sudden be taken out of just focusing on your circumstance too and understanding there is a divine purpose in everything that you have to go through blessed be God blessed be God Father I thank you Lord with all my heart I praise you Lord for what you have done and are continuing to do in Jesus name let's stand together please the Holy Spirit is drawing you and you'd like to come to this altar in the balcony you can go to either exit make your way here in the main sanctuary just slip out this is my

body Lord which is broken for you for you Jesus I'm broken for you remember Samson remember his riddle out of the eater came forth sweetness out of that which should have destroyed me came a honey that I took home to my family and it became strength for those who needed strength that's the principle of God's kingdom out of that which should destroy me God will bring a sweetness and a nourishment to the lives of others moving closely please give people a chance to come who are heading here praise God this is my body that's your cry today which is broken for you Lord I thank you Paul gave thanks Jesus gave thanks I thank you Lord that I have the privilege God of being broken for you and that your life could start to come from this situation through me that I might be a blessing to others

around me you could even begin to give him thanks as we take a moment to worship and if the tears come let them come whatever God wants to do you just say thank you Lord thank you God thank you Father let's worship oh God thank you Lord thank you Jesus thank you Lord remember that when Job prayed for those who seem to be somewhat glad at this calamity instead of cursing them he prayed for them and scripture says the Lord healed them Jesus said Father forgive them they don't know what they do the early disciples went back to a prayer meeting and they said Lord we rejoice that we've been counted worthy to suffer shame for your name's sake God oh but they had a vision of something they had a glory that rested on them oh God oh Jesus thank you Lord Lord thank you pray with me Lord Jesus thank

you that you can look at my life and say to the world this is my body which is broken for you and Lord you would give thanks so help me today to give thanks for the places you've sent me and the journey that I'm on I believe today that from my life there will come a supernatural love for all people even those who have wronged me a supernatural faith to see the working of God and to believe that there is a purpose for everything in my life God keep my heart tender keep my words kind keep my hands encouraging keep my voice clean that I may be the testimony of God's love to my family and to my generation thank you Lord for breaking this body for breaking this body in Jesus name give him thanks give him praise this recording is provided by Times Square Church in New York City you're welcome

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