

Give Me a Reason to Not Give Up

by Carter Conlon

The sermon encourages listeners to persevere in their faith, even when it seems like they're not making a difference, by reminding them of the glory of God that can be revealed through their suffering.

Duration: 44:09

Scripture: Psalm 73:2

Topics: "Perseverance", "Eternal Consequences"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the cry for a reason to not give up, exploring the struggles and doubts faced by believers. It delves into the contrast between the righteous and the wicked, highlighting the eternal consequences of choices. The speaker urges listeners to endure hardships for the sake of others and to embrace the narrow path of following Christ, emphasizing the importance of being a visible demonstration of God's mercy and keeping power.

Transcript

My message this morning Give me a reason to not give up Now I know that's the cry in somebody's heart. The Lord gave me this as a word, but a word of knowledge as well there's there are people here and That's that's the deepest cry of your heart. Even one reason would be good enough.

You don't need the whole wagon load It says God give me a reason just give me a reason to not give up Psalm 73 please if you'll turn there in your Bibles Father I thank you God Almighty for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I Thank you for the power of the written word. I Thank you for the ability you give ordinary men and women to deliver this word in an extraordinary manner So that it becomes a key to unlock prison doors.

It becomes a salve for blinded eyes. It becomes an oil for wounded hearts I'm asking you Jesus to do the miraculous today I'm asking you to do a work so profound so deep so far-reaching that it could only come from the hand of God Lord I thank you for the power of reasoning But we're living in an hour where the work of God must go deeper. It's got to touch the heart.

It's got to be supernatural. I Yield to you Lord, I'm asking you just simply use this vessel speak through me I Help me to disappear that you may be seen and heard Strengthen me Oh God and strengthen this church to hear your word Prepare us Lord. I Pray for every person who's faltering Today in this sanctuary and who's listening from other places God give us strength Give us refreshing Lord.

I thank you for it in Jesus mighty name Give me a reason to not give up psalm 73 verses 2 13 and 14 to start Well, let's read verse 1 and 2 truly God is good to Israel Even to such as there of a clean heart But as for me My feet were almost gone and my steps had well nice slipped verse 13 Verily I've cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency For all day long have I been plagued and chastened every morning Now the psalmist begins by saying God. I know you're good to your people. I Know you bless those who walk with cleanness of hands and impurity of heart.

I know that I've sat under the word I've seen it in Scripture. I know what the psalm say I know psalm 15 says if I I'll dwell in the holy hill of God if I if I don't Sit with the scornful God if I keep my hands clean If I walk a righteous walk in my generation, I know but for me I'm ready to give up The roads been long and difficult for me I've tried to avoid evil I've been disciplined daily and I've been kept from sin But to what end? What kind of an influence is my life had on the ungodly? How have I affected this world? even my own family And folks that's an honest cry if you've got that cry in your heart today It's an honest question if you're if you're ready for an honest answer What's the point? I? Deprived myself as it is of the pleasures that others seem free to enjoy I Walk such a narrow path When others even those who sometimes claim to be part of the body of Christ seem to walk a much broader path They seem to be at liberty to enjoy all the things of this world that I'm not They can sit at night and Satiated their minds as it is with ungodliness on television and talk about how the blessing of God is all over them And yet you've told me to stay away from these things to keep my vision clean to keep Keep myself focused on eternity and on the works of eternity But I don't seem to be having any effect He says in verse 3 I was envious at the foolish when I saw the prosperity of the wicked They seem to be enjoying a lot of things that I can't enjoy and I don't enjoy Verses 4 and 5 they claim to be free strong and happy more than I can say about myself at the moment You ever gotten to the places of Christian where the unsaved look better off than you are Yes, I know thank you for that honest answer There no bands in their death he says in verse 4 their strength is firm They're not in trouble as other men are and neither are they plagued like other men? verse 6 They can say any hurtful thing they want to me While I have to be silent or respond with kindness Therefore he says pride compasses him about like a chain and violence covers them as a garment How many here today you go into the workplace and? You want to be a testimony but it seems that people are at liberty to say any vile hurtful thing they want to you to attack you and You feel that restraining hand of God telling you not to fight back not to respond in like kind He says they do everything my flesh would like to do They speak scornfully about what I hold dearly as truth and they grasp for all that this world has to offer and claims That it fully satisfy them. There's seven.

This is their eyes stand out with fatness. They've more than heart could wish They're corrupt. They speak wickedly concerning oppression.

They speak loftily They set their mouth against the heavens and their tongue walks through the earth Therefore his people return hither the waters of a full cup are rung out to them and they say How does God knows their knowledge in the Most High behold? These are the ungodly who prosper in the world? the increase in riches And this is where he begins to say Truly, I've cleansed my heart in vain and washed my hands in innocency all day long. I've been plagued and chastened every morning They do everything that I'd like to do My flesh I'd like to respond I'd like to respond to what they do in the manner they do to me I'd like to say some things they said like to do some things they do So What's the point of living a life separated under God It doesn't appear that my life is having any effect have you ever felt that way It doesn't appear what difference is my life making I Go to church on Sunday, and all I do is go home to scornful people. That's the testimony of many here They laugh at me for attending the house of God They

talk about how simple stupid and narrow I am to believe these things when there's such a broad and wonderful world out there They mocked me in the workplace And it seems that nobody's changing And I'm wondering is it worth it why do I have to be so strict what why Why do I have to deny myself some of the things that others seem to be enjoying in this life? Is it really necessary it in my life's not making any difference anyway, so Why can't I numb my mind like other people are why can't I sit and watch mindless television every night from six o'clock till 11 o'clock and just just numb my mind and with idiocy and then just go to bed like everybody else Why can't I do that? How come my walk is so strict if it's not really having a whole lot of effect on the people around me Verse 15 he says if I if I say I would speak thus I'd I would offend against the generation of thy children When I thought to know this it was too painful me for me What what he's in effect saying is I don't want to discourage or disparage those who are really trying to live a godly life around me On my left and on my right and some people are feeling that way today You're in the annex and the main sanctuary you you're saying I I really appreciate the brother or sister on my left hand side and on my right hand side If they knew how I was feeling it could discourage them if they know what I was thinking Could cause them to falter and I and I don't want that to happen and some of you are older in the Lord and and it's sometimes when you've walked a long time with God that these thoughts begin to plague your mind and you see the young coming in and they're lifting their hands and they're radiant and glowing for God and you just say Oh if they only knew what's ahead of them They only knew how tough this is going to get I and I I'm 15 years in the Lord and I'm wondering if it's all worth it.

I dare not speak it. I don't want to offend This simple faith that they seem to have but I don't see the point of it anymore I'm in such turmoil. He says I feel sick inside When I thought to know it, it was too painful for me.

I feel sick inside I come into the house of the Lord and and I lift my hands and I Feel again the presence of God, but it's just I feel sick inside. I Don't know what to do, I don't know God if you just give me a reason To continue on this journey If you'll just show me why Why everybody claims to be happy while I'm chastened Everyone seems to be enjoying this incredible blessing while I'm going through heartache and sorrow and pain and suffering and trial Why Lord? Just give me a reason to go on He said until I came into the sanctuary of God Then I saw something The fog lifted as it is it's like a London day Mid-afternoon the Sun tries to peek out the fog lifts and suddenly there are these tall buildings there And you you start to see something that's not visible to the natural eye. I Came into your presence.

Oh God in the fog lifted and I saw something terrifying I began to understand something I Began to see what lies before the ungodly. I Began to understand there's an end to all things as they are coming and it's coming soon And oh god, the people around don't have any idea what they're headed for They don't understand the terror of hell they don't understand what it means to be apart from God for eternity Even the ungodly in the world is surrounded by the presence of God because God in this season and time is omnipresent That means he's everywhere in the world The Holy Spirit is always whispering even to the worst of sinners, you know that because he whispered to you before you came to Christ And so realistically the presence of God is around even and the the ungodly can become Complacent in that presence of God, even though the heavens declare the glory of God Paul said that every man every woman will stand before God one day without excuse Of every nation every tribe because the heavens declared the glory of God Anyone who wants to know who God is he said I would have revealed myself That's why everyone stands without excuse on the Day of Judgment. I Saw he says surely you set them in slippery places you cast them down into destruction.

Oh God the psalmist says when I came into your house I saw that the lost are sliding into a place of destruction from which there is no natural escape It's like a steep hill that has been rained upon it and the ground has turned to a slippery clay and Try like they might they cannot escape what's coming them There is no way out of the judgment that is coming Don't lose sight of the fact that there's a heaven in the hell folks a Heaven to gain is the scripture as some have said in the hell to shun Don't ever forget that hell is a place of torment so tormenting to be outside of the presence of you see even a sinner doesn't understand what it's like to be in a place where God is not a Sinner can't understand that the absence of God the complete absence of God I Don't have a mind that it could explain that to you Only the Holy Spirit can give you even a glimpse of what that would be like The Bible says it's a place where there is a non-ending Fire in a sense. There's there's such torment. There's gnashing of teeth It's endless darkness endless hopelessness Endless lack of comfort the scripture tell talks about it as a darkness.

It's so thick you can touch it and feel it Never a comforting word no hope No vision no future and it's forever and it's called hell and it's just simply the absence of God's presence It's what hell is and all that means Oh God Oh God Oh God The people in your family who don't know Christ are headed there the people in your workplace who don't know Christ are going there The people on your block would deal drugs in the corner are going there The the churchgoer who think they're righteous but do not have a living relationship with God are going there He says in verse 19 how they're brought into desolation is in a moment. They're utterly consumed with terrors What emptiness is coming their way how suddenly it will happen to them? Isaiah chapter 33 verse 14 Isaiah said the sinners in Zion are afraid fearfulness has surprised the hypocrites Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? Carl Oppenheimer one of the persons who Created the atomic bomb The one that was eventually used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War two When they first tested it He was gravely afraid that the device that he had created as a physicist he knew could set the atmosphere in the earth on fire and He knew if it did set the atmosphere on fire would it would create an irrevocable irreversible chain of fire that could engulf Much more than he intended And he was in terror when they first tested this device. Do you know the devices we have today a Hundreds of times more powerful Peter the Apostle said the heavens are going to be on fire Isaiah said the heavens gonna be on fire and there's gonna be a cry among men who among us can dwell with this devouring fire It's all through the prophets folks in the Old Testament.

You read it. It's in the New Testament The heavens will be on fire The earth will eventually be dissolved. God, of course himself will do that What terror is coming in a moment of time? And you look at our generation and you see those that are grasping for nuclear weaponry only for the sole purpose of destruction You realize beloved we're all living on borrowed time now all of us every one of us Every person in your family everyone, you know in the workplace what terrors he said in a moment Look chapter 16 if you will If you turn there In the context of the terrorisms I just spoke to you about I'm speaking about Giving you a reason to not quit Giving you a reason not to give up no matter how difficult It may be for you or uncomfortable Look 16:19 This is a story that Jesus told There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day now I want you to hear this parable in the context of what we're speaking about Remember the psalmist says they have more than their heart could wish They're indulging in the things of the world.

They say that it satisfies them and here I am poor and struggling Disciplined kept on this narrow path Unable to enjoy any of the things they do the victim of their verbal abuse and all of the things and plans that they plot against me and So here's a man who fared sumptuously every day and there was a certain

beggar named Lazarus Which was laid at his gate full of sores. This was a hurting man He desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table yet an inner desire like oh god I wouldn't mind. I wouldn't mind a Caribbean vacation like Like they go on but yet you're asking me to give a Portion of my income to a missions venture that would deny me that vacation.

I won't be able to go I'd like to take my holidays and Just lay in a hammock somewhere And listen to somebody sing kumbaya on a guitar beside me But yet you're asking me to go to Mexico to build homes for the homeless You would have liked to you would have liked the crumb That fell from the rich man's table and moreover the dogs came to lick his sores He felt it was in it was an embarrassing place it's like he was completely dependent on the mercy of God and Everybody passing by who doesn't understand the ways of God would have been disdainful of this man just as they are towards you And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom And the rich man also died was buried and in hell He lift up his eyes being in torments and saw Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom And he cried and said father Abraham have mercy on me And sent Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue for I am tormented in this flame But Abraham said son remember that you in your lifetime received good things your good things and likewise Lazarus as you sought evil things but now he is comforted and you are tormented and Beside all this between us and you there's a great gulf fixed So that they which would pass from hence to you cannot neither can they pass to us that would come from where you are Then he said this is the rich man. I pray therefore father. You would send him that's Lazarus to my father's house I have five brothers that he may testify to them that they Also into this place they lest they come also into this place of torment The rich man said I'm tormented and suddenly it's the very person that he esteemed as insignificant and unworthy of his attention It's somebody who had been placed by God before him.

You see this If he had listened to what God was trying to tell him through Lazarus at his gate Heaven instead of hell could have been his destiny It was amazing that he now knew that this suffering man Lazarus had the word that his family needed to hear I Wonder now how many people in hell do you think are crying out today? For someone who knows and represents the suffering of Christ to be prayed placed across their family's doorstep How many voices do you think are crying out in hell right now? Oh God God send to my family somebody Somebody that can tell them About Christ so they don't have to come to this place How many how many millions are crying out? It must sound like a hive of bees Crying out if God could just open it just for a moment to us if we could hear the cry Of people that have no hope no help no future no eternity Finally finding out they're wrong and saying God send Lazarus Send that suffering man. Don't send the light message to them because they know in hell that a light message will not do Don't send a false prophet that caused the people to err by their lies and their likeness Jeremiah says No, send a suffering man send somebody who represents the cross of Jesus Christ Send somebody who understands that God so loved the world that he became a man and went to a cross and Suffered and died that they don't have to come to this place of eternal torment. Oh God, this is not that season This is not the time for positive thinking in the house of God Send somebody somebody that looks like that cross on Calvary Somebody that is willing to endure in narrow place somebody that is willing to suffer not for their own sakes But for the sake of others My god My god my god Send somebody If you were in hell this very moment, who would you want to speak to your family? Guy smiling on television with his new positive View of how you can have God and the world at the same time Or how about that I would prefer to have that grandmother that has just walked with God She's had to trust God For her provision for her strengths.

He said to trust God I prefer the single mom that drags her four kids to this church every Sunday. I Wouldn't be looking for guys smiling on this television program. No, sir I'd be looking for somebody who knows the sufferings of God who can bring the reality of Christ Somebody who's willing to be given for other people somebody who's had to trust God Somebody who could stand in the midst of their pain and say it's been worth it all Because this whole Christian life is not about me.

I've been left on the earth for your sake not my sake for your sake I've been left here I'm already redeemed. My name's already in a book of life. I've already got a mansion with my name on the door This is not about me.

This is about you Therefore we endure Paul says in Philippians 1 29 for unto you It's given on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him but to suffer for his name's sake Why? Why the narrow path? It's only for one reason as I see it that the glory of God might be revealed through us There's no other reason the glory means the full weight of God the keeping power of God the sustaining power of God Something of God that is deeper than anything that this world has to offer How Else does God speak to this generation? How else does he reveal his cross? Is it not through a people? Aren't you thankful that Jesus didn't just come to the earth and talk about the cross? Just open the Bible that he had of the Old Testament talk about well what the cross looks like and this is this is what? It is and this is how it feels and then just suddenly just vanish and go back to heaven I'm more thankful. He went to the cross than talk about the cross This is a cry in the heart of this generation is don't tell me about Jesus because there's too many voices talking about him Show me Jesus Show me the one who went to a cross you see folks, this is why you suffer This is why you and I are called to walk a narrower road than others This is why when our face gets slapped we turn it to the other side. This is why this is why Verse 20 of Psalm 73 says as a dream when one awakes, Oh God when you awake you will despise their image He's saying Oh God judgment is coming and you've called me to be a testimony of your mercy to them.

Oh I was pricked in my heart. My heart was grieved and I was pricked in my reins. I Know some of you are feeling that way right now.

Oh God, forgive me. Oh Jesus thank you one more time for just bringing everything into focus for letting me see The reason Why my life is so narrow while others Seem to be able to walk another way So foolish. He said was I verse 22 and ignorant.

I was as a beast before he got I just Yeah, I do that once in a while. Just hang my head and I said God I just feel stupid And there's nothing wrong with that folks Nevertheless I'm continuously with thee and that's holding me by that by my right hand He said God you've set me on the same slope as it is that they are on but they're going over the edge and I'm standing there as a witness to them that they don't have to go there Nobody has to go to hell. Nobody has to die in their sin There is a Savior and the reason I will not go over Down that slope and over the edge with them is it because somebody is holding my right hand.

Hallelujah Hallelujah you shall guide thou shall guide me with thy counsel and Afterwards receive me to glory Guide me with your counsel. Oh God Let me not live according to my own way of thinking anymore guide me with your counsel What an atrocious trap Theologically has been laid for this generation The trap is that to know God everything has to go well, everybody needs a big promotion nice big house Great big stretch limo and that's of course evidence that God is with you And folks it's a total lie The gospel we preach you have to be able to preach it in prison. You have to be able to preach it in China You have to be able to go into Iraq and Vietnam You have to be able to go all over the world and if we have to modify what

we preach then it isn't the gospel The gospel I preach I have to be able to preach it anywhere in the world and any setting any environment It can't be just strictly American It has to be able to be preached throughout the world I Sigh as much as you do There are days that I get tired of the grand piano that sometimes seems to be on my shoulders there are days I'd like to I Just like to do my like this, you know Just like you would But then God one more time comes and says Carter it's not about you It's about other people That's the only reason I've left you here It's the only reason that you and I are here today is because there are others That need to understand That there is a Christ who gave his life on the cross that they might know eternity in heaven We are a visible demonstration of Not only the suffering but the keeping power of Almighty God When you study the theology of Paul you'll see that is the very cornerstone of everything He preached and it was the basis of all his revelation of Christ a man who was appointed he embraced suffering and Because of it he was given a vision of the keeping power of God which became a Catalyst an open door as it is for many to come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Oh God Thank you for helping me understand You asked a question in your heart somebody here today. Give me a reason not to give up well How about your son How about your daughter? But your grandson, how about your granddaughter? How about your wife? How about your husband? How about the kids? Across the hall from your apartment building How about the clerk at the grocery store? How about the kids hanging around the corner on your block? How about the rich man who thinks his wealth is going to get him into heaven How about the religionist who just goes to church, but doesn't live for God? I want you to think of a reason because the reason is just one person. That's all it takes one person one reason While you and I will be given the grace to walk this path And to finish this race And I know as you're thinking now About it.

The Lord is putting before you one reason One reason Your family don't need to go to hell Your co-workers don't need to die in their sin If you and I are willing to embrace The pathway that God has for us and begin to realize that it's not about us. It's about others You'll be able to walk out of here With your hands in the air your heart aflame again the glory of God in your soul saying God Let your glory be seen in me As I go through what I go through Let others begin to understand it's not about me. It's about them Open my mouth Open my mouth To be able to testify of your goodness father.

Thank you Lord for this day Thank you God for this season this time in your house Thank you for your word oh Jesus Jesus Jesus Hallelujah I'm going to give an altar call and not not an altar call means that you just come to the front of the church and You are agreeing with God and you're surrendering to what God says is right and You're putting away. What you know is the wrong way of living or thinking You're re-embracing as it is truth If you've known God and you're embracing Christ for the first time if you haven't now, please hold still and listen In the annex, I'm going to ask you to make your way here as well the first part of this altar call or this call to the front of the church is for people who are going to hell and You want to go to heaven? Jesus Christ died for your sins You do not have to go to hell which is the as I said It's the a place where God is not and it's forever. There is no way out of it That's why God became a man and died on the cross It's it's as simple as this.

He paid the price for the wrong things that you do Now coming to him is not just an agreement with the fact that he died 2,000 years ago You are saying in your heart. I'm going to turn away from an ungodly lifestyle From a life of disobedience to God and I'm going to do and live the way God says And I'm going to trust that he paid the price for my sin Which the Bible says if you do confess him With your mouth and you believe in your heart that he died for you. You will be saved That means you will not go to hell when you die.

You will go to heaven But it's not just a mental agreement you're giving your life to God through Jesus Christ You're going to become a follower of Jesus Christ Pointless to come to this altar if that's not in your heart That's not your intention. If you're just trying to escape the penalty of sin and go on living in sin It's rather pointless to come here You're giving your life to Jesus Christ And for those who believe That it's worth living for God In spite of your hardship in spite of what you have to go through In spite of the ridicule, the scorn, the heartache, the discipline, the narrowness of it If this message has spoken to your heart You believe that the saving of the lost is worth living for God And you want to recommit your life to that cause I want to invite you to come to the front of the church as well, and we're going to pray together Now we're going to stand together in a moment. We're going to continue to worship.

It's only 25 to 12 We're going to worship for about 10, maybe 15 minutes. I want you to think about these words And I beg you in the annex and the balcony don't go to hell when you can go to heaven folks Die to your pride This is about eternal life. This is the one thing you can't afford to be wrong in You can make a wrong investment and you can still recover later on But this is the one thing you cannot afford to be wrong in because once you get on the other side There is no way out God give you the grace Give you the grace Don't go to hell today when you can go to heaven As we stand and begin to worship The Lord is drawing you please come to the front of the church in the annex make your way over here, too As well come to the front of the church every sinner Every person who wants Christ to save you just get out of your seat.

I don't care who's standing beside you You get out of your seat if you brought a family member You brought somebody with you You turn to that person and say listen if you're afraid to go I'll go with you I'll walk with you down there do that now Hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah It's all about you, you know the church the gospel the singing The way we as Christians are called to live. It's all about you today who are coming to Christ And from this day forward it's going to be in your life all about Jesus and because of him it's going to be all about others It is a very narrow life But it is a very fulfilling life and it brings about an eternal reward at the end You've you've had just a taste of what it's going to be like at this altar today The Bible says that when a sinner repents the angels in heaven rejoice They they rejoice because they foresee the day that you're going to be there They know what's coming your way just a short season Just a short season of having to go through some difficult times and then we're going to be there forever Praise God how many today? Balcony annex sanctuary Altar front of the church rather with an upraised hand could say pastor I Come in here going to hell But today I'm giving my life to Jesus Christ, and I believe That his sacrifice on the cross will pay the price for the wrong. I've done reconnect me To fellowship with God and bring me to heaven when I die If it's in your heart today to receive Christ as your Savior Abandoned the rights to your life to God through Jesus Christ.

Would you join me and raise your hand all over the sanctuary? I Will never be the same again You'll never be the same again Pray this simple prayer with me Lord Jesus Christ. I Believe you're the Son of God. I Believe you came to the earth You died in my place and Paid the price For the things I have done That have separated me From the life of God and eternity in heaven Today I make a decision to turn from sin in my life From living in a way That is wrong in the sight of God to doing What God says is right I make that decision I Come to you Lord Jesus For forgiveness Believing in my heart That as I am sincere in this prayer You are forgiving my sin at this very moment You are promising me Eternal life in heaven When I leave this body in death It will only be death to my body But eternal life for me.

Oh God Help me to follow you now Not to turn back Or turn away Help me to live for you in this earth Help me to understand Spiritual things in the Bible Teach me Lead me and guide me. I am your loyal servant from this day forward I Call myself today a follower of Jesus Christ Amen Jesus Christ Hallelujah

Hallelujah, hallelujah When we all get to heaven what a day what a day of rejoicing that's going to be And for the rest that are here today for the rest that came to this altar never never never give up Say it with me never Never never give up say it again never never never give up Hallelujah, God will keep you when we all get to heaven Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh Oh

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