

God Will Feed You in the Wilderness

by Carter Conlon

God will feed us in the wilderness, but we must trust His promises and have faith in His power and presence to overcome unbelief and enter into the fullness of His life.

Duration: 44:23

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Gods Provision"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting God in the wilderness moments of life, highlighting the need to find God's provision and strength in challenging times rather than trying to escape. It encourages believers to have faith in God's ability to work miracles, to not limit Him, and to seek His presence and guidance in every situation.

Transcript

Psalm 78, please, in the Old Testament. God will feed you in the wilderness. Sounds like many are there right now and needing a good meal.

God will feed you in the wilderness. Psalm 78, verse 40. Father, I thank you for the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Thank you for the strength, Lord, that only you can give. I thank you, Lord, that this is a truly wonderful and miraculous life. Thank you, God, for your mercy, that you would come down and that you would partner together with frail humanity.

I ask, Lord, for a quickening of the Holy Spirit in my heart, mind and body. I ask that you quicken those that are gathered here to listen and that your kingdom may advance with great power and great glory. And, Father, we thank you for it in Jesus' name.

God will feed you in the wilderness. Psalm 78, verse 40. I don't know if I'll need my glasses or not.

I'm right on the edge now with a large print Bible. I can sort of see it. I'll give it a try.

If I don't get through it, then I'll have to. How often did they provoke him in the wilderness and grieve him in the desert? Yea, they turned back and tempted God and limited the Holy One of Israel. They remembered not his hand, nor the day when he delivered them from the enemy.

Now, verse 40. How often did they provoke him in the wilderness and grieve him in the desert? Now, this particular verse speaks to us of seasons and places that all of us from time to time have to go through. It's a season in your life.

It's a season in mine where there doesn't appear to the natural eye, at least, to be any resource upon which we can lay our hands to help us continue or fully finish our journey. In other words, we look in the mirror and we don't see where the strength is going to come from. We don't know where the resource is.

We look to our right hand. Remember David, one season in his life, he said, I looked on either side and there was nobody there that could comfort my soul. I don't find the way.

I don't know where the strength is going to come from. I don't know how I'm going to get through this wilderness time. And in verse 41 says they turned back.

And folks, only eternity is going to reveal how many people who have professed Christ in the last 2000 plus years have turned back. And they've turned back at the very place where they're about to discover and enter into the supernatural life of God. They turned back.

And oh, folks, I just thank God that at least as much as I know, over the years, he's given me the grace to keep going forward. Even when the situation looks impossible. The only hope sometimes I've had is that he is the God of the impossible and that he's the one who said all things are possible with God.

And that's been the source of my life and the source of my strength. Praise God. And the scripture goes on to say they limited the holy one of Israel.

I believe personally. Now, this is only a personal opinion that this was the greatest sin of Israel is that they limited God. It's not so much that they built the calf because they not that that's a good thing.

They built this golden calf, called it God, danced around it. But that didn't keep them out of the promised land. It was a symptomatic of something very deep within them, a very deep root of unbelief.

But nevertheless, what kept them out of the promised land was the limiting of God. And it's a journey. It's a progression.

And when they finally came to the shores of the very place of God promised them, which is a type for you and I, it is the fullness of the life of Christ. It is it is what Peter, the apostle said, I believe in second Peter, when he said we are given exceeding and great promises. And by these we become partakers of his divine nature.

It's by these promises. But you see, they had limited him. They had formed a system of belief, as it is in their heart that said God can do this and God can't do that.

And it had come from these dry places, come from these wilderness places where they had they looked around and they there was such unbelief in them that it caused the grief to come into the heart of God. And they ended up turning back and not going into this place of promise. Eternity is going to reveal it, folks, when we stand before the throne of God, what you and I were really called to do, where we were really called to go.

And it's not just going to be you and I here today, but multiple multiples of millions that have professed to know Christ and came to the place, as it is, where they were right on the threshold of what God had called

them to be and to do. And they looked in and they could not see the resource because they had developed a pattern of not believing God all the way along in their lives so that when they finally get to the place where God's calling comes and God's calling will come. They simply can't go because they've never believed Him from the beginning.

Verse 13 in Psalm 78 says, listen to what God did, He divided the sea and caused them to pass through. He made the waters to stand as a heap. In the daytime also He led them with a cloud and all the night with a light of fire.

He claved the rocks in the wilderness and gave them drink out of the great depths. He brought streams also out of the rock and caused waters to run down like rivers. And yet, and they provoked yet more against Him by provoking the most high in the wilderness.

And they tempted God in their heart by asking meat for their lust. And they spoke against God and they said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness? The scripture says they tempted Him. And firstly in verse 17, they provoked Him in the wilderness by asking meat for their lust.

In verse 18, they began to ask for the wrong things. And they began to ask God for things, not that God said they need or was leading them into knowing they need. But they began to ask God for things they thought they needed.

In other words, their faith took a natural route as it is. They began to walk by natural sense. They began to think with the natural mind.

Now I'm talking about natural as that which man is apart from God in his fallen condition. They began to walk by their own reasoning. And in this natural walk, they started a list of things that they felt that they needed.

And they began to, that's where their prayers began to go. Not what God said they need or not what God was, but what they felt they needed. And this is the prayer life.

And they began to ask God for things that were going to bring them into a place of failure spiritually. And God knew it. That's why He was angry.

He wasn't so much angry because they asked for quail. He gave them quail. He gave them so much that it literally made them sick.

But the reality was He knew how damaging this focus was. When you and I are praying prayers that God didn't intend for us to pray. We say, for example, Lord, just move that person out of my office.

This is what I need. And then the Lord says, no, what you really need is love and patience. You don't need that person moved out.

You need love and patience. If I give you what you're asking for, then you will not have the resources you need to follow where I'm asking you to go. It reminds me of the story of the little boy that went to school.

Very, very first day in school. And came home at the end of the day. And his mother said to him, well, did you learn anything today? He looked at his mother and said, well, not enough.

I guess they want me to go back again tomorrow. And that's the way many, many people are. If this young boy or girl is going to end up a doctor is going to end up somebody that makes a difference in society.

There are a lot of classrooms. There are a lot of tests that are going to have to be passed. There's a lot of learning that's going to have to come into that life.

And all of the materials will be provided along the way. The knowledge will be there. The learning will be there.

Everything that will be placed before them has been tested. It's been proven. They can trust it.

I'm speaking strictly in the realm of science and medical knowledge. They can trust those that have gone before. They can learn from these things.

But if we're constantly living not to go back another day, not to go into another trial. We are really forfeiting the very foundation blocks that God wants to build into our lives. So that when we finally get to where we need to go.

And we will have the strength to walk, to walk and to make a difference in our generation. They spoke against God. Verse 19 said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness? And you see, this verse tells us that when the tougher times came, they didn't have the faith they needed to get through.

Folks, we're going into some difficult waters. The whole world is. There's no doubt about this.

The scripture tells us whether or not it's in our time, there's a good chance it will be. And irrespective of its collective going into difficulty or not. Many of us here today will have difficult days, personal difficult days in the future.

And what you see, because they were not willing to learn in the wilderness. They're not willing to let God prove himself in the wilderness. They really lived in their minds to escape the wilderness and everything that the wilderness was producing in and around them.

And they said in verse 19, can God furnish a table in this wilderness? In other words, can he supply what I will need to go where he is calling me? And one of the greatest sins that you will ever commit against God is to look in the mirror any given morning. And what you're looking at, you're saying, no, no, it could never happen. I could never be this kind of a person.

I could never go there. In effect, in Proverbs, don't turn their chapter six verses 16 to 19. The Lord lists seven things that he hates.

And if you take the time to study these things, you will find that in some measure they're all rooted and grounded in unbelief. It's amazing when you begin to see it. He says, for example, the first thing he says is I hate a proud look.

Now, is not the ultimate expression of pride to look into the face of God and declare that there's something in and through you that he is not able to perform? Isn't that the ultimate of pride? Looking right into God's word. In other words, looking him into the face and saying, I know what your word says, but I don't believe that you're able to perform it through me. I have a sense in my heart of where you're calling, but I don't believe that this thing is ever going to be realized in my life.

Ultimately, it's pride. It's a system of belief, as it is, that is exalting itself above the knowledge of God. Amazing.

When you begin to see it, he says, I hate a lying tongue. It is not the ultimate of lying, running around and saying, I believe God. When in your heart, you really don't.

How many people run around? They're going to conferences on faith. They're talking nonstop about faith, but they really don't believe God. They don't believe God for their marriage.

They don't believe God for their children. Starting right in the home, they don't believe God. They're always looking for a way out of the wilderness, looking for a way out of the responsibility that God has given them and for the nurturing that God promises to give to get through these dry times.

The Lord says, I hate feet that be swift in running to mischief. And think of those who cover up unbelief with religious zeal, convincing others that where you are traveling is indeed the place where God's glory is manifested. Jesus said there are some who travel land and sea to make somebody just like they are.

And he was not very complimentary about the kind of a person they become feet that be swift in running to religion, as it is. But they're running away from what God is truly calling them to be. Genesis chapter three.

If you'll turn there with me, please, in your Bible, verses five and six now shows us the root of limiting God right in the Garden of Eden. Here's Satan says, For God does know in the day that you eat thereof, then your eyes shall be open and you shall be as God's knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes and a tree to be desired to make one wise.

She took of the fruit thereof and did eat and gave also unto her husband with her and he did eat. You see, here's the root. The central core of unbelief is that the way of God is somehow incomplete.

You see, this is what Satan was trying to sow and successfully sowed into humanity. The God God's way is not complete. There's there's there's not fullness there.

It's not as Paul says that in him we live, move and have our being. No, it's not quite that easy. There's there's something else we've got to help God.

We've got to work with God following by faith and confidence is not good enough. Somehow I must know and be able to reason all things just as God does. You see, this this was the devil's temptation.

You see, if you partake of this forbidden fruit, then then you'll just you'll be just like God. You'll be able to judge your own pathway. You'll be able to say this is good and I can perform it and this is evil and I cannot.

Really, it's unbelief that the devil was sowing in the heart of humanity, getting it in through the seed of rebellion. Does that not then make the theology and we have an abounding amount of theology today where man takes his own initiative, man charts his own course and through the efforts of his own energy, he believes that he will attain all that God wants him to be is not this. In reality, a theology built upon the foundation of unbelief.

When you and I are mixed into it, when we have to figure it all out, when we have to, in a sense, be the ones who are doing it, when we are looking with the natural eye, we are charting our own course. We're saying, yeah, this is good. This is evil.

And we simply are not willing to take God at his word. We're building on a foundation of unbelief. Now, I want you to keep in mind that these people died in the wilderness.

They died there. They would have argued their theological position. I'm telling you, until you got weary and walked away, exasperated, they would have said, God is our God.

How dare you even intimate that we're falling short of his glory? We have the history of coming through the sea. The law has been given to us. We have incredible spiritual leadership.

How dare you even remotely suggest that we are going to die in the wilderness? But, folks, they died in the wilderness. And they died because when hard times came to them, they did not have the resource to get through. They died in the wilderness because along the journey, they're not willing to just simply trust God and believe him.

It's as simple as that. It gets no deeper than that. They're not willing to believe that God's promises were all that they would ever need for life and for godliness.

And many in our day who have never found out what faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ really is are going to die in the wilderness, folks. This is something the Holy Spirit has planted so deep in my heart. There are many, many, many who are professing the name of Christ, but when difficult days come, they're simply going to die in the wilderness.

They're not going to have the faith to trust God in the difficult times, and they're going to turn back to the things they've left behind for their security, or at least they should have left them behind for their security. The problem with the children of Israel is that they never really left it behind in their hearts. They made a pretense of leaving it behind, but they had a deeply embedded trust in the things of this world.

God, give us grace in the coming days. Give us grace now to find him in the wilderness. Give us grace to not try to be figuring everything out and telling God how he should answer the situation.

Give us grace to go into the prayer closet and say, Lord, I believe that all things work together for good. All things. For those who are called according, you've called me.

You've called me to walk with you. You've called me, and I'm destined to bring glory to your name. I believe with all my heart that all things work together for good.

Thanks be to God. Now, contrast this to Joshua chapter 3. Just go ahead in your Bible a little bit to Joshua chapter 3, verses 1 to 5. Now, this is the generation who went in. Now, I don't know about you, but I'm not interested in dying in the wilderness.

I want to go in. I want to go into the fullness of Christ for my life. I want to put my feet up in my bed, whatever day that's going to be, may not even be that long from now.

And I want to just say, it's been good. I've walked with God like the apostle Paul. As much as I know, I've finished my course.

I've not denied his name. I've believed him. I've walked into situations believing God, knowing what he is speaking and making the declaration of that and seeing the kingdom of God come.

Joshua rose early in the morning, chapter 3, verse 1, and they were removed from Shittim and came to Jordan. He and all the children of Israel lodged there before they passed over. And it came to pass after three days that the officers went through the hosts and they commanded the people, saying, When you see the ark of the covenant, now this speaks of the power and the provision and the presence of God.

That's what the ark speaks about. And he says, When you see this, when you see the power of God, when you have a vision of the provision, because remember in the ark of the covenant, at least initially was Aaron's staff, which was a declaration of God that I can make a dry stick to bloom. Hallelujah.

Thanks be to God. Talk about hope for all of us here this morning. In that ark was manna, and the manna was a type of the fact that God can provide in any situation.

He brought bread right out of heaven when there was no other way for the people to eat. Their sustenance came directly from the hand of God. And in it were also the Ten Commandments, which is a type as it is of the word of God.

We have everything we need in Christ. It's all there in Christ. And he says, When you see this ark of the covenant of the Lord your God and the priest, the Levites bearing it, then you shall remove from your place and go after it.

Praise God. I can give an altar call right now in this church. You should remove from your place wherever you are.

If you're sitting in unbelief, you should get up and get out of that place and go after the promises of God. You should keep a space between you and it about 2000 cubits by measure. Come not near unto it that you may know the way by you must go for you have not passed this way before heretofore.

And there are many who have not gone this way yet. You've gone in small measure into the place of trusting God's provision in the wilderness. But now the Lord says, No, you've got to trust me.

Now, you've got to learn the lessons. Now, you've got to get this deeply embedded confidence in your heart. Now, you've got to trust me for strength and provision.

Now, right where you are. Don't pray to get out of your situation. Pray that you may find my life in it.

Pray for something deeper than just walking through this life with a surfacy kind of indulgent, happy Christianity. Pray that the deeper lessons may be found. God needs a voice in this last day.

And the voices that God is raising up are the voices of people who've gone through these wilderness places. It's the voice of Joshua and Caleb who came back to the trembling masses and tore their garments and says, No, no, don't turn back. Don't turn back.

Our enemy's defense is gone. They're bred for us. Don't look at their size.

Don't look at the strength of the enemy. God has called us to do this. He's called us to walk in these places.

And He's well able to give us the land. And Joshua said to the people in verse 5, Sanctify yourselves. For tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.

Joshua was saying, Set yourselves apart from the thinking of this world. Sanctify yourself. You are called to be a different people.

You're called to show forth the praises of the one who's called you out of darkness and into His marvelous light. You're not called to be a testimony of human reasoning. You're called to be a testimony of supernatural power in this generation.

Tomorrow, the Lord will do wonders. Tomorrow, I speak it prophetically. I know it in my heart.

Tomorrow, God will begin to do things you've not even thought of or imagined. Tomorrow, you'll find resource coming into your heart. If Christ is in you, the resources of God are yours.

The resource to forgive. The resource to endure. The resource to believe.

The resource to trust. The resource to love. The resource to have long suffering.

The resource to call things that are not as if they are. I see these people coming through these waters. And this is how.

The only way into the promised land is through the waters, folks. There's no other way. You've got to get through the waters of God's word.

And then the first test of the promised land is Jericho. And it's a test as to whether or not God can or God has triumphed. Whether or not He's given gifts unto men and whether or not He's opened doorways to the naturally impossible.

Praise God. Praise God. Praise God.

Praise God. It's time to get up and march around the impossible one more time. March around.

Where you thought you couldn't go. What you thought you would never achieve. Where you thought the enemy would always have the victory in your life.

It's time to get up and in the grace of God, march around it again. What do you need to march around today? Do you believe that God can? Or will you limit the Holy One of Israel? And, of course, this is the question. Do you believe that God can? Or will you limit Him? Do you believe that God can? Or will you limit the Holy One of Israel? The greatest sin, I believe, that Israel committed, having known God, having seen Him, and made a declaration that God can't bring me in.

Think of those who had to face exactly what you do today and yet made the right choice. When God needs a man to deliver His whole chosen people out of bondage, who does He pick? A failure. Does He pick somebody young and strong? No, He picks a man who's 80 years of age.

Does He pick someone who's eloquent in speech? No, He picks a man who's a stammerer by his own account. Called to speak for God. Called to walk in in not natural strength, but supernatural strength.

Think if Moses had made the wrong decision. Think if he'd looked into the burning bush and said, no, you really have the wrong man this time. God, you can't do this.

This mixture of the supernatural and the natural. Think of Gideon, a young man with a poor self-image. When God called him to lead many into freedom, he said, wait a minute now, my father's house is the

least.

I'm from the least tribe. My father's house is the least in that tribe, and I'm the least in my father's house. There's a man with an image problem.

A very poor self-image. But the Lord calls him, He says, I'm calling you, you mighty men of valor. And in the original text, it means men of resources.

In other words, I've called you, and with the call has come the resources. I have a call on you. The Lord has called everyone here to something.

Whether it's you're going to abound in His love, or you're going to be a man or woman of faith. He has called you according to His resources. And He doesn't call us where we're strong.

You see, this is where Israel made the mistake, and this is where a lot of people make the mistake. They follow their natural thinking and say, well, because I can play the guitar, obviously I'm going to be a Christian musician. Not necessarily.

Think of Paul with all of his theological knowledge. He was theologically brilliant. Wouldn't he be the natural man to go and debate with the Jews? Wouldn't he be the one that you would pick and send if it was all about resumes? No, God takes Paul and sends him to the Gentiles.

So he's relegated to talking to people who are standing around an altar that says, to the unknown God. Starting at point zero, Paul has to begin to argue with them the presence of God. Who would you send to the Jews? The Lord takes Peter, just a man who's strong-willed, full of fluff and bluster.

He does not have the education of Paul. You remember the Pharisees looking at them saying, and perceiving the wisdom with which they spoke, they took knowledge that they were ignorant and unlearned men. And the only thing they could say about them is they have been with Jesus.

Folks, God does not move us. Quite often he moves us in the area of our weakness so that he might be strong, so that our testimony might be of him, not of ourselves. We live in a church age where people have moved in the natural, and they've filled positions in the natural.

That's why they're writing books telling others how to get where they are. Because it was a how-to formula that got them there in the first place. It was not faith in God.

And folks, apart from faith, it's impossible to please him. For he who comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. Praise God.

Let him call me where I'm weak. I praise God that he's never called me where I'm strong. He calls me where I'm weak, that his strength might be made manifest.

Think of Joseph for a moment, a man deeply wounded by his own family. He has every right by man's standards to be bitter and to want vengeance. And God calls this man.

He is the one who has suffered under the hands of the very people that God calls him to feed and be kind to. Even in his years of pain, praise God, he's called in his weakness to be an exhibition as it is of the strength of God. Joseph's brothers must have stood there.

There had to be something in the heart that would have caused them to say, only God could make this man like this. Because we know in our natural state we would exact vengeance. We would send our family out and tell them to starve.

We would make them pay a price. How could this man forgive like this? Praise God. Some of you have been in captivity to bitterness.

God's not just going to heal you, but he's going to make you ambassadors of his kindness and of his goodness. And some of you to the very people who have caused the pain in your life in the first place. Think of Esther called at a critical moment, a juncture in history.

And most likely she may have considered because she was a woman and didn't seemingly have much influence at the moment with her king and in her society. She didn't think that much could be accomplished through her life. But oh, how wrong she turned out to be.

Oh, Esther, how wrong you are this morning. Every Esther in the balcony, in the annex, how wrong you are this morning to believe that you don't have an influence in this society, to believe that God can't use you. Blessed be God.

God, give us a thousand Esther's right out of this church. God, give us a thousand. And lastly, think of Lazarus.

So dead, so wrapped up in death that it was just easier to stay where he was. Called by the voice of God to both live and to testify. Remember that Lazarus sat later on after his resurrection, he sat at the table with Jesus and the Bible says because of him many believed.

Praise God. How many are here this morning? You're saying, oh, can God bring life in this wilderness? I'm in a worse position than anybody else in this church. I'm just so spiritually dead and I'm so wrapped up in spiritual death.

My mind is wrapped up. My past is wrapped up. My history is wrapped up.

My image of myself is wrapped up. I don't believe. And all of a sudden, this morning, you hear the voice of God calling you.

You have this stirring in your heart. And Lazarus had to hear this voice. And he had to make a choice, the same choice that you have to make.

You either limit God and say, no, I just don't believe he can do it. I just don't believe he can bring me out of this place. Or you do what Lazarus did.

With the little bit of strength that you have, you get up. And you start moving towards that voice. Now there was a process.

It was slow, probably, for him to get out of the tomb. And then people had to be sent to unravel all of the death, the wrappings that were around him. But later we find him sitting at the table with Jesus with such a testimony of life that the Pharisees wanted to kill him.

That's the ultimate, I think, of testimony of life. When the religious want to kill you, you surely are alive. Hallelujah.

I say God can. I say God can. I say that he can furnace a table in this wilderness.

And I can make the choice not to limit him. I can in my heart. That was the part that Israel played.

That was their only part, really. As God says, this is what I'm going to do. And they were called to believe him.

But they could never cross that threshold. Always had to figure it out. Always had to tell God what it is that they needed.

But I say he can furnace a table in the wilderness. David found it. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.

Hallelujah. In the presence of every voice that's ever cursed me. In the presence of every present demonic power that says I can't.

God prepares a table. And on that table, he tells me I can. Because his life is in me.

He has triumphed over the power of death. He has triumphed over the power of hell. He has defeated everything of darkness.

And because he lives in me, I can. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. I can.

Praise God. It's an incredible way to live, folks. It's not presumption, it's just faith.

I can. It doesn't mean I'm going from mountaintop to mountaintop. Most often it's valley to valley for seasons.

But I can learn. I can grow. And when the real test finally comes, I'll be able to stand because I've not run.

I've not dictated to God. I've not had to reason at all in my mind. I've trusted him.

Hallelujah. I will not limit the Holy One of Israel. Bless God.

Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus. Some of you today are going to move to this.

God's already speaking to you. I don't have to tell you what he's saying. You already know what the Holy Spirit is saying.

There are some here today that what God has been speaking about your life is so preposterous to your thinking that only the Holy Spirit could make it a reality. But that's what makes it a glorious life. We're not called to be natural.

We're called to be supernatural in our God. Bless the Lord. We're going to stand in a moment.

We're going to worship here and the education annex. And if the Holy Spirit is calling you to believe that in your wilderness, God can start to feed you. Not to get you out of the wilderness, but feed you in the wilderness.

If you have in your heart a willingness to say, Lord, teach me here. Build your character into me here. Give me what I need here.

I'm not looking to escape anymore. I'm not living to escape. I'm going to live to find you here so that tomorrow, when the next trial comes, I'll find you there.

And when the next one comes, I'll find you there. And then when finally the day comes, when there's a line drawn between possible and impossible, I will go with you like Joshua and Caleb did. Lord, I'll go with you and I will believe you.

When everyone around says it can't be done, I will say God can. Hallelujah. You have to have a history to arrive at this.

You have to have a history with God to believe this. You don't just get to it all of a sudden. You have a history with God.

I could prove it from every life that I've read to you from in this text. You have to have a history. And the history starts where you are right now.

Bless God. I can. I can be content in my workplace.

I can because of Christ. I can find fulfillment in my marriage. I can because of Christ.

I can be a father or mother to my children, no matter what they're living like. I can change and I can believe that God will use them for his glory. I can love my unlovable neighbor, co-worker.

I can because Christ's love is in me. Not that I can't do it in my own strength, but Christ is in me. And in the power of his strength and his promise, I can.

So I'm not going to limit God. I'm not going to look in the mirror anymore because there's nothing there that can glorify God, except the heart of faith and trust in him. Praise God.

Joshua said, up, sanctify yourselves. Tomorrow, set yourselves apart from the thinking of this world. Tomorrow, God will begin to do great wonders through you.

That's my altar call. If the Holy Spirit is drawing you, let's all stand together. Make your way down, please.

We'll pray together. We're going to believe God. Balcony, you can go to either exit.

Make your way down here, please. In the annex, if you could stand between the screens. Bless the Lord.

Let's worship. Greg, if we can for a little while. Trust him.

Believe him. Praise God. Next Saturday is going to be a rather special day for me for a deeper reason than what I shared with you earlier.

About a little over 13 years ago, the Holy Spirit sent Teresa and I and our children here to stand with Pastor David and hold up his hands at what turned out to be a very difficult time for anybody that may remember those days. There were some people decided that they wanted to, they were tired of leadership and they wanted to lead. And it's the age old problem that you find all the way through the Bible.

I brought my family into this and ended up standing between Brother Dave and some very vocal enemies. Subsequently, my family took quite a beating here for over a year. Katie and I didn't know the depth of what was going on, only that the Lord told me not to fight back and not to speak from this pulpit.

But Katie was one time on a retreat. She was only 12, put in a room by herself and told that she was evil by people that should have known better. And had to endure this constantly.

They really, really went after her. It was the spirit that was trying to destroy this church and really went after her because that was the quickest way to my heart. I would go in my office every day and cry.

Every day I would go in my office and cry. And then one day the Lord spoke to me and he said, Carter, in everything in me as a father, thought, what have I done? What have I brought my children into? Are they going to be sacrificed on this altar? And the Lord said, you look after my house and I will look after your house. That was what he spoke to me.

And then he told me she was about 15 when she went into a terrible spin because we had to protect her actually in this house. Shelter her, keep her. And yet in the school she was attending, which was not Christian, as we know it, everybody was positive and reassuring.

Here they were telling her that she shouldn't be singing. She's only singing because her father was a pastor. And yet in her school they were giving her the lead role in plays and things like that.

And so she became very confused about who Christians really were. I went into prayer one day and the Lord showed me the future of my children. I'm not suggesting he will do that in the same measure for everybody, but he did for me because I needed to know.

And I've watched to the letter everything that God spoke and all three of my children being fulfilled even today as we speak. And Katie, he told me, said she's going to marry a Christian guitar player, musician. He will be a very godly man.

And the two of them will be involved in missions all of their lives. They'll be very happy together. And she'd be a wonderful compliment to her husband.

Now, that's all I had when she was 15. You have to understand, that's all I had. Now, I had a choice.

I could take it in the natural and say, I've got to get out of here. And I've got to find a more nurturing environment for my daughter. Or I could trust God in the wilderness.

All my life, I've not run from what God called me to do. And I knew this is where I was supposed to be. And next Saturday, you see, I'm going to get to come down that aisle with the same girl in my arm who loves God.

Much of the church will be here. I think in some measure making right a past wrong. There'll be healing for everybody.

And it will be something that declares the glory of God. The Lord says, no, I'm the God of the impossible. And nothing that my hand is on can be destroyed.

No path that I have made straight can be turned crooked. I'm faithful. And I want to challenge you to not run from your wilderness.

But find God in it. Find strength in it. Find his life in it.

Because there is a purpose. In all things, there is a purpose. Thanks be to God.

Don't waste your time praying about always trying to get out of something. Find God in it where you are now. Hallelujah.

I felt I needed to share that because that would be an encouragement to many. In your situation, God will be faithful. You look after his house.

You look after your house. I promise you. I'm just going to pray for you.

Lord Jesus, thank you for those that you've gathered at this altar. Lord, this is truly a solemn moment. I feel in my spirit like we are indeed another generation called to go in to inherit the life of Christ.

We're coming through a wilderness. Oh, God, help us now to learn every lesson that we need to learn today. Lessons that will deepen us in our trust of you.

So that when the time comes to go in to the impossible, we will not hesitate. We will go because we found you in the wilderness. I pray, God, that our testimony, everyone who's at this altar and those who are here in their heart, would be just like David.

He said, Lord, because of you, I've run through a troop. And because of you, I've leapt over a wall. You're a shield and you're a buckler to those who put their trust in you.

David knew his strength came from God and his victory came from God. I pray now, Lord, as we separate ourselves to you, that this day and tomorrow that the miraculous begin to happen. New minds, new hearts, that giftings of the Holy Spirit begin to abound.

Instead of a closed fist, there'll be a tender hand. Instead of a lying tongue, there'll be a voice of truth. Instead of gossip, there'll be kindness.

Indifference will be replaced with compassion. The miraculous will begin to happen. I pray, God, for moments of faith when you give us all words of knowledge to speak into the hearts of very troubled people who need to know there is a God who loves them.

I ask for the giftings of the Holy Spirit to absolutely abound. That we may be voices that cast out the power of darkness. That we may lay hands on the sick and they would recover.

Lord God, I pray that every deadly thing that the enemy has infused into the minds and hearts of your people, God, be broken. This very moment as I pray, Satan, I stand against you. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I resist you and I make a declaration to you.

You have no authority here. You have no power here. You cannot dominate the people here.

These are the people of God. They've been called to bear witness and be a testimony of the fact that He lives. You have no place here.

I make that declaration. You have no hold. You have no place.

Your lies, we take them, we trample them underfoot. We believe that Jesus Christ has triumphed over you. We walk in the strength of His triumph.

God Almighty, let this be a Christmas like no other. Lord, we ask for this. We thank you for it, God.

We thank you, Father. We thank you in Jesus' mighty name.

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