

Have You Seen Your Calling Yet

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon challenges believers to recognize and embrace their unique calling from God, empowering them to overcome fears and doubts through faith.

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Scripture: Exodus 4:10

Topics: "Calling"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher addresses the issue of Christians seeking their calling and purpose in life. He emphasizes that many believers are searching for guidance and understanding of what God has called them to do. The preacher highlights the importance of trusting in God and walking with Him, rather than relying on principles or steps for victory in the Christian life. He uses the example of Moses, who despite witnessing God's power and promises, still struggled with unbelief. The sermon concludes with a prayer for God's kingdom to advance and for Jesus' name to be honored.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other takes are available by writing World Challenge PO Box 260 Lindell, Texas 75771 or calling 903-963-8626.

You are welcome to make additional cassettes of this message for free distribution to friends. However, for all other forms of reproduction or electronic transmission, existing copyright laws apply. My message this morning is a question.

And the question is, have you seen your calling yet? Have you? Have you seen your calling yet? And there are so many people who say, Lord, just show me what you've called me to do. Lead me, guide me. Give me understanding of what you've called me to be and how you've called me to live as a Christian.

And so many of that is the depressing question, especially on the heart of a hungry Christian. Now, those that are not hungry for God really don't even consider these issues. These are really issues for those that have that inward desire to live for God and to live a life that is honoring to him.

Father, I thank you for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, I thank you for your quickening power. I thank you for the life that you give.

I thank you that if you come, the word comes alive. If you withhold your presence, it's only a dead letter. It can do no good for any heart.

And so, Holy Spirit, we acknowledge you. We acknowledge your presence. We acknowledge our need of you.

I acknowledge my need. I dare never stand and speak the word of God without your anointing. Father, I thank you for the grace to disappear, that Jesus, you may appear, that your word may be larger than life.

God, that your truth may find a lodging place in the hearts of all hearers that you've gathered in this house today and those that will hear this message in the coming weeks. Father, we thank you for it, God, with all our hearts, that your kingdom is going to advance and the name of Jesus Christ is going to be loved and honored in our hearts and in this house today. We thank you for it in Jesus' mighty name.

Exodus chapter 4, if you'll turn there with me, please. The second book from the beginning of the Bible for those that are new to Christ. Exodus chapter 4. Have you seen your calling yet? We're going to begin at verse 10, read through to verse 17.

And Moses said unto the Lord... Now, you have to understand that Moses has been given an incredible call here of God, which we're going to talk about. And this is his response to the Lord. And it's a typical response of many people who are called by God.

And Moses said to the Lord, Oh, my God, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant. But I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue. And the Lord said unto him, Who made man's mouth? Or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the Lord? Now, therefore, go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.

And he said... Now, this is Moses. Oh, my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses.

And he said, Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee. And when he seeth thee, he shall be glad in his heart.

And thou shalt speak unto him and put words in his mouth, and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people. And he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

And thou shalt take this rod in thy hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs. Now, this man, Moses, was a man specifically prepared of God for a mission that God had entrusted to his life. And I think it's important for all of us, before we even get into this message, to understand that God has a purpose for your life.

You and I were not saved just to come to church and experience his presence and sing songs. Now, that's part of it. That's wonderful, because we are created to worship him.

But we are created for a purpose. There is a unique design that God planned from before the foundation of the world for you, even before you were formed in your mother's womb. God knew you.

And he had a plan for you. And it's a calling that is very unique to you. No one else can fulfill your calling.

You have a unique spot, as it is in the wall of the temple of God. You are a stone that is being fashioned individually by God's hand. And no one else can do what God has called you to do.

Now, the Lord gave Moses an incredible mission. He told him, go and get your family out of captivity. You have, as it were, almost 2 to 3 million relatives, brothers and sisters.

We can liken it to you and I today. For example, we know all nations are born of one blood. We have family, as it is all throughout the world, of every race, every nationality, color, every language, every culture.

And God said to Moses, I'm calling you now to go and get them out of captivity. They've been gripped by a horrible demonic power that is now squeezing the very life out of them and is causing their firstborn to be put to death. It's causing their hope and their strength to diminish.

And I'm calling you now, Moses. I'm calling you to stand and I'm going to do something in you and through you that is going to release millions out of the captivity of darkness. Moses, go get them and bring them into a place of promise which I've provided for them.

I don't see any higher calling on the life of a Christian than to be God-gripped, than to allow the Holy Ghost to have access and sway to every area of our lives and hearts and say, Holy Spirit, grip me, grip my mind, my thoughts, my heart, my actions, my past, present, future. I surrender it all into your hands and I ask you, Holy Spirit, to take my life and use me to glorify the name of Jesus Christ by bringing people that you love out of captivity and bringing them into the glorious freedom of Jesus Christ, that wonderful victory that was won on Calvary 2,000 years ago. And the Lord says to Moses, I'm not just calling you, but I'm going to give you power over their oppressors.

There's a power that is oppressing my people. God said, I'm going to give you power over this power. In Exodus chapter 4, verses 3 and 4, the Lord said, Verse 2, he said, What do you have in your hand? And he said, I have a rod, the shepherd's staff.

And he said, cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground and it became a serpent and Moses fled before it. And the Lord said to Moses, put forth thine hand and take it by the tail.

And he put forth his hand and caught it and it became a rod in his hand. Now, some commentators say that the serpent was the symbol of power in Egypt. Many of the pharaohs would have the symbol of a cobra on their headdress.

And there may be some validity to that. Essentially speaking, God was saying to Moses, listen, I'm going to give you to what I'm about to do in your life and through your life. And if you will trust my word, I'm going to give you power over the power that oppresses my people.

He said, throw it down. It became a serpent and he ran from it. And you see that the man or woman, the person who doesn't know God will always flee from their fears.

And God said to Moses, no, I'm going to do something so deep in you that you're not going to be afraid of fear anymore. Fear is not going to have any power over you. Moses, you're going to stand before the most powerful, wicked ruler in your generation.

And with nothing more than a stick in your hand, confidence in God, you're going to make a declaration to him. You're going to say, let my people go. And Moses, he's going to have to obey you.

It's an incredible thing. I often wonder as I read this story, why did Pharaoh put up with this? Why did Pharaoh for so long let this old man and his brother come walking into his presence and make these declarations and bring these plagues upon Egypt? You see, he was powerless to do anything. There's only one answer.

God's hand was on the entire situation. He is in control of everything that happens. Nothing happens without his permission.

He said, listen, you don't have to flee now any longer, Moses. You don't have to run. Moses had been running for 40 years from fear.

He had in his own self-will slain an Egyptian. He had attempted to bring about deliverance for his own people in his own way, and it had been rejected. Fearing the exposure of his self-effort, he had run into a land called Midian and had been there for 40 years, fleeing as it is himself from the power of Egypt.

But the Lord said to Moses now, and this is very significant, he said, put forth your hand and take it by the tail. Now, you see, if you know a cobra or any kind of a venomous snake, they don't turn their back unless they're running from something. I don't know if a snake has a back.

I don't know if that's the appropriate thing to say, but let's just say they don't turn tail unless they're fleeing. And a venomous snake doesn't flee. A venomous snake by instinct stands and fights with everything that it's got.

And God said to Moses, don't you run from the snake anymore. Because of what I'm about to do, the snake is going to run from you. And Moses, you run, you just go and grab it by the tail.

You see, a snake keeper or charmer would never grab a snake by the tail because it'll turn around and bite him. They would always pick them up from behind the head. But Moses says, no, the power of Egypt is going to flee from you, Moses.

I'm going to give you power. You see, Jesus Christ has commissioned the church of which you are on our part. He told us that we're to be witnesses of the victory of Jesus and his power over the powers of darkness in the places that he sends us to throughout the entire earth.

Acts 180 said, you shall receive power after the Holy Ghost has come upon you. You shall be witnesses of me in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth. This is the call of the church of Jesus Christ.

He says, you are not to run from your fears anymore. You're to face your fears. You are to walk headlong and you are to take what formerly chased you.

You're to chase it now. And by faith, you're to take it up in your hand. Jesus himself said in Luke 10, 19, Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy.

And nothing shall by any means hurt you. He didn't say, I give you power over some of the enemy's power. He said, I give you power over all of the enemy's power.

And nothing shall by any means hurt you. Now, leave a marker in Exodus chapter 4 and go to 1 Corinthians in the New Testament, if you will. Right after the book of Romans, you'll have Acts, Romans and then 1 Corinthians.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 1, Paul is speaking about an incredible truth that thankfully some in his generation were able to lay hold of. 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 23. He says, But we preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness.

But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power. And the word power in the Greek text means the enabling power. We preach Christ, Paul says, as the enabling power of God and the wisdom, or may I also call it the enabling wisdom of God.

Paul is saying to the Romans, We preach Christ as everything a man needs to do everything that God has called him to do. We preach Christ as the source of entire life and strength to fulfill the call to the letter that God puts on every man and woman's life. He said, Because the foolishness of God, verse 25, is wiser than men.

In other words, if God were able to make himself foolish, even as foolish as he could make himself, he would still be wiser than the wisest natural man. And the weakness of God is stronger than men. For you see your calling.

My question was, have you seen yet your calling? For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, and not many noble are called. For God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. Now there's a reason why those who are naturally strong are not called.

There's a reason why the kingdom of God cannot advance through people who rest on natural talent and ability. And you're going to see that in a minute. But God has made a choice.

He said, I don't want those that are strong in themselves. I want those who know they are foolish. I want those who know that they are weak.

I want those who know that they are base. They are the lowest things of the world. I want those that everyone else has cast out and despised.

I want those that the natural man in the natural world wants nothing to do with. These are the qualifications to be used in the kingdom of God. God has chosen these things, yea, the things which are not to bring to naught the things that are.

Or in other words, to take away the power, to make idle it actually means. To take away the existing power. God said, I have chosen the weakest, most despised, foolish vessels I can find in the universe.

And I put my enabling power upon them. That through them, the existing powers that captivate the hearts and lives of millions of people may be broken. And others may be released from captivity into the glorious liberty of Jesus Christ.

That all men may come to the understanding it's not by human might. It's not by human power. It's by my spirit, saith the Lord.

It's by the grace, the almighty goodness of God that we live, Paul says, and move and we have our being. Verse 29, he says, that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

That according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. You see your calling. Now, listen to me carefully.

Moses, in spite of all the promises of God towards him and all the displays of God's power. God had given him signs. He had shown him the serpent.

He was able to pick it up by the tail and became by faith. It couldn't harm him. He gave him another sign of.

He said, put your hand inside your coat, take it out. It was leprous. He put it back in again.

He took it out. It was holy. He said, I can do anything.

I can heal. I can restore. Leprosy was a disease, of course, which was the ultimate uncleanness in that generation.

You were cast away as it is from the society that you were part of, put into an unclean place. Never to return all of your life to be walking around crying unclean everywhere you go and having people recoiled from you in horror. And God said to Moses, there's no longer anything that I can't cleanse.

There's no situation I can't change. He was giving him the displays of his power in some very tangible ways so that he could understand it. And some of you, many, many who are here today, you are an absolute testimony of the changing power of God.

You know you're a living miracle. You sit here today. You say, I'd be in a mental hospital.

I'd be in prison. I'd be dead of drugs if God's spirit hadn't come upon me. You were insane.

But now you sit here in your right mind. You are vicious and vile. And God came and gave you a new heart and gave you a new spirit.

You say, Pastor, this is true. This is true. There's nothing impossible with God.

He can change anything he wants to change. And Moses knew this. God gave him the sign and the knowledge.

He had the knowledge. But somewhere along the line, the knowledge has got to translate itself into a belief. A heartfelt, life-changing belief that this change is not just for me, but it's for all who call on the name of the Lord.

And lastly, he said, I'll give you another sign. He said, take water out of the river. If Pharaoh doesn't believe, pour it and it'll become blood on the dry ground.

He said, I can change any element. I can change any situation. I mean, the typology is obvious.

Ultimately, it was the blood of God Almighty himself that was spilled on the ground, that made the pathway to freedom. And it's incredible when you begin to see it, because everything points to the cross.

Everything is about the covenant that God made with his son and about the new life that he promises each one of us through him.

But in spite of all the promises and all the displays of God's power, Moses still had to fight through the same struggles of unbelief which you and I have through today. We all fight with unbelief. You want to know how I know why? Because the Bible says every temptation, every trial is common to all men.

I fight with it. You fight with it. We all fight with it.

It's a struggle sometimes when we look in the mirror to believe that God actually can do to us what he says he will do. We hear the distant voice of the spirit calling and we make a mistake of looking in the mirror and saying, God in heaven, that's a wonderful idea. I hope you sure find somebody that can do it, because it's not going to be me.

Exodus 4.10, Moses getting this incredible call, he says, Lord, I'm not eloquent. I've never been before and I'm not now, but I'm of a slow speech and of a slow tongue. Moses was basically saying, that's an incredible thing.

You're calling somebody to stand before the most powerful king that this world knows. And I don't have the ability. I don't know what to say.

I don't have the power. I don't have the resources to do this thing. I have no commanding presence.

Nobody has ever listened to me before. I mean, even Hebrew slaves wouldn't listen to me. I lost my influence in Pharaoh's court and now you're calling me to stand before this king? Who's going to listen to me? And you see, that's the very root of what causes people to miss their calling.

It's that unbelief. And then in verse 13, what God answers in verse 11, it says, Who made your mouth? Do you not understand who you're talking to? God says, I make everything. I make all things.

I've already shown you I can change any situation. Why would you want to limit my power now? Remember the children of Israel, they did the same thing. They came out of Egypt through the leadership of Moses.

And the scripture says in the Psalms that they limited the Holy One of Israel. They put parameters on them and said, well, you can do this, but can you do that? Yeah, I know you saved me from drugs, but really? Calling me to preach the gospel? Or be a missionary? Or to go into a foreign culture that I don't understand? I know nothing about? And to stand and make declarations of truth? Then in verse 13, he says, Oh, my Lord, I send thy praise by the hand of whom thou wilt send. Now, other translations all basically say the same thing.

Lord, please send someone else. That's the New Living translation says it that way. Please? This is a marvelous idea.

God, I'm with you. I'm with you in heart. I did my part 40 years ago.

I killed an Egyptian. I buried him in the sand. You were there.

You saw it. Lord, I'm with you. And whoever you send, boy, he's going to have my support.

And the scripture says, you know, that's true because so many people come to the altar to pray or go to a prayer meeting and say, Oh, God, people are dying in certain places of the city or certain areas. There are people here today that pray, Oh, Jesus, please send somebody into my office. There will be a living testimony for you.

And here you are sitting at the desk yourself. And the same thing is in the heart. Send someone into my neighborhood.

God, the kids are dying. On every street corner they're dealing drugs and I see the devil crushing them and they're under the influence of wicked powers. And I can see so many looking out their windows and praying, God, send somebody.

And the scripture tells us that the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses. Now, it's important to understand the next transaction from verse 14 to 16. You have to understand that this is done when God's spirit is hot towards this unbelief.

It says, His anger was kindled against Moses. And he said, Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he comes to meet you.

And when he sees you, he'll be glad in his heart. You want natural ability? God says, OK, Moses, your focus is on natural ability. Well, here's a man who has it all.

And you can take him with you on your journey. He said, But I want to give you an ominous warning. Those who would rather trust in natural ability than trust in the living God.

He said, I give you a warning. And it's in verse 16. He said, He will be your spokesman to the people.

And he shall be to thee instead of a mouth. And thou shalt be to him instead of God. He said, I'm going to let him go with you on your journey.

But I warn you that this type of a man doesn't hear from God. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2.14, The natural man, now that's the man who's governed by his fallen instinct. That's what the original Greek text means.

The man who is governed, led by, thinks through, plans with his natural fallen instinct. Receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him. And neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.

He walks and charts his own course. Proverbs 14.12 says, There's a way that seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Beloved, beware of the self-trust and natural abilities which accompany all of us on our journey.

It is these things more often than anything else that will lead into error and away from the pathway of victory that God has destined you and I to walk in. Firstly, go with me to Exodus chapter 32, please. Go ahead in your Bible.

I'm going to speak a little bit about natural ability. God says, alright, you want him, you got him. I know he can speak well, but he doesn't hear from me.

Incredible. Incredible. I'm going to show you where natural ability will take you and I. See, the man who follows his natural ability will chart his own course.

He will not go where God calls him. He will go where he thinks he can be best suited to the cause of Christ. We don't see it that way, but often it's a different path than the path that God has called us to.

He doesn't call us where we are strong necessarily. Now, it can happen. But quite often he calls us where we are weak.

He calls us where we need him. He calls us where we can't trust in our own resources because when we begin to trust in our own resources, we begin to distance ourselves from the very source of our life and power. Firstly, Exodus 32 tells us that natural ability cannot be still and doesn't know how to wait on God.

Exodus 32, here's... Moses has led the people, or God has led the people through Moses out of captivity. He's brought them to the mountain that he told Moses. He said, this is going to be a sign.

You're going to bring them out and you're going to worship me on this mountain. He's giving Moses now the instruction, the law. He's talking about the places of promise to him.

Moses is locked in, shut away with God. The people are down near the perimeters of the mountain and they haven't heard from God for a time. You see, natural ability gets nervous when it hasn't heard from God.

Natural ability has a tendency to take over when it feels that God somehow has gone on vacation. Exodus 32, verse 1, it says, When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mount, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron. Remember this man, Aaron.

God says, you want him? You got him. And said to him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us. For as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we don't know, we want not what has become of him.

And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden earrings, which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them to me. You see, in times when faith alone is needed, the natural man will move to create his own solution. The natural man will always do this.

He says, I've got an idea. And that's very dangerous in the kingdom of God. And all the people, verse 3, broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears and brought them to Aaron.

And he received it at their hand and fashioned it with a graving tool after he had made it a molten calf. And they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. The natural man, in times when faith is needed, will redesign God to fit his own distorted viewpoint of God.

When flesh is leading, God gets very strange looking. And beloved, we're living in a generation like that right now. When flesh is leading, you can hardly, you can't recognize Jesus Christ any longer.

He takes on another form as men's hands begin to fashion Him. As they say, Well, I had a vision and I think God looks like this. And I feel that He acts like this.

And they set their hands and they begin to create and reform because natural ability is leading. It's no longer the Spirit of God that is leading the church. And when Aaron saw it, he says, verse 5, he built an altar before it.

And Aaron made a proclamation. He said, Tomorrow is a feast to the Lord. Natural ability will build its own altars.

And it will determine its own focus of worship or level of dedication. And ultimately, verse 6, will bring the people to a place where faith is no more and the flesh is ruling. And they rose up early on the morrow and offered burnt offerings and brought peace offerings.

And the people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play. It's party time. That's exactly what Aaron told the people.

He made a calf. He charted his own course because he wasn't hearing from God. He made his own altar.

He made his own level of worship and dedication and then declared a party. It's party time. Here they are living in a time of wilderness searching.

They're living in a time when they're being led out of darkness. And a fleshly priesthood now has taken dominion for this season over the people of God and is leading them into poverty. Party time.

I've heard that a lot in the last several years in the charismatic church. It's party time. When Moses finally came down, Moses saw what was happening.

It says, verse 25, it says, Moses saw that the people were naked, for Aaron had made them naked unto their shame among their enemies. If you can see it with me, you can see the people of God rejoicing while being stripped naked and exposed to shame before their enemies. Natural ability will be quick to look to place the blame when its pathways end in dismal failure.

You see, natural ability can't lead in the kingdom of God because you can't even see it. Let alone lead. And the ways of flesh will always fail.

You see it throughout scriptural, throughout church history. You see people rise up that really don't know God and proclaim that they're leading the people in this glorious new revelation about the ways in the kingdom of God. And they travel down the road and you can hear the partying, the shouting.

Look what we've found. Look who we are. Look at the great truth we have that no one else has laid hold of.

And you don't even need a set of binoculars to see them all as the dust rises, as they begin to fall not too far down the road. Because natural ability will always fail. It knows nothing about the kingdom of God.

But it'll be quick to look and to place blame. In Exodus 32, when Moses came down from the mountain, verse 21, the scripture says, Moses said to Aaron, What did this people do to thee that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them? Aaron, did they torture you, Aaron? No, Moses was serious. What did they do to you? Did they threaten you? Did they put a knife to your throat? What did they do to you that you have brought them into such nakedness? And Aaron said, Well, let not the anger of my Lord wax hot.

You know the people that they are set on mischief. Incredible, isn't it? Just like in the Garden of Eden. The woman made me do it.

Well, the serpent made me do it. And nobody will take the blame. Nobody will look within.

That's the sin nature. That's the natural man. Will not look within his own heart because of the pride that is resident there.

And at the same time, he's still trying to attach some spiritual meaning to his own actions. And Aaron said, Let not the Lord thou knowest the people that are set on mischief. In verse 24, he said, I said to them, Whosoever has any gold, let them break it off.

So they gave it me. Then I cast it into the fire. And there came out this calf.

Now, the Bible tells us that Aaron fashioned it with his own hands. But you see, he's trying to make something spiritual out of it. He says, You know, Moses, this had to be God.

How else could this have happened? We were seeking Him. We wanted to know who He was. We just took all our gold.

And you see, that's where a lot of theology comes from today. We took all our gold, kind of threw it in the pot, and out popped this calf. It has to be God.

In the early 90s, I was invited to be a keynote speaker at a very large charismatic church conference in Canada. The Holy Ghost came on me. He gave me an ominous warning for the church.

I warned them that they were creating a calf. And they were going to refashion God to suit their own lust to party. Sought in the spirit that people were gathering, not because they wanted truth, not because they wanted the will of God.

No missions focused. No yielded surrendered life. No, it was, we want to party.

We want to run the aisles. We want to come to the altar. We want to jump up and down.

We want to shake. We want to vibrate. We want to feel good.

And today, the charismatic churches, especially in Canada, have no boast. But myriads of diminished or ruined churches. Wandering, confused souls on every hill without shepherds.

This is exactly what the Holy Ghost gave me to speak. I said, the people are going to be wandering on the hills, not too many years down the road, because they have no shepherds. Here's the scripture from Micaiah, where Micaiah stood before the king, and everyone is saying, go and prosper.

They're all standing around saying, go, go, do this thing that's in your heart. And Micaiah said, no, if you do this thing, it will be the death of you. And today, we see the devastation throughout the country.

See, charismatic churches in complete disarray. People wounded and bruised. Church leaders that have stayed to the word of God are telling me they're starting to filter in now, and they won't raise their hands.

They don't want to worship God. They sit in the back. They don't want to get involved in anything.

They mistrust all leadership now. While the self-willed leaders that were leading them still tried to attach some spiritual meaning to having stripped God's people naked before their enemies, still stand there and still say, well, it had to be God. It had to be God.

We were seeking Him, and I popped His cap. Whether or not it looks like the Jesus of the Bible seemed to be insignificant. It even got so brazen that there were preachers standing and saying, put away your Bibles now.

God is doing a new thing. Don't examine it by the Bible, because they knew it couldn't stand the test of Scripture. And now we see people stripped and wounded and naked.

Pentecostal churches have become a laughing stock. In the province of Quebec, Canada alone, there were 100 or so Pentecostal churches. Small towns fighting hard, digging in for many years.

Most of which embraced the things that had passed through in the last 10 years. Almost all the churches are diminished to at least half, and some are gone of their membership. They are the absolute laughing stock of their communities today.

Stripped naked, while those who led them to this nakedness still stand back and say, well, you know the people, what they're like. And others justify their spiritual poverty by saying, well, you know, God is purging His house. That's always a convenient scapegoat for the preacher that has lost touch with God.

You know, God is purging His house. Forever purging His house. Now, the Bible tells us, back in Exodus chapter 4 again, Moses headed out to do the will of God.

And I believe that there are many here today who are like Moses. You are hearing something of God. You are hearing it deep in your heart.

And you've begun to see that the calling of God is not for the strong. The calling of God is not for the naturally talented. The calling of God is for those who know they need a Savior.

Who want Him. They want His heart. And you're beginning to see it more than you ever had.

And the Bible says that Moses headed out, just as many of us are heading out on our journey today. In verse 24 it says, It came to pass by the way in the inn that the Lord met him. That's Moses.

Exodus 4, 24. And sought to kill him. That's an incredible thought here.

God calls a man. He finally yields to the call. And then God seeks to kill him.

Now, first of all, it's important to understand something. The Lord doesn't seek to kill anyone. If He wants to kill you, trust me, you are dead.

No, you see, it's not Moses God wanted to kill. It's something in him. You see, Moses had been a man of the world.

He had lived 40 years in Egypt. And he had also lived 40 years in the land of Midian. And the world's ways were still in him.

And he was not yet fully in his heart separated to the Word and to the will of God. He had a son that was born in Midian. And because he had a Midianitish wife, he hadn't bothered to circumcise his son.

And you see, circumcision was a sign of the covenant. And really what it means is that Moses, in his heart, was not fully committed to living for God. And God said, before you go, I have to go after that and kill it.

I have to get that out of your heart. I have to pierce between soul and spirit, joint and marrow. And I've got to go right in and discern the thoughts and intents of your heart.

Moses, I've got to show you some things in your life. Because if you don't see it now, you're going to get out there and you're going to get killed. I've got to show you where you're trusting in yourself.

I've got to show you where natural instinct has taken over for the Word of God. You are not separated to me, Moses. Let me just read this to you.

Jesus Christ himself said in John chapter 15. Listen to this. I am the vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

And every branch in me that bears not fruit, he takes it away. And every branch that bears fruit, he purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken to you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, and no more can ye except ye abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches.

And he that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit. For without me you can do nothing. Without me you are wasting your time.

Even preaching the gospel, you're wasting your time. You can do nothing without me. It's not about natural ability.

This is not a natural kingdom. This is a supernatural kingdom. It is a spiritual kingdom.

The Holy Ghost is the only one with the blueprints for the church of Jesus Christ, and the plan of God for all humanity. We make a tragic mistake when we start substituting natural ability for faith in God. We have a church age full of ideas, men and women, for God.

And all they've been able to produce is four steps, three steps, seven steps, twelve steps. And no victory. No victory.

Just principles to live your Christian life by. But no supernatural victory. There's no six steps to anything, beloved.

There's one step. Get out of your seat and believe God. Trust Him.

He can't fail you. You've never known spiritual life until you begin to trust Him, and begin to walk with Him, and begin to look away from your inability, and begin to rejoice in God, the supplier of my every need. Hallelujah.

He said, If a man abides not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in me, in other words, if I am the source of your life and strength, if I am the one guiding you, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done to you. If you abide in me, He said, ask, and I will do it for you.

You need power to speak? Ask. You need love? Ask. You need enduring patience? Ask.

You need long-suffering to go through your trial? Ask. He said, I will do it for you. I will do it for you gladly.

I will do it that your joy might be full. I will do it that you might bear much fruit, and my Father might be glorified. I will do it so that no flesh will glory in its health, but all men will glory in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I will do it so that you will have a testimony. You can stand before hundreds of thousands and say, God has given me strength in life, and He can do it for you. Hallelujah! That's the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The ground is level. The way is open. Whosoever will, lame, blind, prostitute, drug addict, whatever you are, God has a plan for your life.

He will take you and fill you with His Spirit, cleanse you with His blood, and make you into a new person. He will cause you to stand among princes. He will raise you out of death and despair.

Hallelujah! He will take you where you can't go. He will make you what you can't be. He will cause you to do what you couldn't do before.

Hallelujah! The Lord was saying, Moses, there are great battles ahead of you, but I can't fight for you. If you are not fully persuaded that in every area of your life that I am worth being your God, I can't fight for you, Moses, until I am God in everything. Until I am God in all.

Then I can fight for you. I want to close with Exodus 17 today. I want to talk about the first battle.

They come out of captivity. And the very first thing that they had to battle is the very first thing that you and I will have to fight when we respond to the call of God. Exodus 17.8 says, Then came Amalek and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

Now, Amalek is the grandson of Esau. Now, Esau is the natural man who sold off his birthright for soup. The man who didn't want the things of God.

There's an Esau in all of us, folks. There's a nature in us that doesn't want the things of God. This was the very first thing that he had to come up against.

His own nature. And Moses said to Joshua, Choose out men and go and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I'll stand on the top of the hill with God in my hand.

Now, Amalek, if you go to the end of that chapter, it says the Lord swore that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation. God says this is going to be an ongoing battle. But I'm going to show you how to get the victory.

I'm going to show you where your life comes from, where your strength comes from. So Joshua, verse 10, did as Moses had said unto him and fought with Amalek. And Moses and Aaron, remember Aaron is the type as it is of the natural man, and he went up to the top of the hill.

And it came to pass when Moses held up his hand that Israel prevailed. And when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. There's a type of something here.

When Moses raised up his hands and surrendered to God, when his dependence was on God, the kingdom of God began to advance and go forward. And when his hands came down, when the weariness of his own flesh began to overpower him and he began to lose confidence, in a sense, as a physical type of the man who loses confidence in God. And when he let his hands come down, then Amalek, the descendants of Esau, began to prevail against the children of God.

And Moses' hands were heavy, verse 12. Scripture says they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on that stone. And virtually every commentator, at least that I looked at, talks about that stone being an absolute type of Jesus Christ.

And Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side and the one on the other side. And his hands were steady till the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.

Now, beloved, listen to me. Natural talents and abilities may be yours to accompany you and I on this journey. It's not wrong to have natural ability.

You might be today a natural leader. You might be a natural speaker. You might be a natural singer.

You might be a natural Bible teacher. You might be a natural missionary. You might be a natural planner.

You might have incredible planning ability in the field that you work in, but God is calling you into His kingdom. And it's not wrong to have these abilities, and there will always be an Aaron following along with a Moses. They're types, in a sense, of the two natures in the same man that God calls.

But make sure, make sure that by God's grace, the natural man and natural ability stay servants to faith in God. You see, all Aaron did was, Aaron was holding up Moses' hands. The natural man became a servant to faith.

And that's what God is speaking to us. If you have inabilities, don't glimpse me by those inabilities. If you have abilities, keep those abilities servants to faith.

Don't let your natural man begin to lead you because it will lead you and those that follow you astray. Let your natural talents, let your natural ability always give place to faith in God. There is no other way to victory in the Christian life or in the kingdom of God.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Have you seen your calling yet? Have you seen it? Have you yet understood it? Are you open now to the voice of God? There are people here that you're going to have some tough decisions to make in the future. Because if you press in, God's going to speak to you.

There are some here that you've come from countries that I can't go to, but you can. God's going to speak to you. It'll have to be God.

No preacher here will ever lay that kind of a burden on you. It's got to be something God speaks. Have you yet seen your calling? Do we yet understand that we are called to bring men and women out of darkness? Bring them to Christ, that they might have life.

Over the course of my life, in the course of ministry, there have been many times I've leaned on the flesh and I have failed. I've leaned on my own understanding. And by God's grace, it has come to nothing.

Every time I leaned on the flesh, the one thing I'm really thankful for is that I found that there's a place of forgiveness and restoration for me. God has been very merciful to me, beloved. I've made every mistake that Moses made and then some.

But God's been faithful. Some people here, you've tried to solve your marriage by shouting, feeling whoever gets the last word in is going to win. That's leaning on the flesh.

You've not trusted God. You've never come to the point where you've just raised your hands up. I said, Lord, I surrender it.

I surrender it all. I put it in your hands. And I make my natural tendencies and abilities servants to faith.

I yield to you, God. I don't understand. Some of you have lived in frustration for years because you've been in the church and you've wanted to know the will of God, but you've boxed it in.

You've said, yes, I want to know your will, but it has to be in this direction. A profession that you love or a career that you've chosen. And you say, God, I'll go anywhere in the legal field and serve you.

God says, no, I didn't call you there. I called you somewhere else. So you fight and fight and fight and lean and try and push and try to make ministry happen.

And it's just a source of absolute frustration because it's in the flesh. It fails. There's no life.

There's no satisfaction. There's no joy. There's no change.

There's no sense of living in the supernatural. There's no morning by morning seeing new mercies, new miracles, new strength, new giftings because it's in the flesh. And it's wearisome.

When you make your own God, it's wearisome. First of all, it points you in the wrong direction. When Aaron made that calf, the very first thing they wanted to do was go back into Egypt.

And secondly, if they would have stopped to consider it, a God who once carried them, they would now have to carry him. How wearying it is when you create your own God, folks. How wearying when you've got to hold this golden calf on your shoulder and trudge through the wilderness, pretending that you're in love with Jesus.

No, you want to fall in love with Him? Find His will. Walk with Him. There are times, there are people here today who would say, Lord, I want to repent of areas of my heart where the Holy Spirit has shown me that I'm not fully surrendered to the Lordship of Christ.

I don't know sometimes in the church if we really realize how dangerous these areas are. One little thing that Moses hadn't done, and God said, you either have to do this or I can't send you. I've got to take your life.

Because you will ruin my heritage. And I know that as I've been speaking today, the Holy Spirit is also speaking on a multiplicity of levels. He's not bound by my voice.

I mean, the Holy Spirit will take a word and it will fragment into a thousand pieces and touch every area of every heart. And many here today, you know exactly what it is that God is speaking to you. Areas where you say, I'm not surrendered.

I'm still pushing, planning, scheming. I'm frustrated, I'm tired. God, I want to go where you're calling me.

I want to be what you want me to be. And there's others who just say, Lord, I've seen my calling. I know what it is.

Take my life and by faith use me, lead me, guide me. Send me to get people out of captivity and bring them to life in Jesus Christ. Send me, oh God.

Send me. And Father, I thank you today. You have been here in such power.

You are so speaking to us. We live in a very dark world, a very dark generation. But Jesus, because you live, there is hope for all men.

Oh my God, I ask you to get a hold of my heart. Give me the grace to see and surrender. Ask you, to take Times Square Church and use us as a torch of life, as a beacon of light to people who live in darkness.

We thank you for what you're speaking. I do pray that we would never limit you. Pray that you give us a heart to love you.

I thank you for it in Jesus' name. Let's all stand. If the Lord, if the Holy Spirit spoke unto you today, and you would feel a need to come to this altar to respond to God's voice speaking to your heart, I invite you to do so.

The balcony you can slip out. There's no pressure. It's really a choice that you have to make with God.

But if the Holy Spirit is speaking and saying, you're saying, Pastor, I'm hearing something. Does there even exist a God? There is. I've got to lay down.

There's things in my life I've got to get right. I've been pushing in the flesh, and I'm tired. There are things that I have to let go of now and let you do it.

I speak specifically to those that are just bound by your own sense of inadequacy. Give it up, folks. Give it up.

Give it up. God's not concerned about this. It's faith.

It's absolutely by faith that the kingdom of God will advance to your life. He has no interest in your talents at all. It's faith.

You and I come empty-handed to God. He gives us everything we need. Education addicts, you can go forward between the screens.

We'll be praying for you momentarily. It's the Holy Spirit speaking. Young people, would you consider? We have so many college students now attending Times Square Church.

Would you consider giving your life to Jesus Christ? Would you consider yielding your path? There's no greater call in the universe. You may have a plan, but your plan is so short of what God has for you. Your plan... What a terrible thing to get to the end of your life and look back and say, I missed God's calling.

I tried to ram Jesus as it is into my personal agenda, and it didn't work. Would you consider? Because you've got life ahead of you. And if you can hear my voice, you are the hope for much of the world that sits in darkness today.

In New York City, you're the hope for tomorrow for many. If you will yield your life to Him. Give Him the rights of every area.

Let Him be God in every area of your life. And follow Him. Amazing, amazing thing that God will begin to do.

Then you're going to start to see miracles and no fulfillment. I'm so happy that so many college students are starting to attend here now. It tells me that there's great hope for New York City.

Oh Jesus, thank you. Thank you. You see, folks, you don't know the destinies of people's lives that are going to be changed.

We look at Times Square Church, we see a few people trickling down the altars. But you don't know the destinies of people's lives that are going to be changed. We don't see the whole picture.

A lady, a man, a young person comes to this altar and gives their all to Jesus and God sees the next 20 years. Sudi Tarian sees the multiplicity of souls that are touched. The lives that are transformed because somebody said yes.

God, I do make you Lord of my life. I give you my all. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Now before I pray with these that are at the altar, I want to give an opportunity for anyone in this sanctuary, Education Annex balcony, who can say honestly, Pastor, I am not a Christian. I would love to like that you're speaking about.

I would love to respond to God, but I don't even know that my sins are forgiven yet. If today you will acknowledge that you are a sinner, if you will acknowledge that God became a man and took your place on a cross and paid the price for your sins, shed His blood to the last drop, that the wrath of God may be poured out upon His own Son, that you might be saved from the wrath of God, if you will acknowledge that Christ died for you, invite Him into your life to be your Lord and your Savior, the Bible says today that God will save you. Salvation is not works.

Salvation is faith in a finished work that happened 2,000 years ago. It's trusting in the fact that God loved you so much that He came and died for you, that through believing in Him, you should not suffer the punishment of eternal hell, but should have everlasting life in heaven with God. Salvation is a wonderful opportunity to enter into the work of God and the power of God here on this side of eternity.

To know Him and to be able to say, I have met with God, my sins are forgiven, and I know His life, and I know His power. And if that's you today, anywhere in this church, join with me now and raise up your hand nice and high. Do it right now.

God bless you. All over the sanctuary, up in the balcony. Don't be ashamed.

At the altar, raise up your hand. He's not ashamed of you. Raise up your hand to Him if you want to receive Christ as your Savior.

God bless you all over this place. Hallelujah. Thanks be to God.

Thanks be to God. The most important decision you will ever make in your life is being made right now. You are giving your life to Jesus Christ.

Let's all pray together for those that are coming into God's kingdom. Lord Jesus, I am a sinner. I thank You, Jesus, that You loved me enough that You would come to this earth, die on a cross, and pay the

price for my sins.

This day, I acknowledge that You have a right to my life. I yield my life to You. I invite You to come into my heart to be my Lord and my Savior.

I believe, Jesus, You are the Son of God. You died for my sins. You rose from the dead as living proof that my trust in You is not in vain.

I believe at this very moment You have heard the cry of my heart, You have received me into Your kingdom, and by faith, Hallelujah. Saved. Hallelujah.

The Bible says the angels of heaven are rejoicing round about Christ's throne this very moment just because You came into the kingdom of God. Isn't that an amazing thing? Let's all pray together now. Lord Jesus, forgive me for areas of my life.

Where I have not made You Lord. Tell Him now. Tell Him what area.

You go ahead and just whisper it to Him. Tell Him where you've not made Him Lord. It's so important to get it out.

Is He Lord of your eyes? Is He Lord of what you read? Is He Lord of your steps? Is He Lord of your conversation? Is He Lord of your plans and ambitions? Is He Lord of your career? Just tell Him where you've not made Him Lord. Now Lord Jesus, I see Your calling. You have called me.

And You will give me all I need to be a living witness of the fact that You died to give men life. Use my life as a key that unlocks prison doors, gives sight to the blind, sets free those that are bruised in heart. That all men, all women, all young people may have the gospel of Jesus freely spoken to them through my life.

I yield my life to You. My plans, my ambitions. I ask You Jesus to guide me from this day forward.

Help me to by faith follow You and never to lean on my own understanding. Thank You that You promised me victory. You promised that my life will bear much fruit.

And through this, You will be glorified in me. I thank You for it. In Jesus' name.

Now thank Him. Thank Him. Thank Him for what He's going to do.

The fruit of faith is a thankful heart.

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