

Hearing the Voice of God - Part 2

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon encourages believers to seek a deeper relationship with God and to actively hear His voice in their lives.

Duration: 54:25

Scripture: Isaiah 6:8, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, John 20:17, Acts 1:8, Romans 3:23, Ephesians 2:8-9

Topics: "Voice Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of going out into the world and sharing the message of God's mercy and kindness. He encourages believers to share their personal experiences of how God is working in their lives. The speaker also emphasizes that salvation is freely given through the blood of Jesus Christ and cannot be earned through works. He warns against dwelling on the past and missing out on the present opportunities to share the gospel. The sermon concludes by reminding listeners that God's plan has always been to redeem mankind and invite them into fellowship with Him.

Transcript

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Isaiah chapter 6, if you'll turn there with me please. Last night, this is part 2 of a message that began last night called Hearing the Voice of God. Last night, I spoke specifically to those who have lost touch with the voice of God, having had one time an intimacy with the Lord, having walked with him, especially in those first few years of our salvation.

And then after that, coming to that place where other things began to crowd up into the heart and crowd up the life of Christ. We were beginning to let things grow in the heart where Christ doesn't dwell. Plans and ambitions and such things coming into the heart and subsequently losing touch.

And we really ended on a glorious note when Jesus turned and spoke again the name of Mary in a manner that he made the choice to reveal himself to her because he had already spoken to her as the gardener and she didn't really recognize his voice. You see, it's God's choice to reveal himself to us. And when our hearts are such that we're seeking him above all else in our lives, then clearly he begins to

speak to us again and shows us that he's been there all along.

It's just that our ears have been dull of hearing and our hearts have been closed to the one voice that can give us life. Tonight I want to speak to those who are going on with God. You know, it seems that maybe you think, how come I never get ministered to? It's always the vexed lighter and it's always the person with hidden sin.

And here I am. I really am plugging away with God as best that I can. I'm walking with the Lord.

I'm searching for him. I'm reading his word and I'm... Is there a message for me in all of this? I believe that God has been speaking to me. This message is for you tonight.

This is about hearing the voice of God. But it's for the man or woman who has been hearing the voice of God. You have been walking with the Lord.

But the Lord wants to always... How many are aware that he always wants to take us deeper in him? We've never arrived. I don't consider that I've arrived until I actually get there. I get to heaven.

The only time I'd be foolish enough to say I've arrived is when I'm actually standing before the throne of God one day. Saying, hallelujah, I've arrived by grace. I'm here.

Because the Bible says we will know even as we are known. So there will be an increase of knowledge in that day. It says that we will be like him.

Jesus is a man in heaven, but he's a glorified man. We will have that. We'll have a different body.

It will be such an incredible thing. In a sense, we will have arrived at the fullness of our redemption. Now we are saved here by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, but there yet is still a work that God is doing, drawing his people to himself, and it culminates one day when he comes for us.

The dead in Christ rise first. We who are alive and remain are caught together with them to ever be with the Lord. We are absolutely changed.

Our mortality puts on immortality. All corruption puts on incorruption. And the redemption, in a sense, that has been purchased for us is absolutely complete.

We're in a brand new body. We can't even sigh. Can you imagine that? It's hard to imagine, isn't it? Being in a body that you can't sigh anymore.

You can't go like that, like we do so often throughout the day. Can't think a bad thought. There's no warring of the flesh against the Spirit anymore.

That's an incredible thought in itself. No longer a body that has been sown in corruption that is warring against the kingdom of God, really, through the Spirit that's come into our lives. We are absolutely free.

I can't even begin to understand that. I mean, I know it theologically, but one day I'm going to experience it. Be in the presence of the Lord.

I suppose on that day we may come to an understanding of how deep and great our redemption really is in Jesus Christ. How far we really were from God. But God in His mercy came to us, and He gave us not only eternal life, but He gave us a promise of heaven, and He gave us a promise of an abundant life that is His

life being lived in us and through us here on this earth.

That's the abundant life. Folks, it's not cars, not houses, not clothes and jobs. The abundant life is Jesus living His life in us and through us here on this earth.

That's the abundant life. It's Jesus. It's that peace that's promised being lived out within us.

It's the ability to love when there's nothing within us that can love anymore. It's the ability to take another step when in ourselves we can't go any farther. It's the life of Christ.

It's the long suffering of Christ. It's all the joy of Christ. It's everything about Christ being lived out through us.

And so we can never say we've arrived. If you get to the point on this side of eternity where you say, I've arrived, then you're right back where you started again. You're right at the beginning.

You're going to have to start all over again. That's spiritual pride, and that's an incredibly deadly sin. Father, thank You tonight for the Word that sets us free.

Thank You for the life and the liberty that's in this house. God, thank You for the hope that You give to those that are called by Your name. Lord, You don't only save us, but You give us hope, and You give us a future, and You adopt us into not only Your family, but You have a plan, an eternal plan, and You adopt us into the plan.

And You say that if we acknowledge You, that You will guide our footsteps. You will show us where to go, that You will speak to us. There is a voice that says, this is the way, walk you in it.

You'll open Your Word to us and plainly give us instruction about daily living. Yet there will be that also, that inner witness that says, go to this place and do that. You will do this because You said You would do it.

You'll protect us from our enemies. You'll give us discernment to know what is of God and what is not. Oh, Jesus, thank You, Lord.

Thank You. More and more, we're beginning to appreciate Your life, that You are willing to live in us and through us. More and more, Holy Spirit, we yearn for You, because You came to lead us to truth.

You came to speak of the things of the Kingdom of God and make them an absolute reality in our lives. God, we thank You for that tonight. I pray now for the strong.

I pray tonight for those who are walking with God, as well as for the weak. I pray now that You take us all, everyone in this house, Father, just to a deeper understanding of You. Lift us, guide us, keep us, Lord, from the snares that have caught so many that have gone before.

And we're not foolish enough to think that we couldn't be caught too as well. Many, many start out absolutely aflame for You and end up such deadwood in Your house, Lord. And God, just thank You that You're going to help us.

As Pastor David has often prayed, I pray tonight, I want to be a green tree in the house of God till the day that I die. Lord, or You come and take me home. That means a new fruit is growing all the time, that I'm

bendable and moldable in Your hand.

And I thank You that Pastor David has been an example of that to me and to many of the people here in this house. We've seen a man who is still a green tree in Your house and will remain so until the day You take him home. God, thank You for that.

We give You the praise and all the glory in Jesus' name. Isaiah. Now, it's important to understand something about Isaiah in Isaiah chapter 6. There are two schools of thought about the Prophet Isaiah at this particular point in his life.

Some say that this is the initial call of Isaiah to his prophetic ministry. And I don't agree with that. Personally, I'm in line with the second school of thought.

That this, because the book of Isaiah is written chronologically. And I believe that it's a special call that came to Isaiah after he had already begun his ministry. Because Isaiah really, if you follow back, is already given the word of the Lord.

He's already prophesying to the people, not to the extent that God wants to bring him to. But in order for God to take this man Isaiah, who is perhaps a little younger at this time, who has been faithful to the Lord, in order to take him to another place, to give him a deeper revelation, you have to understand that God was taking this man Isaiah, who was already speaking the word of the Lord to the children of Israel, and had a knowledge of the things of God. And God said, I want to take you to a place of greater knowledge.

Because when you look at the book of Isaiah, it is really a Bible in miniature. Isaiah was given of God a panoramic view from his day right into the millennial kingdom. And beyond, it's an incredible thing that God gave to this man.

Isaiah saw the crucified Christ on Calvary. Isaiah described it in detail. Isaiah spoke of the fact that a kingdom was coming that could not be taken away, where all tears would be wiped away from people's eyes.

No more sighing, no more sorrow. Isaiah identified clearly this Christ as a man who would be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, Everlasting Father. And of his kingdom, he said, there will be no end.

Think about how radical that must have been in his generation. And Isaiah went to a people who really were so set in their ways I don't know what it is about humankind, but we have a tendency, every man and woman and child, we want to dig in. We always want to find a nice, comfortable place that is agreeable to us, and we want to dig in.

Just like Peter did on the Mount of Transfiguration. This is it, Lord. Moses, Elijah.

I mean, look at Revelation. It completely escaped him, I think, that they were speaking about the demise of Jesus coming up at Jerusalem, and perhaps just encouraging him. And completely oblivious to what's going on, it says, let's build some tents and let's stay here.

And that is the natural intent of our heart. And folks, it's in your heart, and it's in my heart. We have to do like the Apostle Paul said with Timothy, stir up the gift that's in you.

Stir it up. That's what fasting is all about. That's what seeking God is all about.

God's not going to cause us to fast. We have to make the choice ourselves. God's not going to cause us to get up in the morning and open the Bible.

That's a choice that we make. It is the Holy Spirit then who gives us the enlightenment to be able to understand what we're reading. Because if he didn't, we would just twist it to our own destruction.

As one of the apostles warned of those whose hearts were not pure before the Lord. God wanted to take Isaiah from the place where he was to a deeper place. Isaiah is not a backslider coming back to God.

Isaiah is a man living for God. God says, I want to take you somewhere. I want to take you higher, if I can call it such.

I want to show you something, bring you to a place that you've never been before. And that's the call on my life and your life. And that call will never change.

No matter where we attain to in the kingdom of God, we've not arrived. There's always a higher place to go. There's always a deeper depth in God.

There's always more learning about servanthood and humility and what the kingdom of God is really all about. There's always something about Jesus Christ that the Holy Spirit is wanting to reveal to us if we're open to hear it. There's always a place that he wants to take us that in our natural strength we don't think we can go.

There's always something he wants to do that in our natural strength we don't think we have the ability to do. But as we begin to seek him, God begins to open it to us. And he takes us out of what I've always called the realm of mediocrity.

I don't want to live there. I have lived there even as a Christian. But I don't want to live there.

I don't want to live in the realm of mediocrity which is the realm of just digging in and being satisfied with like a status quo Christianity in my own life. Just getting by and doing enough to pacify my own conscience and having enough theology and knowledge and attendance in the house of God that I have an assurance I'm not going to hell. But folks, that's not enough.

God's called us to more than that. Called us to an abundant life, a full life. But in order to achieve what God has, to reach what we are.

That's why Paul said, I have not attained it yet. Now, he's not talking about his salvation. When you read that scripture that Paul... He's talking about the high... He says, I've not attained it yet, but I press on to the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Paul's not saying, I've not attained my salvation. That would negate everything he'd written in the Bible. He knew he was saved by faith.

He's not talking about salvation. He said, I have a call on my life. There's a revelation God wants to give me.

I've not attained it, but I'm pressing on to it. I'm pressing on to it. I yearn for it.

I long for it. And thank God he didn't turn back. The fact that he didn't turn back has given us the words of encouragement that came through the Holy Spirit and his pen just before the days of his death.

God wanted to bring Isaiah to a place of renewed understanding. Chapter 6, verse 1, he says, In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne high, lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Now, if you wonder what the word train means, it's basically the entourage around him.

Above it stood the seraphims. Each one had six wings. With twain he covered his face, and with twain or two he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.

And one cried unto another. He said, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory.

Not just heaven, but the earth. And the post of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Now, stop right there.

This is the first thing that God had to show this man if he was going to be able to receive a greater revelation. Number one is that he saw that in heaven, heaven is a place of continuous activity. Heaven is never at a standstill.

Heaven never rests on the testimonies of the past. And this is the first revelation, I believe, that God's giving to the heart of this man, Isaiah. And it's just simply this.

The kingdom of God, with or without those who have known past victories, is moving forward. The kingdom of God is always moving. It is a moving kingdom, going from image to image, glory to glory, place to place, line by line, brick upon brick.

A kingdom is being built, and heaven is a continuous flow of activity. That's why Jesus said, I go to prepare a place for you. This place is still in preparation.

The kingdom of heaven is still moving forward with force and with power. And God had to reveal to Isaiah that with or without those who have known past victories, this kingdom is still moving forward. You see, folks, the tendency of the human heart is to begin to rest on past victories.

You know the tendency of natural age. You've noticed people, as they get older, they have a tendency to talk about the past all the time. You ever notice that? You go to talk to older people, and they'll talk to you about 1942, what happened then, and then back in 51, and your eyes are literally... And they're going... The story, I'm not demeaning that, but the tendency is to focus on the past because they don't see anything in the future.

And so all their victories are yesterday. Everything they talk about is yesterday. And the older they get, the farther back it gets.

And there's a tendency in the human heart to do that, even in the house of God. I've met saints of the Lord who still have vigor. They still have a mind.

They still have a body that's able to move. They still have an understanding of the Scriptures. Yet all their victories are yesterday.

Their testimony is about what God did back in 53, about what happened in the church one day when revival hit, about how we used to pray and seek God. But it's funny, they'll tell you quickly about what it used to be like, but you don't see them at the prayer altar doing that anymore. All their testimony is about the past and about yesterday.

And if you know what happens, a present-day relationship with God begins to be substituted by memories of the past. It's something that's in every human heart. It's in your heart, folks, and it's in mine.

One of the gravest dangers we face is the longer we walk with God, especially as His kingdom is working through us, that we begin to substitute past experience for a present living reality with God. We substitute all these victories, and this becomes our testimony. It's not Jesus yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

It's Jesus yesterday. And that's the sum total of our testimony. But folks, the kingdom of God continues to move in spite of what happened yesterday.

Remember, God said to the children of Israel, don't store up old manna. It's just going to rot in your hand. And it's just going to make you sick.

You can't live on yesterday's victories. I thank God for what happened yesterday. I thank God for... I preached the gospel on Wall Street this afternoon.

I thank God for that. But that's in the past. That's gone.

I can't live on that. I serve a present God. I serve a now Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of the Father, who is the head of a kingdom that is moving forward with power.

And if I start living in yesterday, I'm going to lose out on what God has for me today, and what He has for my life tomorrow. It's a dangerous thing to live in the past, because eventually what happens is, the past begins to become a substitute righteousness. And it's very dangerous.

It's insidious. People don't realize it begins to happen. But their whole sense of righteousness... People come into the house of the Lord, sometimes even after serving the Lord for 30 years, they come into the house of the Lord, and their whole sense of righteousness is in their past.

And all their accomplishments are the past. And all they talk about is the past. I thank God for men like Pastor David who are not like that.

I thank God for 78-year-old Pastor Jack West, who comes here and talks about tomorrow, and what God is doing, and where He's going, and the number of times... He told me in the restaurant... He's 78 years old. And he told me in the restaurant, I'm cutting down my speaking agenda next year too. I forget how many times a week that he's going to be preaching.

Here's a man coming on to 80 years of age, and I know he's going to die in the pulpit. I know it. I sensed it the last time he was here.

That man's going to preach himself right into glory. It's just going to happen. He's going to stand there in the pulpit.

Let me tell you what's going to happen. He's going to do this just one time, and he's going to go. He's going to go.

Because his relationship with God is not about yesterday. I thank God for the stories, and they are always inspiring to us about yesterday's victories. But the man himself doesn't live there.

The man lives in today, and what God is about to do tomorrow through his life. And I thank the Lord for that. I want you to picture with me for a moment a man on a dock speaking to a crowd of friends about former trips that he's taken all over the world.

Standing on the dock, and a crowd perhaps like you have gathered, and his back is to the ship that's behind him. And he's telling you about all the trips he's taken, all the wonderful exploits, and all the marvelous journeys that he's taken. But the ship, which he has in his hand a ticket for passage, is pulling out of the port.

And folks, in spite of all of his eloquence, what would you be thinking? In spite of the power and passion of his presentation, you'd say, man, this guy has missed the boat. He missed the boat. He had a ticket in his hand, and he's so busy talking about past voyages that he missed the boat that's pulling out behind him.

And that's exactly what happens when we begin to dwell on the past, and that becomes our sense of identity and our sense of righteousness, and we forget we're serving an ever-living, ever-moving God. We end up missing the boat in the long run. We end up talking to people about these previous exploits, and the young Christians are looking at us and saying, boy, that must have been exciting, but you've really missed the boat.

Where have you been for the last ten years? What have you been doing? Secondly, having seen that heaven is a place of continuous activity, if we have that understanding, it will cause us never to stand still. God, I want to move with you. Holy Spirit, whatever you're doing, I want to be involved in that.

I want to be moving with you, and I want, of course, your life to be moving in me and leading me and through me. And secondly, religious pride had to be dealt with. There's a tendency to become content at one's achievements and to begin to rest upon them rather than upon the mercy of God.

Isaiah chapter 6, verse 4 says, The post of the door moved, and the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. For mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.

Religious pride has to be dealt a mortal blow if those who have been faithful are going to grow in God. Whenever the thought begins to get into our heart, we come into the house of the Lord, let's say at a time of prayer like this, and we begin to lift our hands and say, Oh God, I fast, I pray, I tithe. And by the way, God, thank you I'm not like other people are.

Jesus said, This man prayed to himself. I wasn't even listening to his prayer. I've only recorded it as a bad example to others who are going to follow after.

There's a tendency to become content in our achievements and to begin to rest upon them. And God was about to take Isaiah into a deeper revelation, and he had to deal a mortal blow to this once and for all. And he did it by giving him a revelation of who he was.

He showed him his holiness, and he renewed him in his understanding of the fear of the Lord. That's exactly what happened. We can become casual with God.

We can come into his presence week after week, day after day. We can be used of God, and we develop this nonchalant attitude with God and forget who it is that we're dealing with. God says, I want to take you deeper, but first I'm going to deal a death blow to any pride in your heart, and I'm going to renew you in your understanding of the fear of the Lord.

I'm going to renew your understanding of the fact that if I dealt with you in the manner that you deserve, you would die right at this moment before me. I am a holy God. You are altogether in yourself other than I am.

You stand before me by mercy and by mercy alone. There's nothing else that gives you access into my presence. At that one moment, all of Isaiah's prophesying, all of his faithfulness, all of his study of the Word of God amounted to nothing.

He said, I'm undone. In other words, the things I thought I was, I'm not. The achievements I thought I had made are nothing.

They're filthy rags in the sight of a holy God. That's what gave Isaiah the authority to write that. All of our righteousness, as he said, are filthy rags in the sight of Almighty God.

I'm undone because I am a man of unclean lips. No matter what kind of things come from my mouth, they're so far from this infinite holy God that stands before me that I'm finished if God deals with me in the manner that I deserve. And not only me, but all the people, all of Israel, with all of our finery and our pomp and our circumstance, coming into the temple of God, we're unclean.

We're like a filthy rag in the sight of God. At that very moment, God told, well, he didn't have to because in heaven there's divine order. The seraphims don't even have to wait because they know the mind of God.

The moment Isaiah made that confession, the scripture says that one of the seraphims came to him having a live coal in his hand. Isn't that wonderful? There's such a unity in heaven with the heart of God. The seraphims are there waiting because they know as soon as they hear that confession, it's in the heart of God to cleanse.

So they don't have to be told to fly. They know what to do. Then one of the seraphims came to me having a live coal in his hand, which he'd taken with the tongs from off the altar and laid it upon my mouth and said, Lo, this has touched thy lips and thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin purged.

God renewed Isaiah first in his understanding of the fear of the Lord. And then he brought back to his understanding that he, as all men, stands by mercy and by mercy alone. In other words, Isaiah, it's not by works of your righteousness that you stand before me.

It's by my grace. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. There's not one righteous, not even one.

Isaiah was able to pen these words because he'd had a living experience with God. And he knew he stood by mercy. And having stood by mercy alone, God was able to take him higher and give him a commission that most men would not be able to endure.

And also in verse 8, I find this a little bit humorous. Also, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Who shall I send and who will go for us? Then said, I hear my, send me. Once again, Isaiah had become desirous to

hear the will of God.

You see, God will never force his will on anyone. God never directly addressed Isaiah. It's kind of, it is a bit humorous because really you see this passage.

God just was talking to himself. The father, the son, the Holy Spirit are conferring in heaven. And they're saying, well, who will we send? Who will go for us? And Isaiah is now hearing the voice of God.

Who will go? I want to share something with you. The voice has never changed. Don't expect that you're going to hear something different in this generation because nothing has changed.

Because the plan has always been one plan. From before the earth was even formed, God had a plan. That's why he sent his son.

It was to redeem fallen mankind, to invite them to the banquet table of the Lamb, to create a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwells righteousness. That God would have the fellowship of his creation back to him again. Those that had freely come to him of their own choice.

That has always been the plan. So there will never be another voice. If you want to hear the voice of God, you're not going to hear this voice and go into acting.

You know, people are looking for this other voice. Do this or do that while waiting to hear the voice of God. No, folks, let me tell you, the voice of God never changed.

It will never change. The voice is still, who will go? Who will go? Who will tell the poor? Who will tell the blind? Who will tell the people in my house? It's all about going and telling. Not about telling about church and not talking about ourselves, but telling about the God who created this universe, who died for the sins of men, who offers eternal mercy and power to those who would turn to him.

That is the message of God. That is the voice of God. There is no other voice.

People all over the church claim to be hearing the voice of God. Most of it is absolute foolishness. If they were hearing the voice of God, they'd be hearing the same voice that has always been speaking to man just as always.

What is the one thing when Jesus appeared to Mary, what is the first thing he told her? Go to my brethren and tell them. After he appeared to those when he'd risen from the dead and began to teach them, what did he say? Go into all the world, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Preach the gospel to every creature and lo, I'm with you always.

The context is as you go, I'm with you. Go and tell. That's really what it's all about.

Go and tell wherever you are. In the workplace, in the home, at work, in your communities, in your church, on the street, wherever you are. Go and tell about my mercy.

Go and tell about my kindness. Go and tell them what I'm doing. Not just done, but what I'm doing in your life.

Go and tell them that I'm an ever-present God. Go and tell them that the kingdom of God is moving forward and there's a mighty rush of the lame to blind the lame to the banquet table of the Lamb. Go and

tell them that all sin involves short of the glory of God.

Go and tell them you don't have to work your way into the kingdom of God. It is done. It's freely given through the blood of Jesus Christ.

Go and tell them. Who will tell them? Who will go? Isaiah comes right back to basics, doesn't he? You know, we expect to hear the voice of God and have some incredible revelation that's going to make us an emperor of some country somewhere. But nothing changes.

The voice you heard the day you came to him is the same voice that's still speaking to you now. The message has not changed. Who will go? Isaiah is a prophet.

Isaiah has a revelation. Isaiah has a new understanding. Then his ears are opened to the same voice.

And Isaiah says, as if God doesn't know he's there. I could hear him say, here, here am I. See, he's reduced now maybe in his own sight. Maybe he's become a little smaller than he was when he first was lifted up.

Maybe he was getting a little big in his own heart. I really don't know. But it's like he had to, hey, hey, here am I. Send me.

And then God gives him an incredible commission. He said, go and tell this people here indeed and understand not. See and don't perceive.

Make the heart of this people fat, their ears heavy, they shut their eyes. Let them see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and convert and be healed. God said, Isaiah, I've given you a pure revelation.

But you're going to take this to a people that are religious. And they're not going to hear you because they can't hear me. Their ears are shut to my voice.

You see, that's why it wasn't just they're going to reject Isaiah. God said, they've rejected me. And because they've rejected me, they're not going to hear you either.

Your voice won't make any sense to them. I can see Isaiah. But you see, God had to have a man of compassion to bring that kind of a message.

Because in the heart of God, there's a pleading to fall in mankind. It's not this thunderous pointing in people's faces and screaming them into eternal life. No, God, there's a passion in the heart of God.

There's a yearning in the heart of God. He didn't come and become a man and die just to prove a point to you and I. He came because He loves us. That's what the Bible tells us.

God so loved the world. He was not willing that anybody should perish. He came and told it Himself.

Then He gave it to His churches. Now you tell them. But tell them with the same spirit.

Don't come before mankind with arrogance in your heart. Don't come standing on religious accomplishment. Come humbly, realizing that you stand by grace.

And having achieved, having found eternal life, you're just like a beggar telling other beggars where to find bread. Tell them. Go and tell them.

Some will receive it and receive eternal life and most will reject it. This is the end of side one. You may now turn the tape over to side two.

It was in Isaiah's day. That's the way it will be in our day. Isaiah said, how long? How long? And he said, and the Lord said, until the Lord has removed men far away, till the cities be wasted and without inhabited, houses without a man, till the land be utterly desolate.

And the Lord have removed men far away, and there'll be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. That's coming our way, not too far down the road. But then he said, Isaiah, but yet in it shall be a tent.

And it shall return. It shall be eaten as a teal fin, as an oak whose substance is in them. When they cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.

And that's an incredible passage of scripture. The holy seed, if you want to look it up in the original Hebrew, is Jesus. It is the spirit of Christ.

God said to Isaiah, there is a tent that are going to come to you, come to me through your message. A tent of your hearers for every 90, for every 100 you preach to, 10 are going to receive it and 90 are going to reject it. But the tent that come, there's going to be substance in them.

It can be eaten by others. That's what the scripture really means. As an oak whose substance is in them and shall be eaten.

They will devour your word. There will be substance in them. There will be something in their lives that can give food and substance others around them.

And the power of that life, the power that they will have to stand and declare to their generation will be because the holy seed is within them. The spirit of God will come upon them as the spirit of God has touched your life and they will be called to stand and to declare the mercy of God to their generation. Hallelujah.

I've got a cry in my heart. God, I want to preach like I've never preached before. I want to love you like I've never loved you before.

God, open my finite foolish mind to this book and show me truth that men can't resist. Lift me out of all the confines of this physical body, all the confines of former learning, and the things within that say you can only go do this and go no farther. Lift me out of religious pride for past accomplishment.

Grant me grace to understand that I stand by mercy so that my heart will be filled with compassion for those that are struggling. Help me to plead for those that have nobody, that have no voice, that are sitting in darkness, who don't know their left hand from their right. Help me to plead for their soul.

When we stand and speak, may it be the voice of God and not the voice of men. It's my heart's cry. It's my heart's cry for you.

It's my heart's cry for Times Square Church. My heart's cry for every believer in Jesus Christ. God, lift us.

Take us. Do whatever you have to do. But bring us into the realm of resurrection life.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Jesus, I love you.

We love you here at Times Square Church. We love you, Lord. We thank you for what you've done in the past.

But we're not going to live there. We're going to live for today and for tomorrow. We rejoice in the past.

We give you thanks for it. We honor you for it, Lord. But there's a big work ahead.

The kingdom of heaven is moving. Lord, whenever the cloud moved, you told the people to move with it because that's the pathway to life. Lord, I ask for the power to pray.

I ask for the strength to be disciplined. I ask for compassion. I ask for a constant reminder to be in our lives that we stand by grace.

Don't let the root of pride get into us, Holy Spirit. Don't let spiritual pride swallow the life of Christ. Don't let our testimony be always about yesterday.

Help us even to forget some of the things other than to remember your goodness and your power to encourage others. But we don't build our sense of what you desire to accomplish in our lives on that. Tonight, my prayer is for the strong.

It's for those who have walked with you and desire to go deeper. Say, Lord, it's not enough just to have a testimony of your past faithfulness. I want something new.

I want it deeper than ever before. I want more mercy. I want to hear your voice.

Forgive me for trying to hear some other voice, trying to modify your voice to suit my tastes and appetites. There never has been another voice. There's never been another call, but who will go? Jesus, thank you, Lord.

Thank you, Father. I'm going to give an altar call tonight for the strong. Father, if you're backslidden, you're always welcome to come back to God.

If you're lost, the arms of God are wide open to you tonight. He died for your sin. He'll give you a new life to save you from your sin and give you a new life and give you hope.

But I want to speak specifically to the ones who say, I have been walking with God. I have been listening to his voice, but I want to go deeper. I want to hear him again.

And whatever he has to do, whatever he has to show me, I'm willing to let him speak and to show it. I want out of missing the boat, standing on the past. I want to know you, Jesus, in a new way.

I want you to break my heart all over again for the lost. I want you to give me a gratitude again for the mercy in which I stand. I want you to destroy in my heart ambition.

Every trace of it, every root of it, all plans that come from the natural heart. I want you, Lord, to just destroy it, smite it in me. Show me that I stand by grace.

And there really is only one plan that counts for eternity. And it's yours. Help me now to find it.

And in a deeper way to walk in it, if that's the cry of your heart, as we stand together, I would, Sarah, if you're here, if you could lead us in a song, as we stand together, I'm going to ask you to come to this altar. You're coming before the Lord, not before man. And let that be the cry of your heart tonight.

Hallelujah. Lord God in heaven, we all stand before you in need. We all have no testimony of our own faithfulness.

The only testimony we have is of your faithfulness to us. You've been good to us, Lord. You've blessed us.

You've kept us. You've made promises. You've not forsaken them or us.

You've been faithful to your covenant promises to your people. If we boast, Lord, we boast in you. If we brag, we brag about the cross.

It's nothing of ourselves, Lord. Thank you tonight for delivering the strong from spiritual pride. Thank you, Lord, that if we have a testimony, it's not about us.

It's about you. It's not our faithfulness. It's your faithfulness to us.

God, so tonight you're delivering us from pride. And we thank you for it, Lord. We thank you, Father.

We ask that the roots of spiritual pride be destroyed. They've been never found in this house nor in our hearts. God, keep us humble, longing for you, aware of our need for you, and able to bring you in the fullness of your revelation to us, to others.

We cry out like Isaiah tonight. Oh, God, we are undone without you. But through you, we are whole.

We're complete, and we thank you for that. That is the message. That is what you want us to bring.

And, Lord, by grace, and by grace alone, we pledge our hearts to you again tonight, anew and afresh. And we sing the song, where he leads me, I will follow. I'll go with him, with him, all the way.

Lord, we'll not do it in our own strength. We have none. We'll do it in the grace that you give to us.

This is the conclusion of the message.

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