

Help, I'm Stuck

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes God's desire to lift us from our spiritual stagnation and invite us into new life through faith in Christ.

Duration: 26:31

Scripture: Genesis 3:9, John 11:35, John 14:16, Romans 10:9-10, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 3:19, Hebrews 3:15

Topics: "Bondage"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a heartwarming story about his grandson playing a game called 'Help, I'm stuck.' He reflects on how this game mirrors his own prayer life, where he often cries out to God for help when feeling stuck or unsure. The speaker emphasizes the importance of knowing that God is always there for us, even when others may not be, and that we can find comfort and assurance in His presence. He relates this to Jesus' promise of preparing a place for us in His Father's house and encourages listeners to trust in God's faithfulness.

Transcript

Help! I'm stuck. Now, you may wonder where I got the title from. My wife, Teresa, and my daughter, Katie, are presently in Canada, visiting with my oldest son, Jason, and his wife, Megan.

And we have a brand-new grandchild, Liam. His name is Liam John. But I have a two-and-a-half-year-old grandson.

His name is Landon. And Teresa got to the airport, and he walked in the airport. He had brand-new rubber boots on.

He had a coat, a school bag, a ball cap, and sunglasses. And he walked right up to her. Didn't even say, Hi.

He said, Where's Papa? That really gladdened my heart when I heard that. Now, Landon has a favorite game, Katie was telling me yesterday, that he likes to play now. Everybody has to lie on the living room floor.

And you just lay there. You stare up at the ceiling. And after a few moments of silence, you cry out, Help, I'm stuck.

And I said to Katie, Then what happens? She said, Then, of course, after a few moments, we all get up. And the game repeats itself. That's the whole game.

Help, I'm stuck. Now, when I heard it, I burst out laughing yesterday in my apartment as I was preparing, because I realized that Landon has really, he's come to the point where half of my prayer life, that's half of my prayer life. I don't know about you, but throughout my life, that's how I prayed.

Help, I'm stuck. I don't know how to get out of this. I don't know how to change this.

And you just lay there kind of staring into space. And how do I get out of this position? Now, when I heard this, I immediately want to be part of the game. I'm going to be visiting there this coming Wednesday.

And so if you think of me on Thursday, think of me lying on the living room floor with my grandson, and we're going to be playing help, I'm stuck together. And, you know, as soon as I heard it, I thought of, as his grandfather, that I'd be standing there in the doorway and just so loving this child. And I immediately would want to go over and play the game with him as it is, and lay down beside him.

And isn't it true of Christ that he came to the earth, and the scripture says he became acquainted with our struggles. He was not aloof from our struggles. He's not standing on some cloud kind of telling us how to live life.

He came down, he became a man, he walked through this world, and he was tested in every way like we are. And he identified with us. That's what I so love about God.

And once you get to know him, there's so many things about him that you will immediately become so in love with. And then I feel what I want to do, and what I'm going to do, is I'll get up before he does, and I'll pick him up. And I can see him just lifting his arms, because he does love his papa, and I can see him lifting his arms and grabbing ahold of mine, and I'll pick him up and I'll just throw him up in the air.

Kind of a way of showing him you're not stuck. As long as papa's around, you're never going to be stuck down there. There's always a way to get, not only get off the floor, but I love just to throw him in the air, and perhaps every time I'll throw him just a little bit higher, just to show him that there's something that papa can do for you.

And if you let God do it for you through your life, he'll pick you up whenever you're down, whenever you feel like you can't get up, he'll pick you up, because he delights in you. David the psalmist said, he delivered me because he delighted in me. And just let him throw you up in the air.

Now there's a limit, of course your ceilings are about eight and a half feet, I'm not going to throw him beyond that. Can you imagine if God just became overjoyed and just threw us with all his strength? As we're leaving the solar system. Can you imagine when we get to heaven, can you just imagine for a moment what it's going to be like as we are lifted by the hand of God, from place to place, as he begins to unravel and show us mysteries, and we see the mansions that he's prepared for us.

We didn't have a word in our language to understand this concept of mansions. So he had to say it in a way that we could understand it. Think of the universe, think of all these galaxies that are out there, think of things that scientists are just discovering as dots in space right now, but finding out that these little dots are planetary systems even larger than ours.

Jesus said in my father's house there are many mansions, I'm going, I'm preparing a place for you. Amazing when you and I get there and begin to see these things. I want my grandson to know this, I want him to know that Papa may not always be there throughout all his life, but God will be there.

And he's never stuck as long as God is there. And it's a fun game right now for him as a child. And we play a lot of childish and fun games when we're little.

But I was thinking of the sorrow that would come into my heart if what started as a fun game became a life pattern. And that's what happens to many of us. Some are experiencing this this evening.

What starts as a funny little game as a child, you probably played similar games to this. And all of a sudden as you get older, you're a little longer down on the floor as it is. You're a little slower getting up.

Youthful zeal and exuberance causes you to give it a try one more time. Then finally you get so down, you get so weighted by sin, which I define tonight for those who don't understand the concept is when we do wrong against the law of God. And we sin against God, we violate the way God says that we should be living and the things we should be doing.

We get weighted down by sin. Finally, we get to the place where we don't know if we can get up again. We don't know how we're going to get up again.

It literally becomes a way of life. And I know there are people here tonight that it's a way of life. You've been down so long, you're just stuck there.

You're on the floor and you might be able to cry help, but it's less frequently than it used to be. You're making peace with death. And I see a lot of people through the years that I've been a Christian man who have made peace with death.

They say this is just the way it has to be. I want you to think about the story of Lazarus for a moment with me in John chapter 11. A man who died and he's in a tomb.

And he's in a sense made peace with death. He's had an exposure to religion of sorts. I suppose you could say his sister Martha was very religious.

But as far as he's concerned, all she could do is quote scripture. But she didn't really believe that his situation could ever change. And many of you have had experiences like that.

You've been in places where a lot of scripture is quoted. But deep down, a lot of people don't believe any more than you do that your situation will ever change. And she's quoting scripture to God.

Her brother is put away in a grave. As far as she's concerned, he's never going to come out. Not until some far distant day way off in the future.

It certainly, in her mind, can't happen now. It might happen later. She's got another sister, Mary, who really was a devoted follower of Christ.

And she believed God, he says, for me more than anybody. But now she's stuck in the house. That's what scripture said.

When Jesus came, she just stayed in the house. She was stuck. And even when Christ called for her, the scripture says she came out of the house, but she was so stuck in wanting to blame somebody for what happened.

And that's where some of you are stuck tonight. You want to blame somebody. It's somebody's fault.

And so many people are stuck there for so long, that even when God puts down His hand, they can't see it. Even when a chance for life comes. And you have a choice tonight.

You can walk out of here blaming everybody that's ever done you wrong. And you can carry on blaming for the rest of your life and right through into eternity. But God is reaching down to you.

And if you haven't even in your heart to say, Lord, I'm stuck. His hands are coming to you. Not just to raise you up in a mediocre fashion, but to raise you up and cause you, as the scripture says, to soar with eagles.

Cause you to be able to defy gravity as it is. To be given this new life. To be given something of God that lifts you and I out of our present condition and into the life of another, which is Christ in us.

As Paul says, which is the hope of our glory. Some people get stuck in self-pity. They say, well, listen, at least in here, if you look at it from Lazarus's vantage point, he's dead.

He's already in a grave. And he says, well, I'm all alone here. But at least nobody can hurt me here anymore.

And many of you are just like that. You're stuck in some place and a big stone. You've rolled a stone in front of the opening.

You're afraid to come out. Because if you come out of this place, people have hurt you. They didn't believe.

They never trusted. Words were... You heard secret words spoken as you were kind of fading out in your last moment of hope. Oh, too bad.

Not even God could do anything for him. And these words have stuck to you like Velcro in your heart. You can't get rid of them.

And you'd say in your heart, well, people think... Mary's testimony, or Martha's rather, of her brother is, Lord, he stinks. And some of you, that's exactly the way you feel. You say, well, people think I stink.

So why should I step out of this place just to prove them right? Why should I do this? I'm safe here at least. A big stone is separating me from them and protecting me from any more hurt. Help, I'm stuck.

And I couldn't help but think that if... What an awful thing if... And God forbid, I'm going to stand in faith and it will never happen. But what an awful thing it would be to watch my grandson, to watch him grow and what was a little game now becomes a life reality for him. That even when I'm there to help him, he would no longer recognize it.

And to watch him grow into his teenage years and perhaps beyond and get this thing in his head that there's no hope. When I know there is. I know there's a way out.

I know there's life. It's not a theory. I know it.

It's a practical experience in my own life. I know the goodness and grace of God. I wonder... I wonder... When is the first time that Lazarus' ears were opened? I hope there's never a time that I have to stand and weep over one of my own grandchildren.

I hope it with all my heart. And I believe God that I won't have to. But if it even does for a season happening.

I could feel if I had a grandchild that just somehow was convinced there's no way out and a certain state was all he or she would ever know. I think my heart would break. And maybe the sound of his grandpa weeping would be the first time he might even be willing to consider that there's another life that's available.

The Bible says that Jesus wept. There's a lot of opinions on this and I'm not quite sure what the full depth of it is. But he stood there and he wept.

Because the scripture does say he loved Lazarus. Lazarus is laying there and yes he does stink. And yes people have given up on him.

And yes I guess in a great measure he's probably given up on himself. And I think maybe the first thing he hears is somebody weeping for him. Somebody really cares.

And then all of a sudden he hears his name. And I don't think it's this judicial godly command that we suddenly, Lazarus come forth as we see in some of the productions that are done. I think it's the same voice that came down into the Garden of Eden when Adam had sinned.

I heard Pastor William preach on this that the inference in the Hebrew is that it was as a man losing his best friend saying, Lazarus, Adam, where are you? Where have you gone? What's happened to you? I do feel that it was that kind of a cry. Lazarus, if you can hear me come out. The Bible speaks about today if you can hear his voice don't harden your heart.

There's something in the heart of God that breaks for you. You are created in the image of God and for God and to worship God and to know the freedom of God and to let God's hands pick you up. And the Bible says you'll be made into a new creation.

You'll become a person that you could never have even dreamed of becoming. You'll be lifted by the hand of God and brought into a dimension of God's love that is difficult to communicate. You have to experience it to know it.

But you'll be brought there. You'll know the faithfulness of God. You'll find out that he has loved you from before time even began.

He knew you. He loved you. You are the delight of his heart.

He doesn't sit in heaven with his arms folded despising you because you struggle. And he's not among the chorus of voices that are saying there's no hope. I'm a little bit late.

No, he's standing there watching. His heart is filled with expectation for you. All it requires on your part is the lifting of your hands and say I'm a father.

God almighty. I come. I come.

I don't know at what point Lazarus made the decision. He heard and he could have stayed in death. It was completely within his right to do so.

He had to make a choice. I wonder if he said in his heart, well, I'm all wrapped up. And he was in grave clothes.

At the moment, I can't. But God says, no, you can. You can.

I'm calling you. You can come. You can live.

You can walk again. You can have a testimony. I want to sit you at a table with me and give you something that nothing in this world has ever given you before.

Ironically and strangely, Lazarus may have said, but I'm already dead. And the people of late description says I wanted to kill you. Why should I take a chance of getting killed? I'm already dead.

To associate with Jesus meant further rejection and difficulty. But it also meant life. Incredible life from the dead.

Oh, God forbid that my grandchild, any one of them, should ever not raise their hands to their papa. That's how God feels for you. I know many of you have never had a good father.

You've not known tenderness. But God is not like these things you've experienced. If you will raise your hand to him, he'll not forsake you.

He said, I'll not leave you. He said, I've loved you with an everlasting love, so much so that I engraved you on the palms of my hands. With the point of a nail, I engraved your name on my hands.

That's how much I love you. There's a song we sing sometimes in the church. His love lifted me.

I was down. I was sinking. I was lost.

I had no hope. I simply responded to God and his love lifted me. Praise be to God.

Lazarus. He said, Come forth. Come to me.

Come to me. Lift your hands to me, Lazarus. I'll give you life.

I'll raise you from the dead. I'll give you a story that people will come from afar to hear it. I'll sit you at a table and you will feast in a manner that you've never known before.

There'll be such life come into your heart. It starts with lifting your hand. I want to give an invitation tonight.

Annex, balcony, main sanctuary to every Lazarus in this house. Everyone that the Holy Spirit's been speaking to tonight. You can say, Pastor, you've just spoken my life.

But somehow I hear God calling me. I hear my name in all of this. And I realize that I'm going to be vulnerable to do this.

But as your grandson will do for you, I will do for God today. I'm going to raise my hand. And I'm going to accept the invitation of life that God offers to me through his son.

If that's you today, I'm going to ask you unashamedly, would you lift your hand? Just hold it up all over the sanctuary, balcony. God bless you all over the place. Just raise your hand.

Praise be to God. Unashamedly, raise your hand. I'm coming to you, Jesus.

I don't understand it all, but I hear your voice calling me. I've heard songs and testimonies of life. And I'm not living in death anymore.

And I don't care what people say about me, because you love me. And coming to you is going to be good enough for me tonight. You'll cleanse me.

You'll forgive me. You'll change me. I'd like everybody to stand, please, at this moment, if you will.

Now, Jesus said, Lazarus, come forth. It's important. It's important to take a step.

It's important. He had to walk out in all of his confusion and death. He had to step out.

And trust God when everyone else around wasn't. And for those who raised their hands, and in your heart, maybe you didn't, but you wanted to, I'm going to ask you now, as we are going to sing a song, and as we do, I'm going to ask you to slip out. Everybody raise your hand.

Follow this gentleman. Make your way down to the psalter. Right now, on the balcony, just go to either exit.

Annex, please, we'll wait for you. Make your way here. Every Lazarus.

I want every hopeless person who feels hopeless tonight. Oh, God, it's going to touch you. Praise be to God.

What a moment that must have been when the stone is rolled, and the whole crowd watches this dead man come forward. And it's happening tonight. It's happened time and again throughout the years.

The dead have been raised to life. And that's what's happening. You're dead in sin, but you're going to be alive through Christ.

Hearing His voice. Letting Him forgive you as you decide to turn from death. If you're wavering right now, what are you waiting for? What more needs to happen? What more does God need to do? Does heaven have to weep for eternity because you had a chance and you didn't take it? If you can hear His voice, God says, this is not about filling an altar.

There's already a lot of people here. This is about you. This is about you coming home to God.

This is about being forgiven your sin. This is about being unraveled from all the death around you. This is about life.

It's about raising your hands to God and saying, Father, I don't understand. But I know you're not going to leave me here. I know you're going to pick me up.

And by faith, I just have to believe I'm going to live. And I'm going to soar with the eagles. I'm going to have life instead of death.

Don't sit in death. Don't make peace with death. Come to Him.

Give your life to Him. Praise be to God. Praise be to God.

Let's sing for a moment. We'll wait for you in the annex. We'll wait for you.

Now those who are at this altar, now I know that many here have done, you've done wrong. And you know you've done wrong. You've lived wrong.

You've been thinking wrong. And it's really, really made a mess. But God became a man.

And He went to a cross. That was the reason He did this. All the wrong that you've done was put on Him by His Father.

He paid the price. The full wrath of God as it is that you and I deserve was put on Christ. He paid the price for your sin.

My part, your part is to believe that. Jesus, you would do that for me. You would go to a cross.

And you would suffer all of the wrath that I deserve for how I've lived. And then you'd call me to come to you. To believe that you paid the price for my wrong.

And that you will give me new life. The Bible says if you believe in your heart that Jesus is the Son of God. And if you believe that He died for your sin.

If you believe that He rose again from the dead. To prove that your confidence in Him is not in vain. You'll be saved.

With the heart, you believe to a place where you are made clean by God. And what you believe in your heart, you will eventually confess with your mouth. We're going to do that right now.

If you really truly believe this in your heart. And you confess it with your mouth. The Bible says you will be saved.

And then Jesus said I'll send you. It's called the Holy Spirit. He's the third person of God.

He'll comfort you. He'll lead you in the truth. He'll help you to understand this walk.

You'll be born again. Starting new. How'd you like to start new tonight? Isn't that an awesome thought? Starting new.

Praise God. Those who are at this altar, just pray this simple prayer. And anybody who didn't respond but you wish you were here.

It's an issue of the heart. You can pray it too. Lord Jesus.

I've done wrong. I've sinned against you. I'm sorry for my sin.

I don't want to live this way. Anymore. Thank you for loving me.

Taking my place. Promising me forgiveness. And a new life.
Tonight, I open my heart. I lift my hands to you. And I want to say tonight, I trust you Jesus.
You won't hurt me. You won't fail me. You'll be a loving God to me.
Lift me. And change me. And help me.
To honor your name. I believe with all my heart. That at this very moment.
You have received me. Because you've called me. And I'm forgiven.
I have hope. I will live again. God, thank you.
In Jesus name. Now give him thanks. Just give him thanks.
Oh hallelujah. Thank you Lord. Thank you God.
Thank you Lord. Thank you God. Hallelujah.
We give you praise Lord. We thank you God. Thank you Lord.
Thank you God. Oh Lord for your wonderful mercy. Thank you God.
Oh hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.
Thank you Lord. You have a new life. You have a new life tonight.
You have a new life. You have a hope. You have a future.
Praise be to God. Praise God. Can we give God thanks for what he's doing.
Give him thanks and praise.

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