

I Will Never Draw Back My Hand

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the importance of unwavering faith in God's promises and the victory believers have through Christ amidst worldly challenges.

Duration: 58:35

Scripture: Joshua 8:16

Topics: "Abraham"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by encouraging the audience to raise their hands to God and remind Him of His promises. He emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's word and standing firm against the enemy. The preacher also highlights the consequences of pushing Christ out of our lives and society, leading to violence and immoral agendas. He concludes by reminding the audience that judgment will come and those who have rejected God will be consumed and destroyed.

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 tapes are available by writing World Challenge, PO Box 260, Mindell, 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. Joshua chapter 8, please, in the Old Testament, if you'll turn there.

The title of my message today is, I will never draw back my hand. I will never draw back my hand. Father, I thank you for the touch of the Holy Spirit.

I thank you for your anointing. Lord, I could never stand here without your anointing. If you don't come and quicken this word, it's just dead letter.

It just falls to the ground and nothing happens. But when you come and quicken the word, your word, Lord, becomes life in the hearts of your people. I ask for an anointing to preach, but I ask also for an anointing to hear.

Lord, give us hearing ears today that we can hear what you're speaking and lay hold of it. God, let the powers of hell be destroyed in this house today. Let every weapon of darkness be sent to flight.

Show your hand strong on behalf of those who have trust and confidence in you. Lord, you will not fail. You cannot fail those who place their confidence in you.

We believe this with all of our hearts. That's why we preach it and we live it. We thank you in Jesus' name.

Joshua chapter 8, verse 16 to 18, then I'll read verse 26. And all the people that were in Ai were called together to pursue after them. And they pursued after Joshua and they were drawn away from the city.

There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel that went not out after Israel. And they left the city open and pursued after Israel. And the Lord said unto Joshua, stretch out now the spear that is in thy hand towards Ai.

For I will give it into thine hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand towards the city. Verse 26.

For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. Now, we understand from this passage of Scripture that Jericho and the promised land are a type of what God has for the New Testament church. We are called out of captivity first.

Then we are called out of the wilderness, a place perhaps of not fully comprehending the plan of God. And you and I are called to go in and to, by faith, to inherit everything that Christ won for us on Calvary. And those things that Christ won are clearly revealed to us by the promises of God.

It's the word of God that we stand upon as the church of Jesus Christ. Jericho was the type of the first initial battle, that strong-walled city that wants to remain entrenched in every person's life. And then after defeating Jericho, they came to this little city called Ai.

And it's interesting because when they came against this little city, at first they suffered defeat. But then God said to Joshua, He said, hold up the spear that's in your hand. Now, the spear that was in Joshua's hand really was a type of the word that God had given him.

In chapter 8, verse 1, the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear not, and be not dismayed. Take all the people of war with thee, and arise, and go to Ai. And I have given into your hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land.

God said, Now, Joshua, don't be afraid. I've given it all into your hand. And that's my word to you today.

That's the Lord's word to everyone who's called by the name of Jesus Christ. When you came to Christ, you walked into an incredible victory that you and I have not bought for ourselves. This victory was won for us 2,000 years ago on Calvary.

Christ died for our sins, rose from the dead, and now He sits at the right hand of all power and all authority. And everything that He purchased on that cross is now ours. It's yours and it's mine.

We've got to settle this issue in our hearts before we even go on in this message. And Joshua stood, and he raised up that spear of confidence in what God had spoken to him. And because of that confidence, a great victory was won that day.

Now, Ai is the type of the world and all of its determination to conquer the overcoming child of God. In other words, this world and its world system and everything that that really embodies or typifies will come

against you in its full fury. If you've never known the fury of evil, you've not yet fully walked with God.

Yes, some have known the fury of evil in an unsaved condition, and you've been defenseless. There's nothing you could do. Evil occupied your mind and your thoughts.

And the power of evil came against you, and you cried out to God. Or somewhere along the line, somebody told you about Christ, and you found the saving knowledge of God through Jesus Christ. And you came, and you began to understand, hey, God said, wherever your feet walk, I'm going to give you the land.

Now, my feet are beginning to walk through this book, and I'm starting to understand things. And I'm starting to understand that if God is for me, then no one can be against me. I'm starting to understand that I have an inheritance in Jesus Christ.

And where the devil has formerly occupied, he is now a defeated foe, and he has no right to my life anymore. He has no right to my mind. He has no right to my heart.

He has no right to my home. He has no right to anywhere I go. And as I begin to walk and hold up that sword of confidence in what God has spoken to me through Jesus Christ, all of hell begins to tremble.

Beloved, I have that knowledge in my heart that when even the weakest saint of God begins to understand who they are in Jesus Christ, and begins to stand up, I believe the devil trembles when the grandmothers begin to stand up in their apartments at night, and begin to call out the names of their grandchildren to Almighty God. I believe hell begins to tremble. Hell begins to shake.

Because somebody has risen up who has begun to understand that this kingdom is not just in word, but it's in power. There is power behind the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is power to set people free from drug addiction.

There is power over mental torment. There is power over the captivity of darkness. There is power over all the weapons of evil.

And nothing, the Bible says, nothing shall prosper against those who walk and trust in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. John tells us in 1 John 5, verse 4, that whatsoever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.

Now, I'm going to define the world to help you to understand, because, especially new Christians. You know, older Christians throw out terminology that new Christians sometimes don't understand. We're not to be of the world.

We hear these things. The new Christian says, well, where am I to live then if I'm not to be of the world? Don't love the world. Don't let the world into you.

And all these things. Now, let me help to define what this really means. Now, the world is the sum total of what men or mankind without God has done or will do to God's created order.

It is an empire built with all that man in his own sinful condition is. This is the world. It's a type, it's a kingdom.

It's the kingdom of man who has tried to shut God out of his life. Tried to create his own laws. Tried to establish his own order.

Tried to determine his own destiny. And tried to do it all without God. And tries to impose that order as it is on everyone in the world.

But when you came to Christ, God, when he came into your life, he said, no, I'm taking you out of this world order as it is. And I'm bringing you into another kingdom. I'm bringing you into another place.

Because all that is of this world is going to pass away. 1 John, just let me read it to you. Chapter 2 tells us that man builds on all that his eyes were open to when sin entered his life in the garden of Eden.

Love not the world and neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world.

Now, here's really what you find in this world. And you find it all in plentiful supply, no doubt, in New York City. The lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world.

And the world passes away and the lust thereof. But he that does the will of God will abide forever. When sin entered into the human race, mankind without God was left to build by what he could see with his own eyes.

By what he could long for in his own flesh. And by the pride of what he supposes will bring him life. And mankind from the day of Eden has been trying to build his own kingdom and be his own God ever since.

And look at where it is leading the world to today. We have the capability now. Folks, do you know that we stand on the brink of eternity right now? Everyone in this house.

We have the capability of destroying ourselves five times over in the world today. There's enough weaponry now to destroy the entire civilization five times over. This is where the knowledge of man has brought this world to.

And man occupying that which God has created and led by his own lusts will ultimately plunge both himself and everything and everywhere he controls into destruction. The prophet Isaiah. Let me read it to you in chapter 24.

Oh, you go there with me. Isaiah chapter 24, beginning at verse 4, talks about where mankind is going to lead this world to. This is where the world is heading.

If your trust is in just what you see around you. If your trust is in the advice of man, the counsel of man. If your trust is in the stock market.

If your trust is in anything but Jesus Christ, here's where you're going. Because the Bible says conclusively, this is the end result of man trying to govern himself without God. Isaiah 24, 4. The earth mourns and fades away.

The world languishes, that means ceases to thrive, and fades away. The haughty people of the earth do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof.

Because they have transgressed the laws, they have changed the ordinance, and they've broken the everlasting covenant. In other words, they have changed the ways of God. They've tried to create their own statutes or laws of what is right and wrong.

They've tried to defy absolute truth. And then mankind's ignorance have not begun to realize that there are consequences to walking away from the truth of God. Therefore, hath the curse devoured the earth.

And they that dwell therein are desolate. And therefore, the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men are left. The new wine mourns.

The vine languishes, and all the merry hearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceases. The noise of them that rejoice ends, and the joy of the heart ceases.

They shall not drink wine with a song. Strong drinks shall be bitter to them that drink it. In other words, there'll be no consolation.

Now, Isaiah is talking about a day that is probably soon coming our way. Yes, this day has come from time and season to various parts and people throughout the world. But there is a time coming when the entire world is going to be engulfed in the end result of living under the curse of sin.

Living under the curse of following the lusts of his own eye, his own heart, and the pride of his own life. They will even go to drink and try to sing songs. It says in verse 9, but it will become bitterness.

There will be no joy. There will be no comfort. As a matter of fact, the Bible says things will get so out of hand that men's hearts are going to fail them for fear because of the things that suddenly come upon the earth.

The Bible seems to bear witness that even the stars in heaven are going to be moved out of alignment as it is. There's going to be such an incredible shaking it will even affect the heavens. People will run to and fro looking for comfort and not be able to find it.

Verse 10 says the city of confusion is broken down. Every house is shut up that no man may come in. Everyone now is going to run and try to hide.

People are going to hoard. They're going to try to bring goods and false comfort into their house. They're not going to let anybody in.

The hearts are going to grow cold. The scripture says that every man is in survival mode now. There's crying for wine in the streets.

All joy is darkened and the mirth of the land is gone. Verse 12 says in the city is left destruction and the gate is smitten with destruction. All of the plans of man have come to nothing.

There is a time and a season that has been appointed of God. It began in the Garden of Eden. And from the Garden of Eden man has tried to govern God's universe.

He's tried to govern the world. He's tried to govern his own life. And all he has done is brought chaos and pollution everywhere he goes.

Disorder and destruction because his heart is not right with the Lord his God. All the plans of man are going to come to nothing. Absolutely nothing.

There's a day coming, beloved, where there will be no comfort on any radio station. There will be no mocking talk show host with flipping easy answers anymore. There will be no comfort found in any other place but the Word of God and the promises of God.

Now man has always tried to be God. And that's why in general so many men hate Christ. Especially in North America.

I feel very sad for societies that were Christian and have turned away from Christ and now hate Him. They hate Him. You see, because John, the beloved apostle, says in John chapter 3 that to meet Christ is to encounter the truth about yourself.

To meet Christ is to come into the light. Jesus said it this way in John chapter 3. And verse 19. He said this is the condemnation.

That light has come into the world and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For everyone that does evil hates the light and neither comes to the light lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that does truth comes to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

Now folks, to come to Christ is to encounter the truth about yourself. To come to Christ is to make an admission that Lord God, I have tried to be God in my own life. I've tried to govern my own life.

I've tried to create my own systems of right and wrong. I've tried to change times and laws because that's men and lawlessness, that's ultimately what he does. I've tried to change everything and tried to make it suit my opinion about who I am and ultimately even who God is.

But to come to Jesus Christ there is no option but to come into His light. To be exposed as it is to His perfect truth and it's finally to lay down one own agenda and to be turned to the ways of God. He that does truth comes to the light that his deeds, his thoughts, his motives, his ways of doing things are made known.

Initially that they have nothing about, there's nothing of God in them. Very little of God in anything that we do apart from Him. And subsequently to lay it all down and to say, Jesus Christ, I acknowledge that you are the Son of God come in the flesh.

I acknowledge that you died on the cross on Calvary 2,000 years ago. Your death was God's absolute mercy reaching out to a rebellious creation that are trying to be their own God and heading to their own destruction. I healed my life.

I acknowledge that I was born in sin. I acknowledge, oh God, that sin is in me. I acknowledge that my ways are not your ways and my thoughts are not your thoughts.

And now I healed my life. I confess that I'm a sinner and I ask you, oh God, to forgive me and come into my life. And give me a new heart, give me a new mind, give me new thoughts and new ways, give me eternal life.

And as Christ said, give me full life here on this side of eternity as well. Now the world, the Bible tells us, is going to ultimately produce a lawless man. Now this is a man who walks only by that which is right in his own sight.

Daniel, the prophet, saw this lawless man. Now we've come to know a world leader that's going to rise and seemingly will have a solution to the land problem in Israel. And the Bible says that this man will come initially as a man of peace, but he's a lawless man.

And you see, that's all that the world can produce is a lawless man. The best that the world will make of you is a man who may even have a semblance of a peacefulness or a peaceful nature, but ultimately in the core, without Christ, if you are not saved, if you don't have the Spirit of God within you, you are still a lawless man, even though you might have a facade of being a peacemaker. If it's not the peace of Christ, the Bible calls it lawlessness.

This lawless man will walk only by that which is right in his own sight. Daniel spoke of him. In Daniel chapter 7, let me just read it to you.

And said, he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws, and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time. The Antichrist will be the final fruit of man attempting to be his own God in this world. He will not be a unique, he will be, in a sense, a unique individual, but he will just simply be the culmination of all of humanity that's wanted to be God.

Ultimately, just like the children of Israel at Sinai built a golden calf and said, this is God, humanity will finally find a man that they elevate in their hearts, because that's what's been in the hearts, is to worship man himself and not God. And so they will finally find a man that appears to be a man who has the solution to all of the world's problems. And they will elevate him.

And they will make him as a God. And it seemingly is, everything in his hand will begin to prosper. He will conquer, the Bible tells us, not by war, but he will conquer through diplomacy.

Until the day that he enters into the temple in Jerusalem and declares himself to be God. This incredible season is not too far ahead for the church of Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us he will attempt to dominate by force and violence everyone he can, and occupy every place that he is able.

You see, that's ultimately what's at the heart of humanity. That's at the heart of man without God. He will come to you initially peaceably, but if you will not yield to what man wants man to be, then ultimately he will attempt to dominate you by force and by violence.

That's all man in himself is without God. That's all he can ever be in his fallen condition. Unless someone greater than himself comes to help him out of this condition.

The apostle John asks, he says, who then is he that overcomes the world? Who can overcome this spirit, this strong spirit that is going to seduce nations? Folks, the Bible says that there are entire nations that are going to give the powers of their army to this man. This man who is just simply the byproduct of humanity trying to be its own God. A man who has a sense, a semblance of peace, but is inwardly evil right to the core.

A man who is just like every other man who is without God. Irrespective of the exterior facade, there is an interior corruption that is in all of us that has to be dealt with. It has to come to the cross of Jesus Christ and accept the forgiveness that God offers.

It has to have someone greater than himself come in and begin to overpower this old nature or this old nature will continue to lead him and dominate him and guide him. John says, he that believes that Jesus is the Son of God is the one who overcomes the world. In verse 4 he says, in chapter 5, this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.

God says, I've given you a way to victory and it's faith in the finished work on Calvary. I came 2,000 years ago as a man, I died for your sins, the Lord says. I came to forgive you, I came to enable you to be another person than what you are.

I came to raise you literally from the dead even where you stand. Even if you think you are alive, you are in fact dead in your sins if you are without Christ. He says, but I came to quicken you, I came to give you life.

I came to bring you into eternity. I came to bring you to sit with me where I am, Christ says, in heavenly places. I came to give you power over all the powers of darkness and over all the weapons of the enemy.

I came to give you the anointing of the Holy Ghost that will cause you and enable you to rise up above all the beggarly theologies of this world. All its impositions and all of its philosophies about God and about life. I came to lift you up and give you a new mind and a new heart and a new life.

I came to do a work in you that can only be done by God. Christ sits in glory today and he reaches down to raise us up out of our inherited fallen condition. You see, Daniel saw this lawless man and he said he will speak great words against the Most High.

And folks, that's just exactly what you and I were without Christ. Those that were without Christ who are now Christians today, you remember how you spoke about God, incredible things that we used to say and how we cursed his name and walked our lives and treaded these streets in New York City or whatever part of the world we came from as if we had a million tomorrows, not understanding that only the grace of God, only the goodness of God even allowed us to draw our next breath. God in his mercy kept us even when we cursed his name.

Talk about a merciful God. He shall speak great words against the Most High and shall seek to wear out the saints of the Most High. Folks, I did that.

I did everything that this man and Daniel says the Scripture says he's going to do. I remember Christians trying to tell me about Jesus Christ and I remember trying to wear them out. I remember speaking against them.

I remember trying to provoke them with counter-arguments. I remember trying to make them angry to see what's really in them. Trying to wear out as it is the saints of the Most High.

It's in all of us, not just this end time man that's going to rise up. He shall think to change times and laws. This is what's happening all over the Western world now.

Times and laws are beginning to change as man turns farther and farther from God. They want no mention of Christ now in Christmas. And I think it won't be long before you'll find that there's a revulsion to

even celebrate anything to do with Jesus Christ.

It's happening in Canada now. It's beginning to happen in America. It's so tragic attempting to push Jesus Christ out of our school system and then standing back in disbelief when our children start shooting each other because they have no moral absolutes.

They have no foundation to stand upon. Looking back in bewilderment saying, well, what's happening? Not understanding it's because man has become his own God. Push Christ out of his life.

Push Christ out of his borders. And wonder why now violence is running rampant. Wonder why immoral agendas are starting to take over government and all facets of our society.

It says, I've been given into his hand until the time and the times and the dividing of time. Yes, it seems that man prospers for a season even in his ignorance and rebellion. But verse 26 says, but judgment shall sit and they shall take away his dominion and consume and destroy it unto the end.

Judgment will sit. Daniel said, I see a judge. I see him coming to the bench.

I see him sitting down at the right hand of all authority and power. I see everything being put into his hand. And he shall judge the world in righteousness.

He shall judge those who have risen up and attempted to be their own God. He shall judge every devil of hell and every power of evil. He shall judge everything that has been contrary to sound doctrine and to truth.

He shall judge it with the purity of Almighty God. Yes, the man of lawlessness seems to prosper, but judgment is coming his way. It's coming his way.

Just like every man and woman who's here today, you don't know Christ. And you feel free to speak anything you want about God. Feel free to live your own life your own way.

And yes, you appear to prosper for a season. You can dominate. Perhaps you're an executive and you can dominate those under your authority.

Maybe you're just a little executive. You can go home and dominate your family. Dominate your wife and dominate your children.

But your day is coming. The Bible says you're going to stand before the judge. And you're going to give an account for the knowledge that God has given to you, even this day.

You knew truth, but what did you do with it? And the kingdom and dominion, Daniel says, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. And all dominions shall serve and obey him. And Daniel said, Hitherto, or this is the end of the matter.

In other words, there's another kingdom coming. The kingdom of man, the kingdom of this world is going to pass away. The apostle Peter says it's going to dissolve.

It's going to be actually burned by fire. The end time judgment of this world is to be judged by fire. Never by water again.

But you'll read it in the Old Testament through the prophets. You'll also read it very clearly in the New Testaments that a day of fire awaits this present world. And the kingdom and the dominion is going to be given to the saints of the Most High.

Now, there is an everlasting kingdom. It is not of this world. Jesus himself said, if my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight.

But my kingdom is not of this world. No, it's nothing to do with this world. But it's a kingdom that is everlasting.

It begins in the hearts of men. And long after this world is gone, it will continue. From everlasting to everlasting, he is God.

And those who trust in him will live with him. They will rule with him. And they will reign with him.

Christ in glory will take away the power of the devil, the sin in this world. And bring you and I into this place where he lives. It's a new kingdom that cannot perish.

It cannot be taken away. It cannot be perceived with the natural mind. It cannot be seen with the natural eye.

It cannot be understood with the natural heart. It is a kingdom as real as this city that we're standing or sitting in right now. It's even more real because what we're in now is going to pass away.

But the kingdom of God is eternal. Jesus said the kingdom of God doesn't come with outward display. Don't look for it because you're not going to see it.

Behold, the kingdom of God is within you. The kingdom of God is the literal presence of the living God in the life and heart of every man, woman, and child who has trusted in him as their Savior. This is the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God is within those who trust in Christ today. You already are part of the new kingdom. The old things around you are all passing away.

The influence of the world that got into your life is passing away. The dominance of false theology is passing away. The old corruptions are passing away.

And all things are being made new because the kingdom of God has come to you. Christ is alive in you. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6.14, God who raised up the Lord Jesus Christ will also raise us up by his own power.

He will. Go with me now to Matthew chapter 9 in the New Testament, please. Matthew chapter 9. I want to talk to you about the difference between the two kingdoms now.

You're going to see two kingdoms in a very simple parable. Not a parable, a story of Christ. Verse 18, Matthew chapter 9. While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead.

That really takes faith, doesn't it? Jesus, I love you. I worship you. I've got a dead child at home.

He says, But come and lay your hand on her, and she will live. And Jesus arose and followed him, and so did his disciples. Verse 23.

And when Jesus came into the ruler's house and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise. Now, here's the world's worship. I call this the song of the world.

The Bible calls it a noise. They gathered around and they're singing their songs of despair. Oh, woe is us.

Woe is me. Here's a situation that's gone too far for anything man to do about. And the world can only offer its song of despair for those its false hopes have been unable to satisfy.

I know there are people here today that the world is singing its sad song over your life. Too bad you've gone too far. There's no hope for you.

You'll never get out. You'll never change. You'll always be the way you are.

Just take drugs. Just numb your mind with barbiturates or whatever you can get your hands on and hope for the best to the end. And that's the sad song that the world now is singing over your life.

And here they are. Jesus himself walks into the situation. And they've got their guitars out and they're singing their choruses over this dead girl that's in the midst of this man's house.

And he said to them, this is Christ, give place. In other words, step aside for the maid is not dead but sleepeth. And they laughed into scorn.

And isn't that exactly society today? Singing their sad songs. All you have to do is tune into any country and western station out there. Listen to all the sad songs that they sang.

But they scorned Christ at the same time. Keep singing your sad song and keep scorning the living God who became a man and shed his blood that all who trusted him may have everlasting life. That's exactly what the world is doing.

That's exactly what the world is offering for those in society who are falling through the cracks as it is. But listen to what Jesus did. When the people were put forth, he pushed them out.

He said, get out of here. Literally. Everybody, take your sad song and get out.

There's a time, folks, when you've got to do that too. There's a time in the midst of your struggle and situation that you've got to take the counsel of the world and say, I'm just shutting you off. I'm turning you away.

I'm putting you out. I'm not listening to you anymore. You've got nothing to tell me.

All you can do is find somebody to blame. Why has this girl died? Oh, it's the grandmother's fault. It's the mother's fault.

It's the father's fault. It's the neighbor's fault. All the world can do is blame and sing a sad song over the death that's all around us in society.

But Jesus said, and had to have obviously the man's permission, there's a time to put the voice of the world out of your life. There's a time to get rid of all the counsel of man. All the foolish counsel that thinks

that it has an answer for a spiritual condition that can only be touched by the hand of God.

And when the people were put forth, he went in, and he took her by the hand. And the maid arose, and the fame thereof went abroad into all that land. He took her by the hand.

Beloved, it's time for you and I to ask Jesus to take our sons and daughters by the hand. It's time to pray now with faith. It's time.

The Holy Spirit's been speaking to us so loudly, so clearly. Yes, I know many people here today, you've got sons and daughters who are not living for God. And they seem like they're dead in their sin.

But it's time to call out to the one who can make a difference and stop listening to the sad song of the world. And say, Jesus, my son is dead. But if you'll come and take him by the hand, he's going to live.

He's going to live. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

We have a mother in our choir who prayed for her son. Wave your hand at everybody. We prayed for her son for eight years.

A son who became a Muslim. And she began to cry out to God, God, I'm tired of my son living for the devil. God, I'm tired of the death that's reigning in his life.

Lord, save him. And that boy, Islam, drove him to the top of a building, and he leapt from a six-story building here in New York City. And he landed on his feet and survived.

It was a miracle. You want to know why he survived? He survived because Jesus had taken him by the hand. And today he wants to go to Bible school and be a preacher of the gospel.

And I have a witness in my heart. A witness in my heart, he's going to be a mighty man of God. The devil tried so hard to destroy him, but a mother cried out for him.

Christ took him by the hand, and now he lives. He lives. Hallelujah.

Times Square Church is filled from one end to the other in this sanctuary today of testimonies of miracles. People whose situations were beyond help and hope. But God came and touched you and set you free.

He took you by the hand. You didn't even have the power to raise your hand to God. But God came in his mercy and took you by the hand.

And began to whisper and speak into your ear words of faith that raised you out of the dead. When Joshua went to Ai, the first sin had to be dealt with. If we're going to know the victory of God, we've got to deal with sin.

We cannot drag the sin issue with us into the kingdom of God. They first went against this little city and experienced a defeat because a man in the midst of them had taken that which was forbidden. We must deal with the sin of loving and trusting in this world.

And of setting our own judgment above the word of God. That's exactly what this man Achan did. When they fought against Jericho, he saw a garment.

He saw some silver. And he thought, well, what harm could there be to touching this, even though I know that God said we're not to do it. And beloved, so many people want the victory, but they don't want to deal with the sin.

Folks, it's not optional. If there's going to be victory, there's going to be a wholehearted trust in God. We're going to obey Him.

We're going to do right in our financial matters. We're going to deal honorably with all men. We're going to forgive those that have wronged us.

We're going to trust in God and not mammon. We're going to lay our lives down for the purposes of God and not chart our own course for the future anymore. We're going to say, Jesus, take my life.

Guide me, lead me, use me for your glory. God, whatever it is you have for me, I yield to it. And I trust that you will always provide for me and you will always keep me.

And God will be faithful to every promise He ever makes to you. But we've got to deal with the sin. The sin is this whole theology I've been talking to you about of the world.

It says, I can lead my own life. I can govern my own path. I can chart my own course.

I can be my own God. And God says there will be no miraculous power until this is dealt with. This has got to be out of the heart.

It's got to be put away. You've got to be a people. We have to be a people that are yielded to Him.

Willing to obey Him. Trusting for the power to obey Him, which He promises to give those who trust in Him. Now again, in Joshua chapter 8, it says, All the people that were in Ai were called together to pursue after them.

And they pursued after Joshua and were drawn away from the city. Folks, you've never known hell until you begin to live for Christ. You've never understood the full fury of hell until you stand to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Until you begin to pray and say, I'm not going into heaven alone. I'm taking my wife. I'm taking my sons.

I'm taking my daughters. I'm taking my grandchildren that are not even born. My whole family is going into the kingdom of God.

Hallelujah. You begin to stand up and say, I'm not taking this mental torment any longer. I'm not being wounded.

I'm not letting the devil twist a knife of pain in my heart any longer. I'm standing up against this, all this power of hell and evil. I'm standing against it in the power of God.

And the moment you begin to stand, and you begin to raise up the word that God has spoken into your heart, all the inhabitants of Ai came out against Him. There was not one man left in the city. Everything you've ever learned will come and try to fight against the new knowledge of God.

Every theory, every philosophy, every false concept of God, all the doubt and unbelief, all the old memories, all the woundings, every devilish voice will now come out of the city against you to try to stop

you from raising your hand in trust and faith to God. Try to get you back into unbelief again. There was not a man left in Ai or Bethel that went not out after Israel.

And they left the city open and pursued after them. And the Lord said to Joshua, Stretch out the spear that is in your hand towards Ai, for I will give it into your hand. And Joshua stretched out the spear that he had in his hand towards the city.

Stretch out the spear, folks. That spear represents the Word of God to you and I. It's full-trusted confidence in that which God has spoken to you. Joshua stood back.

And you can see this fury coming out of this little city against the children of Israel. Previously, had won a defeat. But now Joshua turns.

He makes like he's running from the enemy. And at the Word of God, he turns. Folks, there comes a time when you just have to stop and turn and face your enemy.

Face your enemy. If there's sin in your heart, deal with it. And when you know the sin is dealt with, when you know it's forgiven, how do I deal with it? If we confess our sin, He's faithful and just to forgive our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Confess it. Say, God, I don't want to live there anymore. I don't want it dominating my life anymore.

I don't want it in my thinking anymore. And you begin to confess as you're running away from your enemy that all of a sudden the Word of God comes to you. It's more real than life itself.

And God says, stop and stand against your enemy. Stand. I put promises in your heart.

Stop and raise up your hands to Me. Raise. You'll never find a man or woman mightily used of God that wasn't called to raise up their hand to God.

We see Moses fighting against the Amalekites with both his hands in the air. God said, just raise up your hands of trust and confidence in Me and I will come and fight against all of your enemies. Joshua stops and raises up the spear.

Can you imagine the faith that got into the hearts of the people at that time? When they see their leader. Can you imagine your children when they see their father? Standing against alcohol. Standing against pornography.

Standing against evil in your house. Standing up, not with dominant fleshly violence, but standing up with a gentle faith in Almighty God. Unmoved by circumstance and adversity.

Standing up and raising your hand to God and saying, Almighty God, You have promised me this land. You have promised me peace. Standing up and looking the devil right in the face and saying, Hey you, you're occupying my place of promise.

Listen, I'm speaking to you. You're occupying my place of promise. Hallelujah.

Depression, you're occupying my joy. Torment, you're occupying the peace of mind that God has promised me. Suicide, you're occupying my abundant life that I've been promised in Christ Jesus.

Alcohol, you are occupying the new wine of God's presence that I've been promised by the Spirit of Almighty God. Selfishness, you are occupying the place of Christ's love in me for others. Mediocrity, you are occupying the place of God's plan for my life.

God said He's going to raise me up and use me for His glory. Hallelujah. It's time for some people to say, Devil, how'd you get in my house? Let me show you the way out.

I have lived what I'm speaking to you. More than one time. Brand new believer.

Nine years of hell. Most of you know my story, but for the benefit of those who don't. Nine years of hell, suffering panic attacks that would put me in the hospital.

Nine years of being unable to even occupy a small room lest I should be singled out and begin to panic. Nine years of self-hatred. Fear.

I came to Christ, and one day, not too long after becoming a Christian, I was reading the Bible and God gave me a promise. That's where the Apostle Paul said, If Christ, if God be for us, who can be against us? Normally, when I would feel one of these attacks coming on, I would go down into my living room, or wherever I was, and I had Valium, and I would fill my face with Valium. And try to get into such a drug stupor, because that's what I was told, that's how I was going to cope with this.

Nine years of taking these pills. Went down into my living room that night, and just something rose in my heart on one promise from God's Word. And I said, Devil, and I spoke it out loud, All you can do is kill me.

And if you do, I'm going home to be with God. So I invite you to throw everything you've got at me. And I throw back what I have at you.

And I said, In the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, I resist you. And folks, I want to tell you something. That very moment, 25 years ago now, from the very soles of my feet to the top of my head, it was like a heat, a fire hit me.

And I don't know the theology of it, but I know this one thing. I was set free. I was set free in a moment of time from what had occupied my promise for nine years.

There is a time that you and I have got to stand. And the Bible says in verse 26, Joshua drew not his hand back wherewith he had stretched out the spear until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. He didn't draw his hand back as they ran towards him, as they shouted their obscenities, as they chanted their false reasonings about their ability to triumph over the power of God.

He stayed his course and raised his hand to God. And in his heart, he said, In the power of Christ, I will conquer you. I will never turn back my hand.

I will never draw back my hand from you, God. Something got into my soul that day. And I said, Lord Jesus, for the rest of my life, I will never again run.

By the grace of God, by the power of God, I will never run from another enemy. I will never run again. I will put out my hand.

And like the psalmist David said, Though ten thousand camp against me, I will not be afraid. My heart is fixed, David said, trusting in God. Joshua says, I will never draw back my hand.

And Christ says to you today, Nor will I. You reach up to me in your dependence and faith, and I will reach down to you with the power and the triumph of Calvary. And we will join hands together in victory. Beloved, it's time.

It's time to stand up to depression. It's time to stand up to torment, thoughts of suicide, alcohol. It's time to stand up to drugs and selfishness.

Immorality. It's time to stand up against the lies of the devil that try to tell you you'll never amount to anything in Christ. You know why he fights so hard with that lie? Because he knows history.

He knows that the men and women that God has raised up have been the nothings and the nobodies of this world. The devil still shakes at the thought of another D.O. Moody rising up with very little education, could hardly speak properly the English language, but would shake the very foundation of hell that had been established in the church of Jesus Christ. The devil very well knows that it was not Jerusalem Bible College that Jesus used, but it was the shores of Galilee where there were ignorant fishermen, impulsive, oftentimes not understanding God, but they had a heart for Him.

And as much as they were willing to stand up and fight for what they believed for on the dock, when God got a hold of them, they were willing to stand up for the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The devil shakes and trembles whenever an ignorant Pharisee running in his own religious zeal has an encounter with the living Christ and turns that zeal to the kingdom of God, for he fully well remembers, Paul, that God transformed and even in prison couldn't shut him down. The devil couldn't shut him down even in jail.

Even in jail he starts writing what ends up being most of our New Testament Bible today. Couldn't stop this man. The devil knows what happens when the least of the least and the weakest of the weak and the foolish of the foolish just simply rise up.

Who followed him in Galilee? Was it the intelligent? Oh, there were perhaps a few. Was it the rich? There may have been a few of those. There were, I suppose, that ministered to his needs.

But who were the rank and file of his crowd? Who was the church of Jesus Christ? I'll tell you who they were. They were prostitutes. They were the drug addicts of their day.

They were the thieves and the tax gatherers, the blind, the lame, the lepers, the stinking and the maids. That was his church. And this is the church that on the day of Pentecost were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to shake the whole known world with the power of God.

You've got to believe the devil shakes. When the least of God's children begins to lay hold of this truth and turns and stops running, stops fleeing every time somebody says, boo, and stands simply placing his hand or her hand in the hand of God and says, I will not run anymore. I believe that through the power of Christ I have triumphed already over all the weapons of darkness and nothing formed against me can any longer prosper because I'm now in the hand of Christ.

I believe that God has a plan for my life. He has a destiny for me. I believe that sin by faith has been confessed and it's now out of the way and I now have an open heaven to God.

And I believe that He will take my life and He will use my life for His glory. He will lead me. He will guide me.

I believe there's no limitation to what God can do through my life. He can set me before a dozen. He can set me before a million.

It makes no difference to God. He can do whatever He wants to do. And He will be glorified.

There's enough potential in this sanctuary and education annex today to bring revival. Holy Ghost revival. To Manhattan.

All of Manhattan. All of the Bronx. All of Brooklyn.

All of Queens. All these areas throughout New York City. Into New Jersey and Connecticut.

Different places. Different countries that are represented here. If God can find a man who will stop and stand and just say, Lord, by grace I will never withdraw my hand.

And God says, by grace I will never withdraw my knee. You reach to me in your need, I'll reach to you in my power. You reach to me in faith, I'll reach to you in my faithfulness to you.

I will do such a work in you that hell will tremble. You'll walk into a drug infested neighborhood and every devil of hell controlling those young people is going to begin to shake. Because a man or woman of God has laid hold of truth one more time.

Let's begin to believe today. First, raise your hand to God where your need is. Where your need is.

Let him touch your life. Let him set you free. Let him lift you out of bondage and oppression.

The dominion of sin. And the false theology of this world. Let him lift you into the realm of victory.

So that you have a message. See, the Apostle Paul himself said, Our faith is not to rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. God says, you come to me, I will give you a living experience of my delivering power.

And you take that message to others who are in captivity. You tell them what I can do. And in the face of adversity and mocking and scorning, raise your hand to me and never run from your enemies.

God said, I won't fail you. I'll keep you. Even to the end.

Hallelujah. Father, I just thank you that you have enabled me to deliver your heart today to this congregation. This church that you have raised in New York City, you have given me the power to speak your heart.

And now, Lord, we need the power to respond. It has to come from you. If you don't give it to us, we can't even respond to the word.

But today we ask that you meet us in the area of our need and set us free and give us a message of God for our generation. We ask it in Jesus' name. Now, in a moment I'm going to ask you to respond to an altar call here in the sanctuary and also in the education annex.

Everyone who's suffering from depression and torment, thoughts of suicide, alcohol addiction, drugs, selfishness, mediocrity, torment in your mind, besetting sin. I'm going to ask you to join me at this altar. We're going to pray.

I believe in God for a mighty deliverance for your life today. I want to give an opportunity this morning, firstly for those who could say, Pastor, I'm here today. I'm in this sanctuary.

You may not even be at this altar here. You may be in the annex, any of the other overflow rooms, the balcony, and you say, I would love to have this life of victory, but I'm not even a Christian yet. The sin issue in my life has not been dealt with.

Now, if you will acknowledge that you're a sinner, if you will acknowledge that God became a man, Jesus Christ, He came to this earth and because He loves you, He paid the price for your sin. He was spit on, whipped, bruised, hated, rejected, and suffered the wrath of God, His Father. The full wrath that you and I deserve for our sin was satisfied by Him.

And on the third day, God raised Him from the dead as an evidence to you and I that our trust in Him is not in vain. Just as He was raised from the dead, so will you and I be raised from the dead when we trust in Him. We will be quickened and raised first from the death of sin that is in every life that is without God, and ultimately we'll be raised from the dead if we do die before Christ comes.

We'll be raised to live with Him for all of eternity. We will rule and reign with Jesus Christ. There are a lot of theories about God, a lot of theories about religion, but beloved, as the saying goes, the proof is in the pudding.

The evidence of God's presence is a transformed life, a changed life. If you are in Christ, the Bible says you become a new person. I want to encourage those who are without Him today and want to surrender their lives to Him.

This very moment, this is the greatest decision you'll ever make in your life. There'll never be a greater decision than the one you're about to make all the days of your life because this is the decision between heaven and hell, between knowing God and not knowing Him. But if you have the courage today to say, Pastor, I'm a sinner, I want you just to pray for me.

I'm going to join you now and just raise up my hand all over this sanctuary saying, I want Christ, I want to be saved. Will you do that right now? Downstairs, go ahead, unashamedly, in the balcony. God bless you.

Put up your hand if you're coming to Christ and hold it up there. It gives courage to others. All over this sanctuary, in the back, you might not be at this altar.

God bless you. All over. There are hands being raised up in the balcony, all across.

Thank you. God bless you. Education annex as well.

We're going to pray a prayer for those that are coming to Christ today. You'll never be the same. You'll never be the same again.

Your life is going to be changed. I promise you, in the name of Christ, you're going to change. God's going to give you power to change.

Let's pray for all these that are coming to the Lord today. All together. Lord Jesus, I am a sinner.

I thank you, Jesus, that you died for me. You paid the price for my sin. I am sorry for living in sin and sinning against God.

I don't want to live this way anymore. I ask you to teach me the right way. Show me what truth is.

And give me the power to live a life in that truth. I invite you, Jesus, to come into my heart this very moment and save me from my sin and be my Lord and my Savior. I believe at this very moment that my name is recorded in heaven.

You have washed away all of my sins. And by the grace of God, I am saved. I am saved.

I am saved. Thank you, Jesus. Go through this sanctuary.

See somebody with a white sports coat. See somebody, and they'll give you a Gospel of John. So you can start.

No charge. So you can start reading the Bible for yourself. And they'll tell you how to get into New Believers class.

And for the rest, are you ready to face your enemies now? You're ready now. God says you can't do it in your own strength. But in my strength, you can.

All things are possible to him who believes. God says, I'll give you the power. I'll give the victory.

You stretch out your hand to me, and I'm going to stretch out my hand to you. Isn't that an amazing thing? I want you to, in the Spirit, just feel today at this altar, God reaching down and taking you by the hand. Just like He reached down and took that dead girl by the hand and raised her up.

And the Bible says the fame of Him went through all the land. Ask God to do such a powerful work in you today that the fame of that work will go through all the place where you live. It'll go into your workplace, in your community, your home.

There'll be a fame, in a sense, of God's presence coming into your life, God's power. Father, pray with me. Father, in Jesus' name, I reach out my hand to the God, Jesus Christ, who sits at the right hand.

I believe your promises and your power. I'm not going to let... Now, name your struggle, whatever it is. I'm not going to let it.

Just name it. Depression, torment, suicide, alcohol, selfishness, whatever it is. I'm not going to let this dominate my life anymore.

Today, I turn to face my enemy in the power of God and by the promises of Christ and the victory of Calvary. Because in Jesus Christ... Remember, when you walk out the door and your enemy goes, Boo! You don't run anymore. You don't run.

You stop. Do the very first thing is raise your hand to God. Say, Lord, you promised me.

No more torment. No more drugs. No more suicide.

No more depression. You promised me, oh God. Touch my life and do a work in me that brings fame to your name.

God says, I will. This is the conclusion of the message.

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