

Let the Righteous Smite Me

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the importance of accepting correction from the righteous and trusting God's appointed pathways for spiritual growth.

Duration: 53:29

Scripture: Psalm 145:2-3, Proverbs 26:27, Matthew 5:39, Romans 8:28

Topics: "Reproach"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the theme of freedom in Christ. He encourages the congregation to rejoice in their freedom from the devil's influence and to boldly proclaim their freedom. The preacher also discusses the concept of the deeper life of Christ, highlighting the importance of trusting God and not resisting evil. He uses the examples of Joseph and David from the Bible to illustrate how they chose to trust God in difficult situations and became recipients of His deep resources. The sermon concludes with a reminder that many destinies are decided when believers encounter unrighteous behavior from fellow believers, and it is crucial to respond with trust in God rather than succumbing to bitterness or anger.

Transcript

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There's a lot of talk today about deeper, the deeper life of Christ. And the Lord is beginning to show me some things about the deeper life of Christ. Things that are hard to hear.

But if we have ears to hear, this could be the beginning today, I believe, of something very profound in many lives. Those that are standing, I gather there's no more room in our overflow rooms. And those in the education annex and all of the adjacent rooms listening to the gospel.

I do believe today that if you can hear this, it can be the beginning of something very, very profound. As a matter of fact, it can be the beginning of the most Christ-likeness in your life that you've ever known. But this, what I'm about to share with you, can only happen by the power of God.

You cannot do it in the natural man. It's an impossibility. It has to be something of Christ that has worked into you and I to be able to do this.

My message is entitled, Let the righteous smite me. Let the righteous smite me. Father, I thank you, God, for the anointing of your Holy Spirit.

I thank you for your presence. Lord, it's about your presence. It's about you being here in our midst.

Where you are, there's life. Where you are, there's freedom. Where you are, there's revelation.

If you're not here, then these are just words and they fall to the ground. And at best, we try to appropriate them, but we can't. Lord, it's you.

It's your life. And we do bow. I bow and I bend my knee before you.

I declare that I have no resources apart from you. I have nothing to offer apart from what you've already given to me. And so I give back to you that which you've given to me.

And I ask you, Lord, that you'd glorify your name today. I ask you, Lord, that you'd be lifted up and honored and that your kingdom would advance in the hearts of your people. This is your church, your body on this earth.

Let your kingdom come. That's our cry. And let your will be done.

What you desire us to be and you desire to do in us and through us, let that be accomplished in this house today. All day I pray for it, not just this morning, but all day. Let your will be done.

Be with us. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for so manifesting the presence of Christ in our midst today. We thank you in Jesus' mighty name.

Psalms 141. David, the king. He says, Lord, I cry unto thee, make haste unto me and give ear unto my voice when I cry unto thee.

Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth. Keep the door of my lips.

Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity. And let me not eat of their dainties. Let the righteous smite me.

It shall be a kindness. And let him reprove me. It shall be an excellent oil which shall not break my head.

For yet my prayer shall also be in their calamities. When their judges are overthrown in stony places, they shall hear my words, for they are sweet. Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cuts and cleaves wood upon the earth.

But mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord. In thee is my trust. Leave not my soul destitute.

Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me and the gins of the workers of iniquity. Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal escape." Now, the Reiss Chronological Bible places this particular Psalm 141 as being written at the time when David had escaped from Saul into the cave of Adula. You find that in 1 Samuel chapter 22 and 1 Chronicles chapter 12.

Now, it's recorded that at this time of the writing of this psalm that all of David's father's house and the people of the tribes, both of Benjamin and Judah, came to him to profess their loyalty. Now, we know that David had been wrongly treated by the king of Israel, Saul. Saul had allowed a spirit of jealousy to come into his life, and he'd lost, in a sense, a touch with God.

He began to resent this young man who had an anointing on his life, and he began to pursue him, wanting to kill him. David had had to flee from his presence for his very life. And so, in this particular cave, came to him his own family, many of his own family, and many, not all, but out of the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, came to him to profess to him that we're loyal to you.

We see the hand of God on you. We know that God's called you, and we're with you. And now, at this same time, David also pens Psalm 142, and in this psalm, he makes a very, very curious statement about this particular situation.

In Psalm 142, he says, when my spirit, verse 3, was overwhelmed within me, then thou knewest my path. God, I was overwhelmed. The circumstances were too much for me, but you knew, and the word in the Hebrew means that you caused me to know, you informed me, you announced it to me, you appointed it to me, you put it in order.

David is saying it this way. I had an inward knowledge that, even though I didn't fully understand it, I knew that this was an appointed pathway for my life. And beloved, if you're going to walk with God, I want to tell you today that there are going to be appointed pathways for your life that you don't understand.

You're going to be appointed to pathways, especially if God wants to use your life in any great measure. Pathways where you don't understand what's happening, and within yourself, you do not possess the resources to win the victory. There's nothing within you that could win it.

There's everything in you wants to go in another direction or respond in a way other than God would have you to respond. And these are appointed pathways, and these pathways are to open to us an understanding of our inherent inability to be everything that God calls us to be, to actually be anything that God calls us to be. We're unable.

The moment we begin to think we can do something, God will appoint a pathway to prove to us that we can't. If we think we're very loving people, then God will put somebody or something before us to show us we're not, and we can't. It's an appointed pathway.

Some of you are on that appointed pathway right now. You're in your workplace or your neighborhood, and moved in next door to you or sitting at the next desk is somebody that, without the grace of God, you would rather strangle them than ever see them come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. David said, I had this inward knowledge that this was an appointed path, and how confusing it must have been for him.

A young man coming in and Samuel anointing him and telling him he's going to be king of Israel and walking into the camp knowing that God is with him. He's won victories out in his own particular seclusion with sheep in the wilderness. Coming in and taking away or putting off all the armor that Israel had learned to trust in and walking down and confronting not just Goliath but the whole of the armies of the Philistines that were swallowing up God's heritage and seeing this mighty victory.

Being called into Saul's court, a sweet psalmist that when he began to worship God, the evil spirit that troubled Saul had to flee away. The anointing was so strong upon this young man's life only to find himself fleeing. Only to find himself surrounded by people perhaps for a season equally as confused as he had been in the beginning.

But God will always call cause us to have an inward knowledge that he has appointed the path. Have you ever been in a place like that? Where it seems like all hell is around you. You try to rebuke the devil, but there's this inward, this inward understanding that this is not the devil doing this.

And even if he's got somewhat of a measure of a hand in it, it has been allowed. He's been allowed to touch my life. God has put it, allowed it for a reason, for a purpose that I don't yet understand.

But yet David says, I know, I know my path. I know it has been ordained of God. But then he goes on in verse three and he says, in the way where I walked, have they privily laid a snare for me? He says, now there are people around me who have laid a snare for me in this way that God has chosen for me to walk in.

Now who are they? Who are they? We quite often want to point to Saul. Obviously Saul was trying to kill him and Saul's army's trying to kill him. And there's others that are informers and evil people all around.

But this is, I don't believe what David is talking about because he also penned this Psalm 142 at the time of trouble in Adullam's cave. Who are they? And here they are in verse four. He says, I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no man that would know me.

In other words, there was no man that understood. This is what David is saying. I looked to the right in this cave.

The word know in the Hebrew text is in that card, it means to perceive or understand or give honor to something. I looked on my right hand, David said, and there's nobody that understood the pathway that God had me on. Refuge failed me.

No man cared for my soul. No man cared for my soul. The word is nefesh.

It means, I'm going to give you my definition because it's a very long, long definition, but it means my life, which had come from my heartfelt love for the ways of God. Nobody cared for this. God had appointed a path for me and everybody's trying to counsel me.

Can you picture in this cave, everybody's there saying, we're with you, David, and we're going to conquer and how evil this regime of Saul has become and how wrong spirited they are and how wrong you've been treated. And we're going to lash out and God's going to put them in our hands and we're going to get vengeance. And David is, is, is, is there.

And that's why he prays in Psalm 141. He said, Lord, I cry to you. This is in the cave.

He said, make haste, come to me, give ear unto my voice. Let my prayer be set forth before you as incense. In other words, when I lift up my voice, let it be a sweet perfume before the throne of God.

And the lifting up of my hands is the evening sacrifice. David says in the morning and the evening, oh God, let my prayer be right. Let my words be right.

Let my heart be right. Let it be acceptable. And David said, set a watch, oh Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips, incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practice wicked works with men that work iniquity.

And let me not eat of their dainties. You see, there are men around David who are speaking and desiring to act in the heat of their spirit. There are men that one day are going to be mighty, but I have to remind you that at the time they first came to David, they were not mighty.

They were distressed and they were in debt and they were discontent. And that distress and that discontent is working in them. It's coming out of their mouths.

And David is sitting in the cave. I can literally picture him leaning on the wall saying, God, I don't understand it, but I trust you and I know your hand is in this. I've not, I know my life is in order and oh God, I, I sense that this is your path.

I sense that your hand is in this. God, your hand is still even on Saul. I don't understand it, but your hand is on him.

That's why I will not touch him. I will not touch the Lord's anointed. Very dangerous thing to touch any man or woman whom God's spirit is on.

And he says, God, but I'm looking on my right. I look on my left and there's nobody here that wants to, that even at this point has a desire to understand that sometimes there are ways of God that we don't understand. And they're speaking things and they're talking vengeance and there's all this wrath pouring out of their mouths.

And David is saying, don't let me eat of their dainties. They're partaking of a table that I don't want to eat of. I don't want to go there because I know there's no victory in there.

David said, I've never seen victory there. I've never known victory there. I've only known victory in a pure to right relationship with God.

In first Samuel 24, you see the situation where Saul is led right into the cave. And as the Bible says, he walked into the cave to relieve himself and David and his men are inside the cave. And the men said to David, oh, David, here's the thing that God spoke to you of, that he was going to deliver your enemies into your hand and you could do with them whatsoever you wished.

Here he is. They said, smite him, smite him, you know. And David got up and the Bible says he just cut off a piece of his garment, but his heart smote him.

He said, how could I touch the Lord's anointed? And with these words, the Bible says he stayed the hand of those that wanted to go farther. He stayed the man, said, no, don't touch him. Don't touch him.

He's God's anointed. And that had been David's cry way back in the beginning. God, don't let me eat of their David.

Don't let me eat of this bitter fruit, this self-induced desire for vengeance. God, don't let me eat of it. Don't let me eat of the fruit of the wounded human heart that wants to take things into his or her own hands.

God, don't let me eat of that fruit. Keep me from it. Verse five, Psalm 141.

He says, let the righteous smite me, it shall be a kindness. Let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head. Let the righteous smite me.

Now, the word smite in the Hebrew is helem, and it means to strike, to hammer, to stamp, to beat to pieces, to dissolve, to break up, to scatter. I don't believe, David, this is not speaking about righteous reproof. This is speaking about David saying, God, let the righteous smite me.

You see, there's quite a difference between when the unrighteous smite you and the righteous smite you. It's an amazing thing. It's easy for us to pray, oh God, vanquish my enemies, get rid of my enemies, let them fall into their own net and let them fall into their pit, all the rest of this.

But what do we do? How do we respond when the righteous smite us? When people who are right in the sight of God, who have the spirit of God on them, they are children of God, but for a season, they don't behave like it. For a season, they give themselves to words that they shouldn't speak. And they lash out because they have yet to understand the depths of walking in Jesus Christ.

And they lash out to wound and to hurt and to scatter and to stamp and to beat to pieces their own brethren. Amazing. It happens all the time in the church of Jesus Christ.

And then as David's men were in the beginning, then others rise up and start to lash back. And there you have really, you have the foundation of most church splits, most divisions in the body. A failure to understand some of the truths that I'm about to, that the Holy Spirit's about to open in these scriptures.

David said it shall be a kindness. Let him reprove me. It will be an excellent oil.

It won't break my head. From my study, I come to this conclusion. David is saying it will bring me into the fullness of God's person, his purpose and provision for and through my life.

In other words, David is saying it will drive me deep into God. If the righteous smite me, it will be a kindness because it will drive me deep into God, who alone can supply what I need to keep his character and to fulfill his purpose for my life. When the righteous smite me, I have no power to withstand this urge to eat of the dainties of others around me.

God, you're going to have to come and give me the ability to forgive. You're going to have to come and give me the ability to be gracious. You're going to have to come.

You're going to have to drive me down deep. You see, those who are quick to respond, quick to anger, never understand these truths. You see, it's one thing, as I said earlier, to be smitten by the evil.

It's another thing entirely to be smitten by the righteous. And I define righteous as those who are accepted by God, even though they don't always act or speak like it, accepted by God. Think of Joseph in Genesis chapter 37, if you go there with me very quickly.

Genesis chapter 37. Think of Joseph heading out a call of God on his life. He's aware of this call of God.

And he heads out to greet his brothers sent there by his father. In Genesis 37, 23, it says it came to pass when Joseph was coming to his brethren that they stripped them out of his coat. In other words, I want you to just go on this journey with me.

They're not just without speech doing these things. They are saying things. Hey, dreamer.

Hey, one who thinks he's got a call of God. Hey, one who thinks that God's going to use his life greatly and for his glory. And as they walk up to him, you can see the malice in them.

Now, these are brethren. These are co-inheritors of the blessing of Abraham, co-inheritors of the promise. And they're walking up to this young man who's just in love with the Lord, in love with God.

He's got all these promises that God is speaking to his life. But this envy rises up. This envy rises up in the righteous.

Yes, they're behaving unrighteously, but they are co-inheritors of Abraham's blessing. You have to understand that. And all of a sudden they're beginning to act in a way they shouldn't act.

And they rise up and they stripped him of his coat that was on him. And they took him, verse 24, and cast him into a pit. And the pit was empty and there was no water in it.

And they sat down to eat bread and they lifted up their eyes and looked and behold, a company of Israelites came from Gilead with their camels, bearing spicery and balm, et cetera, et cetera. And Judah said to his brethren, what profits it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood? Come and let us sell him to the Israelites. Let not our hand be upon him, for he's our brother and our flesh and his brethren were content.

And I want you to picture with me the rough, the hard speech and the rough treatment. You've got to picture Joseph down in the well. And later on, when they stood before Joseph in Egypt, they said, you see, the hand of God is on us now because we heard the cries of our brother and shut our ears to it.

If they heard their brother's cries, I want to conjecture, at least to some measure, Joseph also heard their speech, heard their plans to kill him, heard their plans to sell him off as a slave. And you can hear him crying out of the well. I'm your brother.

Why would you want to do these things to me? I've never harmed you all. All I have is a call of God on my life. And now you're talking about slaying me and selling me off and taking away the coat that's on me and concealing my blood and selling me off as a slave.

And Joseph begins to cry out, but their hard speeches drown out his plaintive cry to be released from the grip of their evil. Now, it's at this place, it's at this juncture that many of God's people's destinies are decided. It's at this juncture that many people fail.

It's at this place that many people in the body of Jesus Christ, having a call and a love for God, run into righteous brethren who are for a season behaving unrighteously. They run into them and they become the recipients of hard treatment and harsh words and unjust accusation and everything else that can come out of an evilly gripped heart for that moment. And they become bitter.

And they become useless in the kingdom of God. And they begin to respond like these discontented men who are on the left and right of David. And they begin to lash out and talk about vengeance and stand up and try to justify themselves and argue the point and create all kinds of strife and division, not realizing that both have fallen into the devil's trap.

The trap being to destroy the effectiveness of the anointing of God on both sides, on all lives combined. Every church split, every split between brother and brother robs you of the anointing of God. If you have

an issue with a brother or sister in Christ that is unresolved, you are robbed to a great measure of what God wants to do in and through your life.

Study the Bible all you want, but you will never go down deep into Christ until the truths that this psalm begin to be realized in your heart. It's so easy to go with the shallow crowd. It doesn't require any strength to go with the shallow.

The shallow crowd rarely see anything beyond their immediate circumstance. The shallow crowd have no sense that this could be the hand of God. They have no sense that this might be God's meeting causing me to have to go to him.

As David said, let the righteous smite me. It'll be an excellent oil. Let him smite me.

It's going to be a kindness because when the righteous smite me, I've got to go down deep. I've got to go down deep to find the resources of God to be able to be a channel of his blessing in this situation. The shallow react quickly and untemperedly.

Somebody says an unkind word and they snap right back right away. There's half of the marriages in the church of Jesus Christ are destroyed by shallow Christianity. People who say, I love God, but don't want to ever go down deep.

Don't ever want to find the resource it takes to be the husband or wife that God calls us to be to our mate. Those that are shallow seek relief through vengeance. The shallow crowd, they said, all right, he did it to me.

I'm going to do it to him. He's slandering my character. I'm going to slander his.

We'll see who gets the best of this. And never understanding that God may want you just to hold your peace, just to be quiet and see that God will always vindicate. Always.

I say, always vindicate those that are his always, always. And tell, let me tell you, it's hard to be quiet sometimes. I remember one time years ago, I was facing an accusation from somebody that I knew I could literally blow right out of the water before the congregation.

The Holy Spirit said, be quiet. It will hurt some of the young people. It will hurt others in the church.

Say nothing. So I had to endure being misunderstood for a season. It's hard not to speak, but God ultimately vindicated me.

Ultimately, the truth began to arise because God will, the anointing does not work with those who are not walking in right relationship with him. God's spirit does not bear witness to a lie. The shallow seek relief through vengeance, even though Jesus says in Matthew 5, 38 and 39, you've heard that it's been said an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

But I say to you that you resist not evil. He's not talking about Christian passivity. He's talking about these very issues that I'm talking about.

Don't resist evil. If someone smites you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also follow the pathway. Christ was saying that I'm going to example for you.

The shallow rarely understand that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to his purpose. But thanks be to God that neither Joseph nor David did these things. Instead, they chose to trust.

And so they became inheritors of the deep resources of God. In Psalm 145 verses two and three, David says it this way. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised.

And his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another and shall declare thy mighty acts. David said, oh, God, I have found you and I have found your ways and your greatness to be unsearchable.

It's like a man who says, God, I have I have dropped down a line with a lead ball on it to try to find the depth of this well. And the world does not contain enough rope for me to tie together to get to the bottom. I cannot find the bottom of this resource.

Just when I think it's run out, it goes and I find another level and goes deeper and deeper. Oh, beloved, when you lay hold of this, this is the very basis of an exciting Christian life. It's the basis of true Christianity.

When you say, oh, God, I have no resources, I'm absolutely bankrupt. But you have all the resources of eternity and beyond. And God, no matter how much I cry, no matter how down I get or how deep I dig, I never get to the bottom.

Paul said to the Ephesians, unto me, who I'm the less than the least of all saints, is this grace given that I should preach to the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ? Unsearchable. In other words, they cannot be found out. You can never get to the end of it.

You will never get to the end of God's strength or God's resource or God's supply. Unsearchable greatness. Hallelujah.

David says again in Psalm 141, verse six, he said, when their judges I was talking about, let the righteous smite me. He said, my prayer, though, will be in their calamity. You see, there's a calamity coming.

Those who use their tongues on in advisedly will face the calamity. You can be sure of it because God is with them. Yes, they may be anointed.

Yes, they may be touched of God, but they will be they will face a calamity. God will see to it that they face one. And David said, my prayer will, yes, they will try to destroy me, but my prayer will be for them and their calamities.

Remember David's cry for Jonathan and for Saul. He said they were stronger than lions and swifter than eagles. The genuine compassion that was in his heart, even after hearing of the death of of one who had pursued him and tried to kill him.

He said, when their judges are overthrown in stony places, then they shall hear my words for they are sweet. Verse six. Now, the judges get the concept of judges are those truths.

You remember in the Old Testament we had the book of Judges. That means those raised up to to bring to this generation an understanding of God. In other words, when their understanding is overthrown in stony places.

In Matthew, chapter 13, Jesus said there are people who receive the word on stony ground. They receive it with great joy, but they have no depth in themselves. And when they are opposed, they become quickly offended.

These are people who have received the word on very stony ground. There's no depth to them. And David says their judges are going to be overthrown in stony places.

Their truths that they're standing on, when they are opposed themselves, are going to fail them because there's no depth to what they believe. There's no depth to the Christ that they preach or espouse in their heart. They've never found the depth of mercy.

They've never released the depth of God's mercy. They've never walked in the depth of God's covering. And so when difficult times come to them, they're going to be their whole truth system is going to be overthrown.

That's why you find many 15, 20 years in the church walking away. I've had enough with God. I've had enough with his church.

I'll go home and read my Bible by myself. They're overthrown in their stony understanding of God. You see, the righteous, when given to quick and impulsive action and quick and hurtful speaking, are showing that they are very shallow partakers of Christ.

If you have an uncontrolled tongue, you are very shallow in experience of Jesus Christ in your life. Yes, you may have a knowledge of Christ, but you're very shallow in his presence. When you are very quick to action, very quick to anger, very quick to vengeance, very quick to respond, there's this shallowness in you that will cause you eventually, if you don't let God deal with it, will cause you to be overthrown.

Their standards of truth are thrown down. And David said, my prayer will be in their calamities and they will hear my words for they are sweet. David says, when they hit the bottom, even those who tried to hurt me, I'll be there and I'll be there to encourage them.

I'll be there to pick them up. I'll be there to help them. I'll be there to lift them.

You see, this is the evidence of true Christian character. So many can profess that I'm living the deeper life. And of course, it's generally if you're from that persuasion, quite often it boils down to, you know, you have a big bank account.

But the evidence of true Christian character is the sign that Christ's life is in you is that when you and I have a desire to go back as Jesus did and be kind in whatever way we can to those who have been responsible for our wounds. This is Christ. Christ was wounded for our transgressions.

He was bruised for our iniquities. But on the third day, he rose and came back and he came back to Peter who had failed him. He came back to others who had so learned truth from him and gotten into such confusion.

And no doubt there were many who had said things that they shouldn't have said in the heat of the moment, in their anger, in their misunderstanding, quite conceivably said things even to one another. But he came back. And you see, I fail him.

David said, Lord, if you marked iniquities, who could stand? When we get to heaven, we're going to see how many times we failed him in a day. But you see, if you're a Christian, it's not marked against you. There's no record in heaven.

The blood of Christ covers all of our sin. It's an amazing thing. It's an amazing truth.

And he keeps coming back. And if I fail him, he comes back. And if my character fails him, he comes back.

He keeps coming back, even when I wound him. In the way it may be I treat somebody else in the body of Jesus Christ or in the way I respond to a certain situation, he comes back to me. Thank God he does.

I thank God we don't serve a one-time God. Here's your chance. Blow it and you've lost for eternity.

Blow it, I'll never come back. But that's the evidence of Christian character. When I can go back to somebody who has wounded me and be the channel of God's blessing to that person, be the channel of God's encouragement when their situation has come and they have fallen, when they've finally fallen into their own trap, when they've finally stepped on their own tongue and fallen over and finally they have come to the end of their resources to find me or you, whoever it has been that has been victimized by their speech or victimized.

I'm talking about the righteous. First, to find you or me at their doorstep saying, I heard something happen. I've come to see if I can do something to help you.

To find a card in the mail that says, I just want you to know I've been praying for you and I thank God for you and I do pray that God use your life for his glory. You don't have to go into old wounds. There's no need for that.

Just words of encouragement. They pick it up. You see, that's what the Bible says.

If somebody hurts you, like do a good deed and you heap coals and fire, that's not judgment. That's conscience. When you do something good to those that have done evil to you, you are pricking their conscience to come back to God.

Those are the coals of fire that the scripture that Christ himself speaks about so that they may come back and begin to live for the Lord. In Genesis 50, you find one day Joseph's brethren now, after all their hard words and everything coming into hard times. Remember, David said, my prayer will be for them and their calamities.

And when they hit bottom, they will hear my words. I'll be there for them and my words will be sweet. And Joseph's brethren come before him after their father has died.

And he says to them in chapter 50, he says, but as for you, you thought evil against me, but God meant it to good to bring to pass as it is this day and to save much people alive. In verse 21, he says, now, therefore, fear, fear you not. I will nourish you.

This is exactly what David is talking about. When they hit rock bottom, I will be there because I've made a choice to go deep in God. And I know that those who go deep in God will have a supply when everyone around hits rock bottom.

I'll be there and God's supply will be in my life. And I will be a representative of Jesus Christ, who is always merciful, kind and compassionate to those who are out of the way. He said, don't be afraid.

I will nourish you. In other words, God has given me the supply and I will feed you. I will help you and your little ones.

It's not just you, but your family. And he comforted them and he spoke kindly to them. He said there will be provision through my life for you and for your families.

And he spoke kindly. What did David said? My words shall be sweet when they hit when those that have set out to wound me have hit rock bottom. I will be there for them not to rejoice at their downfall, but to pick them up again.

This is Christ. This is his church. This is this is Christian character.

The rest is just empty religion. This is Christ. David said in Second Samuel, chapter nine, after it's all over, after Saul and Jonathan have fallen, after the armies of Israel have been vanquished by their enemies, after finally God, his anointing has brought him to that place where the people finally recognize that he is for a season called to be the king of Israel.

And instead of gloating, instead of sitting at a banquet table saying, well, it's all got what he deserved and that all that followed. So I like Jonathan one time, but he had to make his choice. It was me or Saul.

He chose Saul when he got what he deserved as well and Jonathan's house and all of his family and the rest of them and let them all be damned. Every every one of them. You see that that would not be the heart of Christ, that would be David looking to the left or to the right in that cave and taking on the spirit of those men at that time who were with him.

David cried. He said, oh, God, don't let me to their days. Don't let this be what I feast on.

Don't let this be what motivates me in the battle. God, help me to put this away. I want your life.

I want your spirit. That was always David's cry. Psalm 51, he said, oh, God, don't take your spirit from me.

Oh, God, it's been your presence. You've always proven yourself to me. You've always kept me.

You've always held me in the palm of your hand. Oh, God, don't let me start to take control of my own life. Don't let me start to eat something that's not you.

Oh, God, keep out of my heart issues that will destroy your testimony through me and destroy other people around me that you died for. God, keep it out of my life. Let the righteous spite me, David says.

Let them spite me. Let them try to destroy me. It will be a kindness.

It will drive me deep into God. And when they fail, I will have the resource that they need. David's response.

Is there any yet of the house of Saul that I may show the kindness of God to him? I want to show the kindness of God to the house of Saul. That was the end result. Remember, he said my prayer shall be in their calamity.

And when they fail, when they fall, when they're overthrown in stony places, they will hear my words for their sweet. And then they found one called Mephibosheth, the lame son of Jonathan's. And David brought him to himself and said, fear not, I will show you kindness for Jonathan, your father's sake, and I will restore to you all the land of Saul, your father or actually your grandfather.

And you will eat bread at my table continually. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. What a privilege it would be to to be a man or woman of God who who who was able to give provision, even sometimes you can't go back. Sometimes it's too late.

In Joseph's case, his brethren were still alive and he spoke while they were living. In David's case, it was too late. There's nothing he could do for Saul or Jonathan, but he could bless his house, their homes.

And what a wonderful privilege if God someday even allowed us to bless the children of those who have wounded our lives, those who maybe misused their position in Christ and hurt us. And we could be used of God to bless their children, that we could have that kind of a spirit upon us, which can only come from Christ. There's nowhere else you can get it.

It has to come from God. Now, David, Psalm 141. Let's let's finish off with Psalm 141, verse 7. David says, now here's his he's back now to his present position, really.

And he says, our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cuts and cleaves wood upon the earth. David says that we're like a bunch of people are chopped to pieces by our enemies. And here we are without strength.

But my eyes are unto thee, O God, the Lord, and thee is my trust. Leave not my soul destitute. Keep me from the snares which they've laid for me.

Now, I personally believe when he says they, he's talking about the men in his own cave. Keep me from the snares which they've laid for me and from the djinns of the workers of iniquity. If you read on further in David's life, there were mighty men, but there were also sons of Belial, wicked men.

They were not all mighty and they were not all righteous. There were many mighty, but there were also wicked men. And David says, keep me from the snares which they've laid for me and the djinns of the workers of iniquity.

Let the wicked fall into their own nets. But, O God, while I with all escape, let me escape. That's got to be the cry of your heart today.

Oh, God, let me escape. Let the wicked fall into their own nets, but let me escape. God, you've got to come and give me a heart that natural men can't possess without God.

You have to give me a supernatural ability to forgive. It has to be supernatural. You have to give me a supernatural desire to be kind to even those that are the most unkind to me.

You have to have helped me to see everything in eternity's perspective. You have to help me understand that all things work together for good. I love you, God, and I'm called according to your purpose.

So whatever has come into my life, you have allowed it for a reason. You have allowed it. It couldn't come if you didn't allow it.

You are the God of my life, the God of the universe, so you've allowed it to come. You've allowed it to come to me to drive me deep, O God, into you. Give me understanding.

Give me the ability. You see, you can't escape before you have a new heart and a new nature. There is no escape in natural ability.

Your natural ability and mine will always fail us. We will never get out. It has to come from God.

It has to be supernatural. You have to be born again. You have to have a new spirit, a new mind, a new heart.

It has to be God-breathed, God-given. Remember David said, nobody cares for this breath of God that's on me. Everybody wants to do their own thing, but I have a breath of God on me that tells me I need to be responding another way.

And I believe in God for the strength to do it. I shared in communion time today that unless you're born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God. And today, if you're here without Christ, I want you to know he died for your sin, to forgive you, give you an eternity in heaven with him, and to give you power to be a new person on this side of eternity.

I believe there are many backsliders in the church of Jesus Christ, and perhaps some even here today who have fallen because your standard of truth has been shallow. You've had a standard of Christ, but it's been a very shallow standard. And when you face difficulty, you're easily offended, easily offended.

People come to you and slight you, overlook some little pet project that you have or something that you think you should be recognized for or other things such like. And you're offended because you're very shallow in Jesus Christ, very shallow. Easily take offense and begin to lash back.

Whether or not it's verbal, it's in your heart, it's in your spirit. You begin to lash back. And many backslide because of this.

Backslide because they fail to understand that God will allow things to deepen you. You'll never deepen. We won't naturally deepen.

We are spiritually lazy, every last one of us in this building. We're lazy. We will settle into Canaan's land.

We will build a tent on a tabernacle on the mountain. We will just live there in glory land for the rest of our days. God says, well, it would be nice.

And it's coming one day. You're going to live there one day. But till that day, I'm going to just allow a few things to come your way because you've been asking for me.

You've been wanting my nature. You've been wanting my life. So I'm just going to send some things to you that are going to cause you to have to go down deep.

And that's where you're going to find. That's the only way we learn, folks. We just don't learn any other way.

You don't get it all out of a Bible study. I heard a young preacher one time get up and talk about all the things he suffered. He used to be like about 20 years old.

Oh, God. I'm only 50, and I don't look forward to the suffering that's coming. There's been a lot already.

But I remember thinking this young fellow's got a lot of Bible knowledge, but a very little experience yet. But I felt God's going to be with him. It's going to.

I remember sitting in my seat thinking this is really going to hurt. It's really going to hurt. He's going to go down deep and God's going to send something that's going to make him really go down deep and where it won't be theology anymore.

Be life experience. That's why I share with Pastor Neil quite often that he and I feel oftentimes we're like woodpeckers trying to peck down an oak and Pastor Dave steps up here is like a mighty chainsaw just one sweep down. It goes because of the life experience.

You know, he's been very wounded. Those that were here several years ago. You know, I've never seen a man deeper wounded in my entire life.

I feared for his life at one point. I've never seen a man so betrayed or so hurt in all of my life. And yet the Holy Spirit told him, say nothing and do nothing but be kind.

I remember him. I remember seeing his enemies come with hat in hand. Broke, destitute because their calamities had come to them because of the wrong dealings.

And I remember seeing the kindness. I wanted to throw them out the back door. I kid you not.

I grabbed him by the back of the pants and say, out you go. You want it out? You're out. But he was kind.

The law of kindness is in him. And it's life experience that gives you the power to stand and represent God. And those that never go through the experience have a knowledge of God, but they never know God.

And so I'm very thankful for the furnace. I'm very thankful for the drive down deep times. I'm very thankful.

And I'm even aware of my need, because if I wasn't, it would be bad for me and you. We can escape by allowing him to draw us into the depth of his comfort. That's really what allows us to forgive.

He draws us into his comfort and he comforts us and says, yes, they've hurt you, but I haven't and I forgive them. So won't you join with me? Won't you be the channel of my life to those that have wounded you? Won't you be the channel blessing to them? I want to have vessels, you see, because I believe there are many men and women of God over the years that have been called of God, but they're sidelined because they can't get through the the gauntlet of criticism, the gauntlet of evil speaking gets them. They can't make it through.

They become bitter. I remember one time going to visiting a church when I was in Texas and the pastor got up and preached on the love of God. And he was so angry.

It was such a paradox. It was like I sit in my seat like, what is this? I mean, how we should love one another. And he's just angry.

He's literally frothing at the mouth and he's talking about how we should. He was obviously very angry. He was very angry at the church and he was he was bashing them with a love sermon.

But there's no love in him. It was not the channel of God's supply. It was it was one of those messages like it was just, thank God it's over.

I don't want my life to be like that. Imagine you finally die and people say, thank God it's over. I have I have preached funerals, folks of Christians, where the Holy Spirit told me not to honor the people.

I remember one time the Lord said this. I've taken this person home, but don't honor them. Don't honor them.

You'll confuse their whole family. You confuse everybody they work with. They had an uncontrolled tongue.

Don't honor this person because you will you will mar Christ. You will mar the testimony of Christ if you honor them. It's a very hard place to be sometimes.

David said, let them fall into their nets, but let me escape. And he escaped. He did escape.

God gave him the grace. And today in the education annex and overflow rooms, and I know you can't all come to the sanctuary and in the main sanctuary. If you are caught, first of all, if you're unsaved, I want to invite you to give your life to Christ.

But if you if you are backslidden because you refuse to forgive a wound or you are now caught in a snare. Or you want to lash out, you want to respond in like kind. God says, if you'll just draw to me, I'll give you the grace.

And when they have a need, you'll become their supply. If that's in your heart today, I'm going to ask us to sing a song, the orchestra would come to the choir. I'm going to ask you to come and meet me at the Psalter, and I have a word for you, and we're going to pray together this morning.

Would you do that now? Let's all stand together. The Holy Spirit drawing you, speaking to you, you're backslidden. Come back to God, come back to God, learn to forgive.

Come back. Those that are far away from God, come home, come home to God. He'll forgive you and teach you how to forgive those that have wronged you.

Every sinner in this house. I want you to make your way down here and say, God, I'm far from you. I need a new heart.

I need a new nature. I'm so foreign to everything I just heard. It's so much not part of me.

I want you to save me today. And I'm sure that you've been hurt deeply, but you need to be comforted by God. And that comfort will give you the power to forgive.

Let me read to you Psalm 124. This is David's writing. He said, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick when all their wrath was kindled against us.

Then the waters had overwhelmed us. Now, the waters is always it always symbolizes the words that are spoken. The waters would have overwhelmed us and the stream had gone over our soul.

The proud waters had gone over our soul. These are proud words, David said, and they were against the knowledge of God and they would have overwhelmed us. But blessed be the Lord who has not given us as a prey to their teeth.

Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers. The snare is broken and we are escaped and our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth. Hallelujah.

The snare is broken. The snare is broken. You see, it's important to understand something.

The snare is not what people have spoken over your life. It's what the devil wanted to do to you because of it. That's the snare.

And David said, the snare is broken and we are escaped and we can go back to a banquet table and invite the children even of those that have wounded us and feed them and nurture them and cover their lameness. Those that have come to this altar this morning, you're going to be able to say you can say actually right now the snare is broken and I'm escaped. I'm out of the snare.

The devil tried to put a net on me, tried to draw me into iniquity and make me become a vessel of unrighteousness. But the snare is broken and I'm out. By God's grace, I'm out.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Education annex and overflow here at the altar.

Let's let's all pray a simple prayer together. Lord Jesus, I cry to you and make haste to come to me. Let my prayer be set forth as incense and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice set a watch.

Oh, Lord, before my mouth, keep the door of my lips. Help me not to practice evil. Help me not to do wicked works with those who do.

Help me not to eat at the same table. Now, Jesus, I thank you that you have forgiven me for the wrong things I have done. I confess you alone as my Lord and Savior, as the source of my life and my strength.

I ask today that your kindness to those who wounded you. I wounded you. You've been kind to me.

You came back to me. I ask today that in your strength, in your strength alone, I might be kind in my thoughts, in my words and in my deeds to those who have wounded me. To those who have wounded me.

I know this can only happen by the strength of the Holy Spirit. But you have promised to give me what I need to be everything that you've called me to be. I confess this day that I believe the snare is broken and I am escaped.

I am escaped by the grace of God. Hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

Hallelujah, hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus.

Hallelujah, Lamb of God. We praise you. We bless you, God.

We bless you, Lord. We bless you, God. I'm free.

I'm free! I'm free! I'm free! I'm free! I'm free! By the grace of God, I am free for the rest of my days. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Oh, give Him a shout of glory! Give Him a shout of glory! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Mighty Savior! Mighty God! Mighty Lord! Thank you,

Jesus! Thank you, Jesus! 3 o'clock, 6 o'clock, we meet here for prayer before every service. We're going to go singing today, I'm free, I'm free.

Jesus broke the chains that bound me, I am free. You're free! You can dance out on Broadway if you want. You can shout to God out on the street, I'm free! I'm free from the snare of the devil.

Thanks be to God, I'm free. Let's go singing it today. God bless you.

This is the conclusion of the message.

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