

Money, Mules and Travel

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the critical need for believers to hear God's voice and recognize His provision in times of spiritual famine.

Duration: 57:34

Scripture: Genesis 42:1-2, Genesis 42:7-8, Genesis 42:12, Exodus 28:1, Psalm 60:1-5, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Voice Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of reaching out to the lost and sharing the message of salvation. He highlights that the purpose of the church is to bring people to the knowledge of Jesus Christ and the redemption He offers. The preacher acknowledges that this work comes with challenges and pressures, but emphasizes the need to persevere and not ignore the cries of those in need. He shares a heartbreaking story of a young man who livestreamed his suicide, highlighting the indifference and lack of action from those who watched. The preacher urges listeners to not waste their lives and to be attentive to the needs of others, emphasizing the importance of hearing God's voice and fulfilling His purpose.

Transcript

For the last two weeks, I've been in the, for the last three weeks, I've been in the same scriptures, studying this text that the Lord just won't seem to let me away from, where the brothers, the sons of Jacob, after having betrayed their brother Joseph, a type of the church as it is, stand before him, unaware of who he is, in a time of famine. And over a course of events, there's a revelation given, and they finally begin to hear him. They see who he is, they understand what he's done, how God has been involved in this.

And I'd like to share again, one more time, this will be the third message on this issue, a message, we're going to start in Psalm 60, if you'll go there, please, with me. In the Old Testament, a message that's called, Money, Mules, and Travel. Money, mules, and travel.

Father, I thank you, Lord, for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I thank you, God, for the strength that you give, that we don't earn and don't deserve. It comes from mercy.

And so, Lord, I appeal to your mercy today. I'm asking you, God, for an anointing, to make your word come alive, to see everyone who's in a prison of any sort, delivered. Lord, to see in our generation, the ears of your people unstopped, and blinded eyes given sight, captive hearts released, and those that are

imprisoned, free.

Lord, these are the promises that you say come, because of the anointing of God's Holy Spirit and the Word of God. I'm asking, Lord, for ability so far beyond anything, Lord, that I could present to this congregation today. I'm asking you to take every simple statement and explode it a thousand ways.

Speak to every heart, because, Lord, your word is alive. It's not a dead letter, it's a living word. Your word creates.

Your word brings light. Your word gives life. Your word sets free the oppressed.

Your word fills with the fullness of God. Lord, your word delivers from demonic oppression. Lord, these are the things that you do.

I'm asking you to do these things. The hour is late. The need is very great.

Lord, so we turn to you. We turn to you with everything that is in us, God. I turn to you today with everything I am and have, and I'm asking you, Jesus Christ, Son of God, be glorified in this sanctuary.

Be glorified in our lives, O God. Be glorified in this generation. Let this be an hour of victory for your people and for your church.

Lord, we thank you for this. God, we give you praise and glory. Now, quicken this word.

Quicken my heart. Quicken our ears to hear. Quicken us, Lord.

Let there be light. Let there be light in this sanctuary, God. Command it.

Command there to be light. Father, we thank you for this and praise you in Jesus' mighty name. Psalm 60, Money, Mules, and Travel.

Verses 1 to 5. O God, thou hast cast us off. Thou hast scattered us. Thou hast been displeased.

O turn thyself to us again. Thou hast made the earth to tremble. Thou hast broken it.

Heal the breaches thereof, for it shaketh. Thou hast shown thy people hard things. Thou hast made us to drink the wine of astonishment.

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah. That thy beloved may be delivered, save with thy right hand, and hear me.

Now, folks, if I were to ask today, what do the words that we have just read mean to you? Now, in fairness, if you've not had a chance to study this, it might not mean very much. But let's say I gave everyone here a week to study this scripture. We came back a week from now, and then just randomly just started pointing to people in the sanctuary, and say, what do the words of Psalm 60, verses 1 to 5, what do they mean to you? Now, there would be some people with an honest heart that would say, Pastor, I've read it over and over again, and it means absolutely nothing to me.

I don't understand it. I know that something's being spoken, but for whatever reason, I can't hear it. It just simply doesn't come alive in my spirit.

Others would stand, and they would say, Well, I hear vague whispers of things to my heart which aren't too clear yet. I think I'm hearing something here, but it's hard to hear. It's like a voice speaking to me in the midst of a very noisy crowd or noisy marketplace.

I can hear it, but it's just so vague. It's such a whisper. I'm not quite sure.

Now, there would be a third category of people who would stand here, and they would have gone to the study text, and they would say, Well, it appears from the notes that I've been reading that this is a historical defeat suffered in battle when God withdrew his divine protection from the armies of David and took his hand off his own people. And so some see the Word of God strictly historically, interpretively, literally as it is. Looking at it and just looking in the historical context, it really speaks about history.

Now some others, perhaps with musical ability, would see it as a wonderful poem, an opportunity for a song. See a few verses that seem to have a bit of rhyme to them and could say, I just hear a song in this, a wonderful song, and I'd like to write it down. And then lastly, there'd be a category of people who'd say, Pastor, this passage of Scripture has spoken right to my heart, and God has shown me the way out of my situation.

You know, the first person would look and say, I don't hear anything like that. The second type would say, Well, if that's the truth, then somebody's got to turn up the volume because I'm not quite hearing it that way. The historical man will never see it.

He just views Scripture just in a literal tense and can't see beyond the letter on the page. And the others be similar, but there's a person, there's somebody here that says, this book is speaking, these texts are speaking to my heart, and it's shown me the way out of my situation. Jesus said in John 6, 63, The words that I speak to you, they are spirit and they are life.

This is not a letter, a dead letter. This is a living book. This book is alive.

God will speak to your heart. If your heart is open, if my heart is open, when I open this book, it should never be boring. God should be speaking.

There are seasons and times that various Scriptures will speak different things, but there are times that it will just pop off the page, and it would be not a whisper, but a very clear statement from the heart of God into my life, into my situation. And the Lord will answer me according to His word. That's how important it is to know the word of God.

Jesus said in John 8, 47, He that is of God hears God's words. God said, if you are of mine, I speak and you can hear me speak. It's important, folks, I'm telling you.

You and I can't go into the coming days without knowing what God is speaking. And there may come a time, for whatever reason, I'm not prophesying this, I'm just saying it could happen, that we can't get together for a season. Now, if that should happen, and you've got to know what God is speaking, because you're going to wind up in this myriad of voices, from CNN to the other news channels, to commentators, to everybody who's got an opinion.

You'll be out there looking, when only one voice can tell you where to go to find the provision of God and the direction of God. And you and I have got to know His voice. We've got to be able to hear the voice of God.

He will speak to us through His word. Now, I know He speaks to the heart. There are things that God will speak every day, saying, just go to this place.

I know there are leadings of the Spirit. But there is a speaking of God every day that comes to you and I through this book. God said in Genesis 1, and the Spirit moved.

God said and the Spirit moved. God said and the Spirit moved. That's exactly how God's kingdom works.

God speaks to my heart, then the Holy Spirit within me makes that word a living reality. God says, trust me to go through this door. I can show you that in the Scriptures.

The Holy Spirit comes and says, listen, I'm walking with you. I'm going to give you the ability to do this. I'm going to cause you to go through into this place.

You can't go through with your natural ability. I will take you into these places. Now, in the Old Testament, the book of Amos chapter 8, speaks about a famine that came into the land.

Now, the Bible says that it's not a famine of physical food, but a famine of hearing the words of the Lord. Listen to what Amos 8, 11 says to verse 14. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.

Oh, folks, I don't know about you, but I don't ever want to get caught in a situation like that, where I'm not hearing from God. I would dread that more than anything else in this world, where God is no longer able to speak to me. Verse 12 says, They shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, and they shall run to and fro, and seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.

In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst. They swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy God, O Dan, liveth, and the manor of Beersheba liveth, even they shall fall and never rise up again. Now, why is this famine come into the land, according to Amos? Now, the famine comes because God is just.

The famine comes because God will not be mocked. The famine comes because you cannot lightly deal with the word of God, and end up not paying a consequence for it. We have, as a nation, dealt very foolishly and very lightly with the things of God.

How foolish a people that we have become, in this and in other countries, who've known the truth of God, who've walked in measure, at least in some form of revelation of God, but have dealt very lightly with it, and ultimately turned and began to despise the ways of God. And God responds, as He always does. He sends a famine.

Now, there can be a natural famine, but there's a famine deeper than a natural famine, and that's a famine of hearing what God is speaking. The famine of knowing. The promises of God intimately and personally.

You and me. Not walking in here looking for hope. Walking in here with hope.

That's got to be your future. You walk in the house of God with hope. God has been speaking to me.

God has been leading me. God has been empowering me. And I know that what awaits me might be unpleasing in the natural, but I'm not walking in the natural anymore.

I'm walking by what the Holy Spirit's speaking to my heart. The word of God is absolutely alive to me, and I have promises from God that cannot fail me. And these promises will sustain me and carry me through whatever days are ahead of me that I have to face.

Now, there was a famine of hearing the words of the Lord. And Amos says that famine came because they were holding to things that were wrong, as if they were right. They were swearing by the God of Dan.

Now, I don't have time to go into it all, but it's the God of convenience. There was an altar that was set up partway to the worship that God truly prescribed, and the place that God said, this is where you will worship. There was another altar, and the Old Testament was set up, and it was an altar of convenience, where you don't have to go quite as far, the journey is not quite as great.

And they were swearing by this altar, and they were swearing by spiritual principles that were not correct, and they were saying these places are where life is found. But it wasn't true. If it's not true to God, I don't care if a million people agree with it, it's not true.

And if God doesn't agree with it, there's no power in it. Amos 3.3, the Lord says, How can two walk together except they be agreed? The Lord says, if you're asking me to walk with you, then you've got to walk in agreement with me. I'm not called to walk in agreement with you.

You're called to hear what I'm saying, and you're called to walk the path that I set before you, through the doors that I open to you, and in the promises that I'll make very, very clear to you. Paul speaks of the last days in 2 Timothy 4, verse 4, and he says, They will turn their ears away from the truth, and shall be turned to fables. They'll be turned to stories about God.

They'll be turned to made-up things about God. They'll be turned to prophets that prophesy out of the imaginations of their own heart. They're not hearing from God.

Their words have no power. Yes, they are palatable to the natural man. Yes, they seem wonderful when you're telling people that you have this incredible future ahead of you, and you're going to be this wonderful person on a stage, and you're going to be famous, and all these things.

They seem to be so wonderful, but there's no life in these words. There's no power in these words. They're turned from what God speaks to things that issue out of the hearts of fallen men who love the preeminence in pulpits and among the people of God, sadly enough, even in our generation.

In Genesis, the scripture that we have been studying for the last two weeks, we see Jacob, the inheritor of the promise of God spoken to Abraham. You remember God said to Abraham, I'm going to bless you, and you're going to be so majestically, so powerfully blessed that through you and your family, your life, the whole world is going to be blessed. Now, you and I know today he was speaking about the church was going to come from, Christ was going to come through the physical lineage of Abraham.

Now, we know that to be true. And because of Christ, there's now a church. And through the church, the true church, the whole world is being blessed.

So God's promise was true. But we're now at the grandson of Abraham. The blessing went from Abraham to Isaac, and then from Isaac to Jacob.

Jacob went into what was supposed to be, physically speaking, the promised land. He had 12 sons, 10 of whom became jealous of the favor that was on his second youngest son, whose name was Joseph. And the 10, in their blind jealousy, betrayed Joseph.

And for 30 pieces of silver, they sold him off as a slave into Egypt. It's a type, folks, of what you and I did to Christ. It was not the Romans.

It was not the Jews. It was you. It was me.

It was my sin. It was yours. That sent Jesus Christ to a cross.

Suddenly issue. As much as he was betrayed by Judas, up to the point where any of us came to Christ, we betrayed him with our lifestyles. We betrayed him by our sin.

We betrayed him by our unwillingness to acknowledge him. As Lord and Savior and creator of the universe. And Joseph was betrayed by them.

And over a course of time, many, many years, actually, Joseph suffered terribly at their hands. And then he ended up in a position of authority, second to Pharaoh in the land of Egypt. Now, in the place where Jacob dwelt, there came a famine.

And in this famine, it's interesting, when you look at the scriptures, Jacob is really not hearing from God. None of his sons are hearing from God. Because all he gets is hearsay.

He says in Genesis 42, he said, I heard that there's corn in Egypt. There's no mention of God here whatsoever. You study it all you want.

There's no mention of God. He's the third in line of the promise. And here he is, gathering his sons one day.

They're starving to death in the place of promise. And he says, I hear there's corn. Now, most likely some caravan passing by.

And people had stopped, perhaps, and had a bit of a discussion in the daytime. And said, where did you get that provision? Well, we got that provision in Egypt. And so he says to his sons one day, I hear there's corn.

I want you to go down into Egypt and Dubai, so that we might survive this famine. And so in Genesis, excuse me, chapter 42 and verse 5, it says, And the sons of Israel came to buy corn among those that came, for the famine was in the land of Canaan. There's my point.

The sons of Israel, thank you, are as out of touch with God as everybody else around them. Think about it for a moment. There are seasons.

There are seasons in the church when God's own people are just as out of touch as the whole society around them. Where they're not hearing from God. They're not in the prayer closet.

They're not coming out with revelation. They're not claiming the promises of God. They're scurrying and running and following hearsay from... Folks, why do you think, why do you think every time some foolish thing arises in the western world that purports itself to be revival, that everybody is packing up their money

and their mules and traveling off to it? Why do you think that is? It's all because their church is being governed by hearsay.

Being governed by what somebody else is saying. There's so many who are empty. They're not hearing from God in our generation.

We have dealt so carelessly with the things of God, we've lost touch with Him. And folks, I say we because that's what Daniel said. When Daniel was praying for the restoration of God's people, he included himself as part of the problem as well as part of the solution.

I'm not pointing a finger at anybody. I'm speaking collectively about the church in America. God help us to rise up again in this hour that we're living in.

God help us to get out of the prayer closet with a revelation from God and a word from heaven, folks. Those that are looking to government, I'm telling you, government will do what they can do. But it's time now for the church to be the church.

We know where provision is. We know where strength is. We know where the future lies.

We know how to get through hard times. There has to be a Paul again on every sinking ship. There has to be somebody that's come out of the prayer closet with a word from heaven and say, Don't look around you.

Don't look to your own plans to get out of this mess. I have been with God and God has given me a word. And the word He's given me is about how He will make provision to get through to the other side of this journey.

Praise be to God. The sons of Jacob are just as clueless as everyone else. You see them gathering together what little money they have, taking their mules and journeying into Egypt.

And folks, I had a mule one time when we had a farm. And the thing is, these things are some of the most stubborn creatures in the world. And you can picture these 10 sons of Jacob going down into Egypt and the mule at some point will just decide to stop.

That's what a stubborn nature is like. Just figures this is far enough, I'm not going any farther. You pull that thing all you want, you get behind it, you can try to pick it up and push it, and until it decides to go, it's just not going to go.

And folks, I just can imagine this. This is supposed to be the church that's going to bless the world. And if you were to look down, if we could go back in history and see this entourage of 10 sons of the promise of God as it is to Abraham in the lineage.

And they've got this caravan of mules and bags of money and stopping and pulling and pushing and trying to get this thing going. We're going down to get provision. We've heard there's provision in Egypt.

Now folks, they're traveling the same fearful path as every other dependent nation on the earth at that time. And yet they're the ones who are supposed to know God and they're supposed to be this great blessing in the earth. And so when they finally arrived in Egypt, their brother Joseph is sitting on the throne, but he makes strange to them as he's not speaking to them clearly.

They don't really know who he is. They don't know what he's accomplished. They don't know the greatness of the provision that could be theirs.

They don't see or feel the yearning in his heart to reveal himself. When you read through Genesis, you'll see the number of times that Joseph had to leave the throne and find a secret place to weep. He wanted to reveal himself, but he couldn't.

He was constrained. He was restrained. And it's the same as the heart of Christ in our generation.

Jesus longs to reveal himself to his church. He longs for you to hear the words of his mouth. He longs for you and I to rejoice in the victory that he has fully won on Calvary, the triumph he has fully triumphed over the things of this world.

He wants you and I to know and to have this revealed to our hearts. But Joseph looks at them and he says, you are spies. He knows who they are.

They don't know who he is. And he says, you are spies. In other words, you just came, he said, to see the nakedness of the land.

In other words, you just come here to see how you can get the provision that's here. You're spies. You're not honest men.

And folks, I'll tell you, they're spies in the church of Jesus Christ. They're not. They're just simply there to say, look, I want everything this place has got and I want to find the sneakiest way I can find to get it.

I'm not willing to carry a cross. I'm not willing to be given for others. I'm not willing to go these, whatever it is that I'm required to do.

But I want to see where the defenseless part of this is. Folks, even in this church, we've had pickpockets come in here. Can you imagine of all the places to come in and be a pickpocket? But there are spiritual pickpockets too as well, and sometimes in the house of the Lord.

And they said to Joseph, we're not spies. We're honest men. Can you imagine? We're honest men.

Oh, really? Well, tell me about yourself. Well, they said, we're 10 brothers and we have another younger brother. He's with our father back in the land we came from.

And we have another brother, and unfortunately, he passed away. Now they're talking to the brother who passed away, apparently. We're honest men.

We're not spies. We're honest men. And Joseph looks at them again and says, no, you're spies.

You're spies. You're not here honestly. There's a dishonesty in your heart.

He says, I'm going to prove you. I'm going to take Simeon. I'm going to put him in prison.

I'm going to keep him there. And he says, you bring me your younger brother and prove to me that you really are honest men. Now don't forget that Joseph has been many years apart from his family.

And as far as he knows, these men are liars. And did they betray his brother the way they sold him for 30 pieces of silver? And he really has no way of fully knowing whether or not they've done the same to his

younger brother Benjamin. And he says, here's the way you're going to be proven.

You've told me you've still got a brother that's alive at home with your father. Then bring him to me. And he says, you will not see my face until you bring your brother to me.

And there are so many people who just say, God, I want to know what you're speaking. I want to know what you're doing. I want the provision you want for me.

And the Lord says, if you want to see my face, there is a requirement. You have a brother. I want you to bring this brother to me.

You cannot come just for yourself. It's not just about you. There is something about others.

You have a younger brother that has got to come into this place of provision as well as you have found it, but he hasn't found it. He's still in another place and you've got to get him and you've got to bring him to me. And that's the first time that in the scripture the conviction seems to be coming upon these men.

They gather around their mules again and they say, you know, we heard the anguished cries of our brother and we didn't do anything about it. Therefore, all this distress has come upon us. Now Joseph heard them speak and it's the first time there's any recognition that they had done wrong.

We heard our brother cry. I wonder sometimes when we get to heaven, how are we going to stand before God, folks, and have ignored the cry of the widow and the orphan and the powerless and the drug addicted. Last week on the Internet, a young man went on.

I don't even know how this works. So please forgive my techno speak. I have no idea.

But he had a camera. He went on the Internet and said he was going to commit suicide. And for 12 hours he took pills and for 12 hours, people perhaps around the country, maybe even around the world watched him die.

Some egged him on. Some wrote in and told him, make sure you've taken enough pills. Others did nothing.

They just simply watched him die. And folks, there's even discussion of some kind of repercussion. But even the legal experts say, how can we do anything? But, folks, I'm telling you, it gives you a mindset of what's in the world today, that nobody went there.

And finally, when somebody did say this has gone on long enough and he looks like he's in distress, he's probably passed away by this point, they finally called the police. They went there and it was too late. But, folks, Jacob's son said, we heard the cries of our brother and did nothing.

And, folks, I don't want that to be my testimony. When I get to the throne of God, just walking in and finally realizing how I have wasted my life, how it has not amounted to what God wanted it to be, how my ears were not only closed to God but closed to the needs of humanity all around me, closed to the widow, closed to the orphan, closed to the oppressed and the addicted and the suicidal. Somehow, if we want to hear God's voice, folks, we have to be willing to hear the whole package.

It all comes together. It's not just about provision. And so many people want to hear God's voice, but all I want to hear are the promises.

Just give me the promises. The Lord says, no, with the promises and the provision and the strength and the power comes the whole... Your ears are either going to be open or they're going to stay closed or you're going to only hear in whispers. But if you want to hear from me, you have to be willing to hear it all.

That's why in Proverbs the Scripture says, he who increases knowledge increases sorrow. There be an awareness of suffering come into your heart. There be an awareness that life is not all about just you and I getting through to the end with our clothes and our houses intact and our hands raised and talking about how wonderful the journey has been.

While thousands around us have not found anything of the provision of God. While Benjamin is left in the land, another place that God says, I want you to go get him and bring him. And I want him to be with you.

In chapter 44, we see now they are returning with their brother and with a new heart. They become one with Christ. And in chapter 45, if you're open to Genesis, we'll go to chapter 45.

The words of Joseph's mouth now become plain and clear to them. It's amazing. Judah finally stands there and when Joseph is taken captive by Pharaoh.

I'm not going to go into all of the details. Suffice to say, they bring their younger brother down, he's taken captive. And Judah finally stands there and he says, listen, it'll break my father's heart if this boy doesn't come home.

And he said, so therefore I offer my life in his place. I offer my freedom that he might go free. I offer my future that he might have a future with his father.

I offer my service as a slave that he might be free and he might go home to the father. And it's truly a type of the church that stands before God. He says, Lord, I offer my life.

I offer all that I am and all that I have that others may come to know you as Lord and Savior. I give you my future. And God, if it brings hardship into my life, then so be it.

But Lord, I give it all to you. I give everything I am that your heart might be satisfied in the earth. Because folks, the work of Christ is the redemption of the lost.

The work of Christ is not to just save us and keep us happy until we get home to be with him for eternity. It's about the lost. That is the work of God.

That is the reason there's a church on the earth. That is how the world is blessed. Because through us, they come to the knowledge that there is a Savior who died for them 2,000 years ago and paid the price for their sins.

They come to the knowledge that because of God, you can have a new heart, a new future. You can have a new mind. You can have a new life.

You can have new hope for not just time, but for all of eternity. But it comes with a price. It comes.

Folks, I'm like you are. There are days I've grown throughout the whole week. There are times that I just want to get out from under the pressure.

There are times I get tired from living under the pressure. But folks, I know that to go the direction that my natural heart would want to go would be spiritual death, not just for me and my family, but be spiritual death for many others. That the Lord would allow my life to be an influence over in the future.

Don't think for five seconds it's easy to get in this pulpit for any one of us who stand here. Don't think there's no price to this because we have nice suits and we have leased cars and stuff like that. Don't think there's no price to it, folks.

There's a terrible price of living under pressure all the time. Oppressed on every side, as Paul says. Fighting hell.

If you ever want to know if there's a hell, you stand up and start preaching the gospel. You're going to find out there's a real hell. You're going to find out there's a real devil.

But we made the choice somewhere along the line to give our all for the glory of God and that the heart of God might be satisfied in the earth. Praise be to God. And the voice of God could begin to be audible in our minds and in our hearts that we might grow in this grace and knowledge of Christ and not bring to you a theory just off the pages of a book but a living relationship with Jesus Christ.

I know that God can take you through doors of impossibility because He's taken me through doors of impossibility. I've come out of places of fear. I lived with nine years of panic attacks and hell in my life.

I know what this is all about. I know what it's like to be called of God to do the impossible when it can't be done any other way. I know what it's like to step out and be sick in my gut day after day doing what I was doing because of a love that had come into my heart for God and for God's people and for people all through the earth who needed to know a Savior.

I know what it's like to travel in impossible places. I know what it's like to lose everything on this earth more than one time. I know what it's like to fight a very real devil, a very real power of darkness.

I know what that's all about. But I also know whom I have believed. And what I've preached to you today, I've come to learn is a practical reality of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If you want to hear His voice, you have to be willing to hear His voice. He'll speak about all kinds of things. As a young pastor preaching part-time at a church that seemed to be in great revival, the Lord spoke to me many times.

I remember the first time He spoke to me about giving up my job, giving up my career because I was a dual career. I was preaching, pastoring, but I was still in a full-time work position. I remember Him speaking to me about giving this up and the incredible battle I began to fight inside of my spirit to let these things go and to begin to trust God.

But even to this day, I say, God, thank you. Don't ever let me stop. Don't ever let me draw a line in the sand and say this far and no farther.

Right to the end, right to the last moment of time. If my body loses health, I can still preach one time a month. And in our modern generation, what the Lord has spoken to my heart is that you can do a whole lot more with a cannon than you can with small weapons fire.

One message preached in the Holy Ghost can outlive us each by a hundred years today now. The technology is here. And should the Lord tarry, I've got to get in that closet and hear from God.

I've got to bring a living word into this pulpit. And folks, it can't be just me. It's got to be you as well.

You have to have a living word now for your family. You have to have a living word for those that God has given you influence over, for your people in your workplace, in the marketplace where you travel. You've got to have a word from God.

You've got to know what God is thinking. You've got to know what God is speaking. You've got to know what God is feeling for the hearts of men and women who are perishing all around you.

Faith comes by hearing and hearing comes by the word of God. Joseph said immediately to his brothers when they were willing, when Judah was willing to be laid down as it is for his brother Benjamin, it said Joseph could not refrain himself. And he said, cause every man to go out from me.

And Joseph made himself known to his brethren. And he said, I am Joseph. Praise be to God.

I only want to hear one voice. I want to hear that voice that says to me in the prayer closet, I am Jesus. I am speaking to you now.

Oh, folks, there's nothing more profound than when you know you're hearing the voice of God. I went in my office one morning to do my devotions in a little town called Riceville, Canada. I opened my Bible and suddenly the Holy Spirit came into the room.

He told me to go to First Chronicles. I believe it was chapter 28. I went to that chapter and it was the chapter where David gave to Solomon the pattern of a temple.

And Solomon finished the building that had begun through the life of David. And God spoke to me and said, I'm about to move you. I'm about to take you to another place.

It's a work that has been started by another man. He's going to give to you the pattern of my house by the Spirit. There are things he said to me you don't know.

There are things you don't understand. This man is going to be the vessel. That was Pastor David Wilkerson.

He's going to put it into your heart. And he's going to show you how the house of God is built and how the house of God is governed. He said, you'll be moving very shortly.

And you'll be helping this man to finish the work that I've called him to do. Now folks, that's called hearing from God. In order to hear that, I had to be willing to leave what I was doing.

I was pastoring a church in revival. My kids are in a Christian school. Everything, everything was going my way.

We had a missions program that one year outstripped the budget of the operational budget of the church. It was outstripped by the missions program. The church was alive.

People were on their feet shouting and clapping and singing way before the service would even begin on Sunday morning. I'd dismiss the people and they wouldn't go home. I'd close the service at 12 o'clock.

At 2 o'clock, I'd close it again. One day, 3 o'clock, try again. People just want to pray.

They just want to worship. We'd come into revival, folks. It was a bonafide revival.

The glory of God had come down. And in the midst of it all, I opened my Bible and the Lord says, it's time for you to go now. I'm taking you to another place.

There has to be a willing... I was so sure that I'd heard from God. I went to my... I had an assistant pastor in the next office. I went over to him.

I said, prepare to take over the church. I'll be leaving shortly. I knew it in my heart that God was taking me to another place.

Folks, you've got to be willing to hear the voice of God. And you've got to be willing to go where God says to go. Joseph says, come near to me in verse 4 in chapter 45.

The Lord will say, draw near to me. And coming near to Christ, you and I begin to hear his heart. We begin to understand what he's thinking.

We are given as it is the burden of God for not only ourselves but for other people. He says, God sent me before you in verse 5 to preserve life. Verse 6, there are five more years of famine ahead.

Severe famine. You've got to be willing to hear. Now, folks, we've warned you of these days.

We've warned you in this church of the days we're now coming into. We've warned you for years now that these days are coming. And so now they are coming.

And now you know the warning was of the Holy Spirit. But now what I'm telling you is you've got to be able to hear for yourself to get through. The famine that we've warned about has come.

But there are five more years. And he says, God sent me before you to preserve a posterity in the earth and to save your lives. Now, this is Joseph speaking as a type of Christ.

Jesus says, God sent me before you to save you by a great deliverance. He's made me a ruler through all the land of Egypt. Now, Christ, of course, is the ruler and reigner throughout all the world.

He says, come down to me, verse 9. Don't tarry. Come down to me. Folks, that's the word for today.

Jesus says, come to me now. Don't tarry. Don't make the mistake that Lot's wife made.

Don't stop and look longingly for what you're going to have to leave behind you. Don't tarry. There's no career, there's nothing that's worth losing the ability to hear what God is speaking in this generation.

Don't tarry. Get what you have. Get your family.

Get your friends. Come to me. Come to me.

Folks, get a prayer meeting going in your house. Invite your neighbors in to pray. If they'll come and just start praying.

You don't have to have all the revelation. You don't have to know everything there is to know about the Bible. But you do have to know God and be willing to hear from Him.

Get your neighbors now and begin to pray. And He says, and I will nourish you there. You come close to me.

Bring everything you have and I'll nourish you for the yet five years of famine. Unless, if you don't come, He says, all you have is going to come to poverty. And in verse 12, He says, now behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that is speaking to you.

Praise be to God. God said, it's me speaking to you and you can see it now. Folks, that's really what the whole message is about.

The Lord says, you're going to know I'm speaking to you. You're not going to have to guess and it will not be a whisper. But if you are willing to be given for other people, you're going to know.

You're going to hear my voice. It's not going to be a vague whisper to you any longer. Now, where we started in Psalm 60, let's finish there today.

This is what the psalmist says. Oh God, you've scattered us off. You've scattered us.

Thou has been displeased. Oh, turn thyself to us again. You've made the earth to tremble.

You've broken it. Heal the breaches thereof, for it shakes. Now, the psalmist is talking about a time of terrible shaking that's come.

Now, it's most likely a spiritual thing that they were feeling in their hearts because these are the people of God. And they've gone into battle and they've suffered a terrible defeat in this battle. And a trembling came.

He says, you've shown your people hard things. You've made us drink the wine of astonishment. And when you look in the original text, it means from the cup of judgment that is being poured out on the whole world and on godly societies.

We are drinking from this same cup. We are just as fearful as they are. And it shouldn't be this way.

You've given a banner, he says, to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth. In other words, the psalmist is saying we should be gathering around testimonies of victory. Each one of us in the coming days.

We should be holding up this banner of Christ and the promises of God and saying, gather here, gather here. Here's where victory is. Here's the way out.

This is how to get through these kinds of days and these kinds of times. This is what the psalmist is saying. You've given a banner.

This has been your promise. And we're supposed to be displaying it because of truth. That your beloved may be delivered.

Oh, he says, save with your right hand and hear me. He says, God has spoken in his holiness. And he goes on now and begins to list all the promises of all these things that come against you and I. And he says, God, you've said this.

You'll rejoice over this. You'll divide this. You'll destroy this.

He says, God, you've given all these promises that nothing is able to stand against us as the people of God. In verse 11, he says, give us help from trouble for vain is the help of man. Through God, we shall do valiantly for he it is that shall tread down our enemies.

And the psalmist is saying, God almighty, let me finish this victoriously. I don't want to go out dragging a mule with money in my pocket, traveling, looking for God. I want to know God.

I want to hear God. I want to walk with God. I want to be able to display a banner of confidence in God everywhere I go.

When everyone else is failing and falling and men's hearts are failing for fear of the things that are coming upon them in this world. I want to walk through this world with a step that has a confidence in it. I want to know where I'm going.

I want light in my eyes. I want an assuredness in my voice. And though everything around me seems to be failing, I want to stand on the deck of that perishing ship.

And I want to be able to say, be of good cheer. I've been with God. God has spoken to me.

I know where I'm going. And if you will follow with me, you're going to get there too as well. Praise be to God.

Praise be to God. Let us finish victoriously, folks. Let the church finish victoriously in this age.

Praise be to God. We're not called to gather our resources. We're not called to drag stubborn mules and dwell on hearsay of where God is and what God is doing.

We are called to know God and to walk with God and to have the promises of God alive in our hearts. We are called to lift up the banner of Calvary's victory. Praise be to God.

I want to shout it from the housetops. I want to shout it from every place that God would allow me to. And you need to as well.

You need to hear from God. Get into the prayer closet. Hear from God.

Hear what God is speaking. And let your heart be drawn out to the souls of those who need to know there is a Savior. Praise be to God.

Let's not let people die in their sin on our watch. If they die in their sin, let it be a free will choice. Let them have known that there was an option.

Let them have known there was another way out. Let them have known they didn't have to commit suicide. They didn't have to run terrified.

They didn't have to turn to the things of this world that cannot satisfy. Let them know that there is a difference. To hear the voice of God, you've got to be willing to confess dishonesty.

Dishonesty in dealing with God. You cannot be here today claiming to be honest if you're not. Dishonesty has got to be put away.

You cannot claim to be one thing and be living another. You cannot claim to be pursuing something when in reality it's something else that you're pursuing. God knows it.

The Scripture says he will not be mocked. He will not be revealed until dishonesty is put away. Everything that you know to do but are refusing to do it, God says now you've got to deal with it or you won't hear my voice.

This is a serious issue, folks. It is a very, very serious issue. You have to walk honestly.

You have to walk in the light of the Scriptures. God is not going to come and speak to a person who is walking in a lie except to tell you that you need to turn to the truth. But you'll never fully hear his heart or his voice until dishonesty is put away.

And there has to be a willingness to be given for other people to death if necessary. Why should I say it any other way? A willingness to be given for other people. I've counted the cost.

I've thrown my lot in with those that are making the choice to be given at whatever the cost. And each one of us has to make that choice now. We're moving into a time that's going to be very, very difficult.

You have to count the cost now. Is the soul worth it? Are the children in our streets worth it? What is God thinking about this? Is it all just about me and my provision? Or is there something deeper that God is calling me to in the Christian life? The willingness to be given that others may be free. That Judah moment when he stood before Joseph and said, Take my freedom that Benjamin may have his.

That's really where revival comes from, folks. The rest of it is just popcorn and noise. That's really where revival comes from.

There's been a lot of talk of revival in the last 20 years, and most of it is pathetic at best. No. True revival.

True revival. The church becomes the church of Jesus Christ. I want to finish it victoriously, this walk.

I want to finish it valiantly. I want to finish this race and get to the end and have one voice say, Well done. Well done.

You heard what I was speaking, and you walked according to the promises and the instructions I gave you. Praise be to God. This is a sober moment for the church of Jesus Christ.

It's a sober moment for the church in New York City. You already know it. I don't have to convince you.

And you know it in your heart. This is a sober time. A time when choices have to be made.

I think in your heart, this has been a serious church. This pulpit is not a light pulpit. It never has been.

So I have to assume that you're here because you want truth. We don't tell jokes here, and we don't attempt to make you laugh. There are times of humor, but it would be natural.

It's not planned. We speak to you the gospel of Jesus Christ and call you to a life that honors Him according to the scriptures. And now we're living at a time of making a choice.

Church all over the world is living at this time now. There will be a victorious church. There will be a valiant church.

There will be a church that finishes the race. But this church, just as the first church, counted the cost. There'll be no easy slide through this time that we're going into.

There's a cost now. And you have to count it. And God says, I'll speak to you.

I'll show you where provision is. I'll open my heart to you. We'll weep together.

We'll embrace. I'll give you everything you need, but you have to listen to everything I'm going to speak to you. And you'll have the supply to do what I've called you to do.

Father, I thank you, Lord, with all my heart today. God, for your word. I thank you that you've given me the ability to express what's in your heart today.

I pray, God, that we finish this journey honorably and with integrity and supernaturally. I ask you today, as people make their way to this altar who feel they need to, that there be a release of provision, of compassion, of direction. Everything, Lord, that you have for those who are called to be your church, that you would reveal yourself.

I pray that we never be a people that you have to weep over and then hide yourself. God, don't hide from us. I ask you, Lord, for my own life, that you never hide from me, never have to hide from me.

Pray that I can be an honest man all my life and follow you as you lead. Lord, I thank you for it, God, with all my heart. I praise you.

In Jesus' name. As we stand together in the annex in the main sanctuary, if you'd like to get right with God, especially those who need to get right with God, and for those who want a willingness to be given for others, and for those who just say, God, I need to hear your voice. I'm not quite sure what the obstruction is, but I need to hear you speaking to me.

I need to hear it. Make your way here, please. We'll worship for a few minutes and we'll pray together.

Would you do that? Balcony, you can go to either exit. As we stand, main sanctuary, just slip out of where you are. Let's pray together.

We're going to believe God for this. Remember, at this particular moment, that's when God revealed himself. Joseph was made known.

To his brothers, slip out of where you are. Just say, whoever is here today, say, God, I need to hear you. I need to hear your voice.

I need to know what you're speaking. I want to know what you're speaking to me personally. Just make your way here.

We'll pray. Thank you, Lord. You know, the psalmist in Psalm 60 cried out and he said, God, I'm supposed to have a banner.

And the banner should be a drawing point for many people when they see something so radically different in my life. And can you picture, just for a moment, when these 10 sons of Jacob come out of this private meeting they've just had with Joseph. Because Joseph commanded everybody to leave.

And they come out. And there's a big lineup of people from all over the world waiting for their corn. And they've got their donkeys and they've got their money.

And all of a sudden, these same group that went in and were part of the lineup are coming out. And there's a glow on their faces. There's a knowledge.

And as they pass by, there had to be a savor of something that just went with them. And people would be standing in line waiting for their turn at the corn. And they'd be thinking, what do they know? What happened in there? They seem to be like the rest of us.

But they're walking out. And they seem so excited about something. And they're picking up wagons and they're heading out.

And they're going out with haste, but they're going out with joy. And folks, they had a revelation. They had an intimate moment, which is exactly what's happening at this altar.

It's an intimate moment with Christ that does not leave you heavy. You don't walk out of this with heaviness. You walk out with joy.

You walk out and say, okay, I've come and I'm dealing with God honestly. I'm going to agree with God. If I've not walked honestly, I'm going to say so.

And I'm going to agree with God. And he's going to draw me close. He's going to give me instruction and give me assurances for my future and my family.

Because remember, he said, go get your father. Go get your family. And don't worry about your stuff.

He said, there'll be a lot. I've got a lot. I can handle it.

Don't worry about your stuff. Bring everything to me. And I will provide for you in the next five years of famine.

Of course, it ended up being a lot more than that. But in the next five, I'll provide for you. And as they walked out, you have to picture the scene.

They're coming out of this room and everybody's perplexed. Because I'm sure everybody that went in was depressed at having no food. And when they come out, they're depressed at having lost all their money.

And got only corn in return for it. And there'd be this constant flow in and out of gloom. And yet these men come out, as you are going to come out of this church today, with light in their eye, hope in their step.

That's what dealing with God produces. That's what a face-to-face encounter with Christ will always result in. We'll never send you out of here with heavy hands and weak knees and a feeling of guilt.

God will send you out with hope for the future. Praise be to God. Thank you, Lord.

Now, Father, I thank you, Lord, with all my heart for what you're doing. I thank you for the integrity and honesty in this church. I thank you, God, that these are not a light-eared people who are just looking for some new thing, some new fad about God.

These are people looking for truth, Lord, because you bear witness to it by your presence. I thank you, God, that today the shackles of every sort are being broken. People are being set free from depression about the future and are being given a hope, a sense of mission, a sense of purpose in this city and on this earth in this last hour of time.

I thank you, God, that we can trust you for provision. You've said you would provide. We believe it, Lord.

We thank you for it, God. We thank you that you will provide for us not only today or next week, but for the rest of this journey there will be provision. We thank you, Lord, there will be a distinction between the people of God and the people of this world.

Just as there was between Canaan and Egypt, there will be a distinction, God. We thank you for it with all of our hearts. Father, send us out with hope today.

Let there be a bounce in our step. Let there be joy in our hearts. Let there be a sense of tomorrow because God is in it.

And our ears are open, Lord, to hear what it is that you want to speak. Speak to every heart, Lord. We'll not resist you.

We'll not limit you. Speak to us, God. Tell us what you want to do.

We know the provision will be there. We know the strength will be there. We know the joy will be there.

We know the fruit will be there. God, we know your heart will be satisfied. And for this we give thanks and praise in Jesus' mighty name.

Give him praise. Thank him. Praise be to God.

Praise be to God. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, God.

Thank you, God. Thank you, Lord. Lord, we praise your holy name.

Thank you, God. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord.

Praise God. Now, when you open this book, your heart is going to be stirred. I promise you this on the authority of God's word.

If you want to do the work of God, your heart will be deeply stirred by this book. Praise God.

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