

# Pray to Escape Your These

by Carter Conlon

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of loving and serving God above all else, highlighting how God's plans work for good in our lives, even in the midst of challenges. It encourages listeners to pray beyond their limitations and to seek a deeper understanding of God's teachings. The message focuses on the power of God being displayed through acts of kindness and servanthood, rather than seeking worldly recognition or status.*

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 29:11, Romans 8:28, Philippians 2:5, John 21:1, Matthew 23:11

**Topics:** "Loving God Above All", "Power of Servanthood"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Thank you for those memories from the past and I know that I speak for everybody here tonight That we're just so thankful for the future to as well because Jesus Christ is already in the future He's already got a plan and through the prophet one of the Old Testament prophets He said I know the thoughts or the plans that I have for you Thoughts and plans for good and not for evil to bring you to an expected end So you and I just like a star the Chen who shared tonight How could she ever have thought that getting a kovat 19 and she was very very sick because we were praying with her to the point of fearing for life how could she ever have thought that something is as awful as that situation would bring about a Bigger healing than kovat 19 a bigger ache in her heart something that had been there since she's a little girl When her dad left and she didn't see him again from the age of 9 to the age of 20 And longed all her life to hear those words I love you what a healing that brought into her life. And so I want to encourage you as the Bible says All things do work together for good to those who love God and are the called according to his purpose now either you believe It's all things or you don't it has to be all things and God didn't say some things work together for good It's all things so there's if you will ask for the eyes of the Spirit There is something of God in everything that God allows into your life And there's always a reason an older pastor told me years ago when I was a young minister Carter if God allows it into your life. There's a reason so don't don't ask.

What are you doing? Say Lord, what is it that you're showing me God helped me to understand what you're teaching me. How are you building me? What are you putting into my life that is going to cause me to? Better understand you and to be a better representative of your kingdom now tonight. I want to pray or speak a word That's entitled Being delivered or getting beyond praying beyond your these T-h-e-s-e everyone has a these in their lives.

I'm going to talk about praying beyond your These father. Thank you Lord for This few moments to encourage people to pray and to believe God I am doing the same thing in my life right now I'm praying to get beyond the the visas in my life and to get to this place Lord where Lord, I I love you so much that I can be used for the sake of your people in a deeper way Thank you Lord that your ways are not our ways and your thoughts are not our thoughts They are higher than the heavens are from the earth so God give me the grace quick in my body and mind tonight to speak this to somebody and let it let it chart lives tonight on a different course a course of power and glory for the name of Jesus and in Jesus name we ask this Amen. Now, this is a scripture.

I shared on Sunday morning From Philippians chapter 2 beginning at verse 5 I woke up on Sunday morning and the Lord began to speak something into my heart And he began to talk to me about a place that he wanted to take me that I hadn't even maybe fully considered I suppose I had in some measure we all do but I'd never really fully considered what God was actually trying to Speak to my heart but Sunday morning it became real You ever have those moments in the scripture where the where the pool just clears and all of a sudden you've read this thing Hundreds of times and you've never seen it this way. That's why that's why I know the Word of God lives That's why I know that God speaks through his word It's as if you've been telling your child something over and over and over and over and over and then one day they just suddenly get It you haven't really changed your words. It's just suddenly their understanding was open and they now Understand in a deeper way what you've been trying to tell them Let this mind Philippians 2 5 let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus this might in other words Let these thoughts become your thoughts remember as his thoughts are higher than our thoughts Let these thoughts let this way of thinking Come into your mind Who being in the form of God did not consider it robbery to be equal with God? But made himself of no reputation Taking the form of a bond servant and coming in the likeness of men and being found in appearances of man He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death even the death of the cross Therefore God also has highly exalted him and given him the name which is above every name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those in heaven and those on the earth and Those under the earth and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father We had a prayer request come in tonight from Bethpage, New York, and it's Josephine and here's what she said I was delivering food to The families of people who died with a note the Lord is with you and so are we now? That's what she was doing.

This is what she felt God leading her to do Okay, it's real simple delivering food to families of people who died with a note the Lord is with you and so are we She got a call from somebody in one of those families who because of her act of kindness was delivered from alcohol addiction and She finishes her prayer request or praise report by saying only Jesus could do this. That's it. That's an incredible thought now.

I want to go back now keep that keep that story in mind We'll go back to Philippians now Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God. It just doesn't get any better than that right. He is God He's the Son of God.

He is God. He's the third person of the triune God. He's equal with God He's in there's nowhere to go beyond where he is if there if there were such a thing as a spiritual ladder You can't go any higher than

where he is.

There's no wrong above him And and you would think that in that place That the power of God in a sense would be fully realized there You know a lot of people when we pray and we say Lord use me We always get this vision of being used of God has to somehow take us to a high place Maybe I put it this way a place higher than we are there has to be something more than what we're given to do Our thought is For God to use me. It's got to be bigger crowds got to be better places. It's got to be more attentive people It's got to be larger responses everything in the natural the way We think has got to be bigger and bigger and better and better and somehow we think it brings glory to God and it can But it's not generally the way that God chooses to do things So he was already there and already at the pinnacle now It was in the heart before the creation of the world to break the penalty and power of sin and to redeem Humankind that was in God's heart The Bible tells us that Christ was foreordained to die for our sins even before the foundation of the world So that's in the heart of God.

It's in the thinking of God. God's in the place of all power So how now is that power of God about to be exercised? How is that power going to be put into gear may I put it that way? how is the power of God going to be taken to the place where the the the power of darkness is destroyed the penalty of sin is forgiven the the power of sin is vanquished. The devil himself is destroyed God retains or re Gathers his people and brings them home for for all of eternity.

How is that going to happen? And so now we see the Son of God and and reasonably it could be argued That he could just do as they the king did in Esther's day and just kind of move the scepter and forgive the whole world He was God. I mean obviously could do whatever he wants to do. He's God.

He he created everything He makes all all the rules so he could actually redeem us any way that he chooses to So, how does he choose then to show his power? He shows his power by making himself of no reputation but I Don't know I'd have a word for it when I see it. This is how he shows his power He comes down to the to this world and the Bible says in Isaiah has no form About him, there's nothing about him. There's no comeliness.

As a matter of fact, it's really saying he's not even good-looking In many regards, there's nothing that draws us to him whatsoever He comes down in the form of an ordinary Looking man raised in an ordinary family doing an ordinary job, but yet it's the power of God Inmotion to redeem the world It's just a picture that God's been giving and and it's like it's getting bigger and bigger and bigger in my heart literally every Day, but not only does he come down and he makes himself of no reputation but he takes on himself the form of a bond servant and and comes in The likeness of man so he comes down not as a 10-foot bronze warrior in a chariot with flaming horses and everything else that which he could do and Cherubim and seraphim flying all around him and the hosts of heaven visible No He comes down in the form of a servant and in the likeness of the people that he had come to redeem You know sometimes we try to make ourselves just a little too big and a little too bright and a little too visible and We can actually unwittingly in our desire for a higher place Lose the power of God. It's it's an amazing thought when you begin to realize it now in John chapter 21 Jesus Christ is now risen from the dead. He's gone to the cross He shed his blood.

He's now risen from the dead. His disciples are gone fishing. It's it's a tumultuous time It's it's a difficult time to understand but they've gone fishing now.

They they know he's risen from the dead. They're they're not Fully sure of what that's going to mean in each one of their lives or how it's going to lead them to follow him They know they're called to follow but they're not going to be they're not quite sure what that's going to look like And so they fish all night Of course, they catch nothing and in the morning Jesus Christ is standing on the shore and he calls out to them Have you caught anything and they said no and he tells him of course He says throw the the net on the other side of the boat. They they do it in obedience they haul in this incredible haul of fish and Peter in his love for the Lord because John says it's the Lord and Peter just leaps out of the boat swims to shore and Jesus now, what is the risen Christ doing? He's gone to the cross.

He's raised from the dead by the power of God. He can walk through doors he can walk into rooms he can appear in any form he wants to and Again, he just looks like an ordinary person because there was a measure There was a measure of doubt just looking at him as to who it was the scripture bears witness to that It says none of the disciples dared ask him. Who are you because inside they knew it was the Lord although he he looked to be again ordinary and What is he doing? What is the risen Christ doing for people? He's baking fish and biscuits.

It's really that simple While they're out fishing and while they're catching this final catch. He's he's I don't know how he did it I suspect I suspect it wasn't much more than a clap of his hands and there was but that's only what I think but they they come to shore he's got biscuits and he's got fish on the fire and he starts feeding them and then he turns to Peter and Three times he asked the disciple Peter. Do you love me Simon Peter Simon son of Jonah? Do you love me now? Some interpreters get this so wrong They say he asked him three times because Peter denied him three times now that would make Jesus Christ so vindictive Do you love me? Yes.

Okay. That's one. You're forgiven for the first time you do you love me? Yes Okay, you're forgiven for the second time That's just a really shallow interpretation of this particular Interaction that's about to happen because the first thing he says to Peter is Peter now keep in mind Okay, we're talking about the Christ who left the throne of heaven made himself of no reputation came down in the form of a servant Now, this is the Christ.

Okay, who said I'm sending you as the father sent me I'm asking you to follow me as I'm following the will of my father and he says Simon son of Jonah Do you love me more than these? now the interesting thing is He never defines what the these is and I think it's in purpose because every one of us have a these In our life. I don't know what the these I don't know what the these is. There's probably a lot of these is there There's boats.

There's nets. There's friends. There's fish.

There's there's old ways of doing things There's the Sun the moon the stars. I don't know there's the there's the water that Peter obviously loved because he was raised as a fisherman and whatever Maybe it was an all-encompassing These do you love me more than these in other words? Is there something of this world that's got your heart? Is there something? Ahead of you. Is there is there something in your mind? Is there something that you think is going to bring happiness to you apart from me and following me? Do you love me more than these and Peter said? Lord, you know that I love you and then he said feed my lambs In other words if if these are not the most important thing to you Then there are children in my kingdom that I want you to look after I want you to be given for the little ones who you don't necessarily know how to give back and they need it They need fathers and they need guidance and they

need somebody just to rub the top of their head and say I have faith in You son or my daughter or whatever it is.

You see but if you are if you are all consumed With the theses of your life, you're not even going to see these little ones a few years ago. I was in Kenya I had an interaction with a little girl that just changed my perspective on some things a lot of things actually I Was visiting this park in Kenya. It was a little girl there with a group of kids she probably about five or six years old and I Kind of bent down on my hunches and I started talking to her and I said It said so what's your name? And where are you from? And you know, do you love the Lord and I just talking to her about stuff and she looks me right in the eye and she Says mister, she said you have spiritual eyes And I said to her, what do you mean by that? She said if you didn't have spiritual eyes, you wouldn't see me Isn't that amazing out of the mouth of a babe a child, you know pastors get so busy Spiritual leaders get so busy.

We got so much on the go. We got so many visas in our lives We got we got a fillet these chairs. We got a we got to be on these cameras We there's just a lot of visas and in all of our visas We can actually forget the people and forget the lambs and forget the little ones and they can be just like little heads bobbing around But we don't even see them Unless we love them.

We love Christ more than these you see he was offering Peter his heart if you love me more than these then you're gonna you're gonna have my heart and You're going to be able to see the things the little ones that nobody else sees And he asked him again a second time Simon said of Jonah Do you love me? That's the second time and it's so exasperating Because I think he's asking Peter do you can I speak to you? This is my my impression for what it's worth Do you love me more than these and the second thing is Peter? Do you love me? Can I speak to you? Can I correct you when I need to you remember The Lord had to send the Apostle Paul to correct Peter when he went into error in the book of Acts. Do you love my word? Can you be corrected? Can you be straightened out when you start going on a crooked path? Do you love me? Do you love me and Peter says, you know, Lord? I love you and he says tend my sheep then in other words bring truth to my people walk in truth Peter and bring truth To my people because it's only the truth that will set them free It's only the truth that will keep you in freedom and it's only the truth that will set them free And then he says to him Simon the third time son of Jonah. Do you do you love me now? This is the one that I really love of the three times He asked him because now Peter's now looking at an ordinary-looking man.

He's resurrected from the grave He's gone to the cross. He's won this great victory Remember he came down as a servant made himself of no reputation Humbled himself and became obedient left the throne and before his death washed his disciples feet This is the Christ now was talking to Peter and he says to Peter directly Do you love me? And this is the way I interpret this third question. Do you love the man? You're looking at do you love the image of God? I Have not come to you as the resurrected Christ.

I've not come to you at 10 feet tall. I've not come to you glowing I've not come to you in any form or fashion that would cause you to be drawn to me I've come to you as an ordinary man. I've come to you feeding you in your hunger I've come to you helping you in your confusion and I've come to you in Ordinariness and I believe the question to Peter was do you love the ordinariness of God? You see a lot of people have this idea That somehow to be used of God they have to become almost like hyper spiritual They have to get to a place of understanding and speaking in a way that nobody can understand them every time they wave their hand fall over and just the if you can get this if You can ever learn and I to be learned to be content to be a servant the power of God God Starts doing miracles through our lives.

We don't have to worry about trying to make it look like a miracle is going to happen We don't have to shake our hand and pretend the power of God is on us and all the rest of that stuff We just take groceries to a hungry hungry family and we say to them as Josephine did the Lord is with you and so are we and with that simple note wasn't even a statement the simple not probably a knock on the door leave a box of Groceries an alcoholic opens the door brings it in the house and the power of God sets him free Hallelujah. Oh God. Thank you for pulling the plug on all of the stuff.

We do your name I just got this inner joy in me now that I is this bubbling over because I feel like the hand of God has reached down and just pulled the plug on his church in the Western world and Turned off all the lights and all the waterfalls behind us and everything else that we do to make everybody think that you know Whatever we want them to think and then suddenly we're down to the place of saying Whoa, do I really look what do I look like what God looks like? And if I do am I willing to walk in the path that God lays out for me? Am I willing to be ordinary and in the ordinariness of my life? Am I willing to believe that the power of God? Will start flowing in ways that you know Josephine didn't even know when she walked away that an alcoholic was about to be set free by a simple act of kindness through a servant Peter Peter do you love me more than these? Peter do you love me? Can I speak to you? Peter do you love me? Are you offended at the image of the risen Christ? Are you offended at the ordinariness of God? Are you offended that I choose? that I choose To display my power through servants and not kings You see I told you Jesus would say today if he was standing here that the greatest among you would be the servant of all Did you believe it and do you love it? And do you desire it and I don't know about you tonight, but I want to get past every these in my life I don't know. I don't know how many visas I've got God knows But I feel I feel he's got me by the hand I honestly do and he's leading me into something that's producing this joy in my heart that I can't even begin to explain The simplicity the simplicity of knocking on my neighbor's door. Maybe and say hey you guys doing? Okay, anything I can get for you.

I'm going to the store. Can I get you some bread? Can I get you something? Can I anything you need the simplicity of? being a servant the simplicity of of walking in the footsteps of my master and Realizing that the way to the power of God is not up. It's down If that can get deep into your heart you'd be amazed what God will be able to do for you I am believing that in Times Square Church as pastor Tim Delina and I choose to serve each other and Choose to serve the people of God that there's going to be a release of God's power We are now in 208 countries throughout the world in this prayer meeting I don't know how many of thousands of people that that means are listening right now online all over the world some of you It's the middle of the night I know that there's pastors in Lithuania that get up in your pajamas with hot chocolate and you're you're part of this prayer meeting I know there's girls in Kenya.

It's at 2 in the morning for you, and you're you're praying with us right now I know there's people all over the world and I am believing that as we choose to be Servants one to another and to the people around us as we are willing to get off whatever Throne that we happen to be on it and lay aside. Whatever these is in our lives and just love Jesus Christ and love his word and love his work and love his calling and Love just the fact if all we're given is a basin and a towel that's good enough And we've got to believe the power of God is going to flow through that We have to believe that because the ways of God are not our ways The thoughts of God are not our thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth So the ways of God and the thoughts of God are higher than our ways And I am believing with all of my heart that as we serve one another in this church in New York City That God can take this little lunch as he did with the little boys lunch And he can cause it to just live in an explosion that can feed people in thousands of places I believe that with all of my heart. I am being led of God and pastor Tim is being led of God into a lower place than

we've ever known before the ways of The world are to go higher you keep climbing you get more influence You get a bigger name you get you get more things that are attributed to you That's that's the way the world does stuff And then when you get to the top you just kick everybody down on the ladder that tries to even get close That's the secular way of thinking that's the lost man's as a matter of fact.

That's what Satan tried to do Before he came into the Garden of Eden. He tried to be as God is tried to elevate himself and Jesus that was his way to power Jesus showed him the way to power is exactly the opposite to what Satan did he was unwilling to serve he was unwilling to be ordinary He was unwilling To trust and believe that what he'd been given to do of God was sufficient for him and so

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