

Religion in the Inner Court

by Carter Conlon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of building a deep and intimate relationship with God, rather than a casual seeking of God that lacks power and provision.

Duration: 44:52

Scripture: Isaiah 58:6-12, Matthew 7:24-27, Luke 13:1-5, Hebrews 12:26-29, Revelation 3:7

Topics: "Spiritual Awakening", "Holy Spirit"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the need to move beyond a casual, outer court religion and enter into a deeper relationship with God. It calls for a spiritual awakening in America, highlighting the importance of genuine faith, prayer, and a focus on people rather than material possessions. The speaker warns against building on a faulty foundation and urges a shift towards a life led by the Holy Spirit, empowered by God's love and strength.

Transcript

Before I speak today, I'd like to encourage you, if you haven't read the book Fear Not, I would highly recommend it. We're not into selling books, it's not about selling books, we don't make any profit from these, and any royalties that do come in go into a fund to help people, so it's not about that. But there's truth in there that will keep you in the midst of the fearful things that are coming on this earth, that have come and will come.

And there's another book that I'm just putting out, it'll be out hopefully in the next few months, it's called Unshakeable, and it's about the coming financial collapse in the Western world, and how to prepare for that, how to get through that. And folks, I wish I could say that this is the only storm and it's over, but that's not the case, this is a season of storms. This is a physical storm we've gotten through in New York City, and we're facing a social storm right now, with the redefining of marriage and the family, and the eradication of everything to do with the name of God and the value system of Christ.

This monster called liberalism trying to push everything of Christ out of our society, and folks, there's nothing that's going to be able to stand against that but a genuine spiritual awakening in America, in our time. We don't have a lot of time to get this right. I feel this is a Jonah moment for America, and God is opening doors to make that declaration.

I've been asked to go on national radio across the country, and folks, pray for me, please. God, give me courage and balance, but I feel this is a moment, we have a window, that's all we have is a window to push this back and to see Christ one more time glorified. There's nothing except for a spiritual awakening that will make any difference now in this nation.

I thank God, and I hope we get some sincere political people, but that's not going to change the moral tenure of this country. And there's a financial storm coming. I don't think anybody can stop this, what's coming down the road very shortly.

And the Lord's preparing us now, and getting us ready, because there is great security in Christ. There's a joy that can't be taken away. There's a love, and there's a fellowship in the body of Christ that will not ever be found anywhere else.

And I thank God with all my heart, but we're partnering now with probably, I don't know how many churches, but it's going to be way over a hundred when this is over, and it's the beginning of a prayer awakening in this city. And in order for a prayer awakening to happen, the barriers had to be broken down that separate us, and God is doing that right now. So my heart is alive and rejoicing in the goodness of God.

Our home was flooded along with a lot of others, but it's repairable. But nevertheless, it just reminds me one more time to hold on to things in this world very, very lightly, because none of them go with us. The only thing I'm taking to heaven is you, and that's it.

There are no 401ks there, there's no houses in the water there, there's no nasty neighbors there. And for all of those who are with us this morning that are disappointed because the marathon was canceled, you come in tomorrow, we'll give you some running to do. There's a lot of boroughs, there's some boroughs that need people to go door-to-door, so you could wear your jogging shorts and your number and the whole deal, and you can just go door-to-door with a list, and do you have what you need, and do you need people to help you? I'm serious about this.

You come in tomorrow, we'll get you running. You can run all day. You can run through an entire borough in New York City.

And I'm completely in earnest about this. Put your running to good use. Thank God you've done all this training, so get out there and get to work.

Praise God. I want to talk to you this morning for maybe a half hour or 35 minutes about religion in the inner court. Luke chapter 13, please, if you go there with me.

Religion in the inner court. Now, Father, I thank you for the anointing of your Holy Spirit. I wouldn't even attempt this message without you, Lord.

Without your hand delivering this and your heart behind it, I wouldn't want to do this. But, Lord, you call out in mercy. You are a God of mercy and justice.

And you're kind to us, Lord, by letting us know the things that we need to consider at this time. Help us, Lord, and help the church around this world. Help those that are online listening.

Help your house to realize the severity of this moment. And give us the grace and strength to go through the open door that you've set before us. And I thank you for this in Jesus' name.

Luke chapter 13, beginning at verse 1. This is about religion in the inner court. There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them. Think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Now this scripture is a season where Jesus is warning some people about an impending calamity.

Now you and I know from history that there were people here who felt they were safe because they were dwelling in some measure of proximity to the Holy of Holies, as it were, in the temple. So they felt they were safe. Now Jesus, knowing the future, they were forty years away at that time, approximately forty years from a complete annihilation.

The Roman army was going to come in and absolutely destroy the city and destroy the temple and the people would literally be found under the rubble. And they would be slain, as these were. Now they supposed that they were safe, their religion made them safe.

And they supposed the judgment came on these others because somehow they were deficient or not quite as spiritual as they were. But Jesus was telling them, no, there was a destruction that came on others which will come on all in spite who dwell in this casual place. And that's where they were dwelling.

They were living in a spiritually casual place that is trying to build something but it lacks the strength to stand. Now in the book of Hebrews, I'm just going to read it to you and I marked them in the script in my own Bible for time sake. But in the book of Hebrews chapter 12 verse 26, it says, His voice then shook the earth, but now He has promised.

Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heavens. And this word, yet once more, signifying the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made. Or in other words, they're man-made.

Everything man-made is going to be shaken. That those things which cannot be shaken might remain. That which is birthed in Christ, that which is born of God, that which is the embodiment of the heart of God cannot be shaken and will not be shaken.

No matter the ferocity of the storm. And the writer of Hebrews says, Wherefore, in verse 28, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear for our God is a consuming fire. And I believe that part of that text means that our God is faithful to burn out of me everything that shouldn't be there.

God is faithful to give me strength and give you strength. God is faithful to take us where natural people can't go. And give us a peace that this world can't offer.

And a wisdom that's not found in any measure of study. And give us a strength that can't be gotten no matter how many times we try to convince ourselves that within ourselves we have the power to stand. The Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians in chapter 13, chapter 3 rather verses 10 to 13.

Paul says, According to the grace of God which is given to me as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation and another builds thereon. But let every man take heed. That means be careful how he builds on this foundation.

For no other foundation can no man lay but that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or stubble, every man's work will be manifest or will be made known. For the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire and the fire will try every man's work of what sort it is.

In other words everybody can have what they think is a secure relationship with God until the storm comes. And then we find out who really has had a relationship with God and who has been building in the outer court. As many of these people that Jesus was talking with, they were building a spiritual life in a casual place.

That's the outer court. In our opening text, essentially here's how it describes it. It says, Disposed the Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered such things.

Most historians say this all took place in the outer court. The outer court is where people more or less, the court of the Gentiles, may I call it that, and the outer court is a place where it's a preliminary place to getting where we need to get to in God. It's a type of maybe like church attendance once a week, listening to the odd tape, picking our Bible up 15 minutes a week.

That's outer court religion. That's just a pacifying religion. It gives me a kind of a minimal cost fire insurance policy.

You know that I'm not going to go to hell because I do confess Christ and I do have some measure of His life in mind, but I'm living in the outer court. The outer court is just a preparatory place to go to something much deeper. It's a place of cleansing.

It's a place of considering. It's a place of making our way into that which God truly has for us. But many people just stopped there and thought they were safe there.

Historians tell us that the Romans started to turn against the church of Jesus, against the Jewish people, not the church, but against the Jewish people because they considered the Jews a threat to their nation. These are pre-days before they came in and literally annihilated the nation. They speak of one or two instances where the people were gathered one time for the Passover and Roman soldiers came in disguised as worshipers.

They had daggers under their coats and they started to literally kill the people in the outer court. The people thought they were safe there. But you see, they were defenseless when the enemy came.

And that's what happens to casual seekers of God. You remember in Christ's day, He was so infuriated by this casual seeking and what this initial place had become that He made a scourge of cords and He overthrew the tables and He threw out the dove sellers and all the religious buying and selling that was going on there. And the Pharisees had made the outer court of the temple seeker sensitive, if I may call it that.

They allowed the people to buy their groceries on one side and carry them through the outer court to the other side. And so it became a casual place. The reverence, the awe of God was lost in this place.

But yet people gathered there and thought that dwelling at this level of spirituality was sufficient for them. But when their enemies came, they found they were defenseless. And others were building something, this tower of Siloam that they thought was going to stand.

They might have even been doing it in some measure for the glory of God. I'm not sure of that. But that's certainly a possibility that that was in some of their hearts.

But I'm sure there were voices warning them that their tower was about to fall. There had to be people that were saying, you're not building this right. This has an unusual lean to it.

Or the mortar you're using is not going to hold the brick together. You're building it too easily and you're building it too quickly. And you're building it on men's ideas.

There's a prescribed way that this building has to be built. But you have cast off the builder's plans and you're building something else on this foundation. And there had to be voices there warning the builders this thing is not going to stand.

I don't know how tall it got before it came down. I'm not sure what brought it down. Was it a storm? Was it a wind? Was it a minor earthquake? But something brought it down and a lot of people died when that tower fell.

Jesus said these words to us in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 7. He said, And the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat on that house. And it fell not for it was founded upon a rock. Now folks I'm telling you and I'm warning for those listening online.

For those who can hear the word of God. There are many churches today in America you're building on sand. And you're sending the people out to build with sand.

They're building something all of the theological focus that is on self. Everyone is using Christ for self. All the pastors that are creating a casualness in the house of God.

You are building a house that is not going to stand in the coming storms. And I stand here as one that I feel in my heart call of God to warn you. Not because I'm not angry.

I'm not standing against you. I'm not your enemy. I'm warning you that what you're building is about to fail.

It's going to fall. It's not going to stand the economic storm. The social storm.

The political storm. And perhaps even unrest in our major cities. What are you going to tell your people when you've been bringing them into the house of God.

Feeding them straw and sending them out to build something that's not going to stand. No one can lay anything on this foundation. Except the foundation that Christ himself laid.

And when you and I understand as Paul said in 1 Timothy 1.15. That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. That was the mandate. That was the mission.

That was the motivation of God. That is why God became a man. That is why Christ came into the world.

He came into the world to save you. And to save me. There's no other reason he came.

He did not come to make us rich. He did not come to give us political influence. He did not come to make us feel better about ourselves.

And give us a bigger slice of the socio-economic pie. He came for a people that he would draw unto himself and give his heart to. He came to call us into his body on the earth.

And make us partakers of the very heart of God that sent his Son into the world. That's why in this church we preach a Jesus with legs and arms and a voice and a heart and eyes. That moves into human need.

God in the form of his Son left heaven and moved towards us in our need. We were in a storm of sin and destruction. We were in a place of despair.

We were in a place of hopelessness. We were in a slide heading into eternity without God. And God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten Son.

And as the body of Christ the text of scripture clearly calls us. There's no debate on this. The text of scripture clearly calls us to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

To deny ourselves and take up our cross and follow Christ. Is the call of God on his church. That doesn't mean we walk around mournful.

But it means we allow this heart of Jesus to be formed in us. This heart that says life is not all about myself. Life is not about using Jesus to better my personal portfolio.

Life is not about coming into the house of God with a plan and asking God to bless it. Life is coming in and laying down my plans and saying Lord give me your purpose for my life. Guide me, lead me, give me the power I need to get this done.

And let it be for the glory of God and for the souls of men. Move me oh God into this mountain of human need. Rise up church of Jesus Christ in America today.

Rise up. To those that are listening in the UK this morning you just have a short time. Your whole society is falling down around your ears.

When will you cease the foolishness in the house of God and get back to the prayer closet again. And open this book and say God speak to me and guide me. We must abandon the outer court.

We must not dwell there. We must not live in the outer court. We must move in towards the heart of Christ until his heart is formed in us.

When people become our focus then we are not building something which can collapse. You see folks. If your whole security is in you.

And if you are only using Christ to enhance yourself. Then everything you are building is going to collapse. You are going to end up in the street terrified.

Like people that don't know God. You are going to find yourself confronted by a society growing even more hostile by the day. As they were in the day of Christ in the temple.

And you could be deluded into thinking that a casual seeking of God is going to protect you. When that is not the case. It will leave you defenseless against your enemies.

People are the focus of God. Other people are the focus of God. And when I am building.
You see folks. I am not interested in the sand castles of this city. None of this is going with me.
The only thing that you and I are taking home with us. Our own children. Our grandchildren.
Our wives. Our husbands. Our families.
Our brothers. Our sisters. Our neighbors.
The people across the hall. That's all that is eternal. That's all that is of any real value.
To the kingdom of God. Everything else is just things that. The places that keep us out of the rain.
The places that give us. That provision secularly that we need. To feed ourselves and our families.
But these things are not what we are building. And if that is what we are trying to use God to build. God help us as a church age.
The whole house is going to come down. As the days grow darker. The true church of Jesus Christ grows stronger.
Because our focus is not on this world. And what this world has to offer us. This world is spinning out of control very quickly.
This world is going to experience major calamities in the cities. Even if it is just social upheaval. This world is on a collision course with the holy God.
This world. This world is not my security. And I thank God for that with all my heart.
I've preached it here so many times. And I'll probably refer to it until the day that I die. But I'm telling you.
This is the key to strength. In the kingdom of God. This is the facet I've chosen.
To loose the bands of wickedness. Undo the heavy burdens. Let the oppressed go free and break every yoke.
In other words. Be a catalyst of God to break this yoke of sin. That this world is putting upon people.
The yoke of fear. The yoke of despair. The yoke of wanting to commit suicide.
The yoke of feeling that all is lost. When all is not lost. Heaven is still there to gain.
Freedom from sin is still available to all people. Is it not to deal your bread to the hungry. And you bring the poor that are cast out to your house.
And when you see the naked you cover him. And don't hide from your own flesh. Or that means actually in the original text.
Don't hide from human kind. Don't let your religion be something that is just a shallow. Outer court religion.
That has no power. It has no provision. It has no protection.

It has no purpose. It has no future. It has nothing.

It's a form of godliness with no power. It's a denial of the very reason Christ came into this earth. That's all it is.

It's just an obnoxious system of rules, regulations and outer garments. That's all it is. It has nothing of God in it.

Then he says your light will break forth as the morning. Then. Then.

That's why we're in this house today. And the presence of God is here. Because hundreds of people have been out.

Shoveling out basements. Taking out food. Giving out blankets.

I'm not preaching works for salvation. Don't misunderstand me. But those who are truly saved have no problem getting involved in the work of God which is human need.

Then your light. Then your light will break forth as the morning. Then your health will spring forth speedily.

Your spiritual health will spring forth. Then your righteousness will go before you. Then the glory of the Lord.

That means the protection of God. The weightiness of God. The caring of God.

The supernatural infusion of God. Will be that which follows you and gathers you in its hand. And gives you strength.

Then you will call and the Lord will answer. Talk about prayer meetings. When we go out like we prayed today.

God get that gas truck into Staten Island. Then you will call. Then the Lord will answer.

Then you will cry. Then he will say here I am. Praise to be the God.

Praise be to God. Praise be to God. If you move to taking away from the midst of you the yoke.

If you move to human need. If you move to those people stranded. Folks how can you and I sit here? How can we sit.

If we are sitting here today and we have no concern for the parents. With toddlers and infants sitting in apartments at 35 degrees. Something is wrong with our Christianity.

If you and I can sit here unconcerned. If we are not moved. If we are just in our heart hoping the whole thing will just blow over.

Somebody somewhere will do something. And we can just sort of get back to our outer court religion. And worship God.

Well maybe that's good for you. But it's not for me. By God's grace I am never going there.

I don't want to go there. I hate the thought of it. There's got to be something of God in my heart.

I can't do everything. But I can do something. That's the motto of my heart and my life now.

I can't do everything. But I can do something. If you stop putting forth the finger.

Blaming people. It's so easy to. I shared on the emergency devotional earlier this week.

It's the lazy man's theology really. You land on the shore. And you point the finger and say judgment.

You're all under judgment. That's why. And it's so easy.

Then I can just dust off my hands. And kick the dust off my shoes. And go back home.

And eat my nice warm bread. And live in my beautiful house. If I have such a thing.

And folks. We're all under judgment. Except for Christ.

Except that God had sent his son to us. It's a mercy call. That God came to us.

And folks. We're not called to pronounce judgment. We're called to.

Go to people as Christ came to us. And empty talk. And put away empty talk.

And talk about what we're going to do some day. And how when my ship comes in. Boy I'm really going to do something for God.

Your ship may be sunken. You don't even know it. And if you draw out your soul to the hungry.

And satisfy the afflicted soul. Then your light will rise. In obscurity.

That means in a confusing time. In a time when people don't know. Which end is up and which end is down.

Where north and south is. I think we're there now as a society. I didn't ever think that I'd ever live to see society as confused as it is today.

Where there's such a lack of character in men now. That even our leaders won't do what is right. For our future.

But everybody's holding to these positions. Folks. It's an obscure time.

I think we're living at a time when people out there are saying. Is there something we can trust in? Is there a way out? Is there something we can place our confidence in that won't disappoint us? And Jesus said to the prophet Isaiah. Then your light will rise in obscurity.

Then you will be a lighthouse. Then people will see this candle that ought not to be under a bushel. But it ought to be on a high place in the house where everybody can see it.

And then even your own darkness will be as the noon day. No matter how difficult it gets, you'll have a clear vision. You'll see where you're going.

You'll understand what the future. And the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your soul in drought. Tell me where security is found.

And make fat your bones. That speaks about a time of scarcity. But the Lord says.

I'll make fat your bones. I'm not going to go too deep into that. Some people might not like that.

And you'll be like a water garden. In a time of drought. In other words it's producing fruit constantly.

New fruit. And like a spring of water whose waters don't fail. And it even goes beyond that.

It says those that will be of you. In other words those who lead to Christ. Will build the old waste places.

These places that fell down because people built on a wrong foundation. And they've collapsed. But those who come to the knowledge of God.

And they understand the simplicity of Christ. Will again build the old waste places. And raise up the foundations of many generations.

And you will be called the repairer of the breach. And the restorer of paths to dwelling. God says I will give you a name.

And that name is that you were one who led people to a place. Where they actually can build on a foundation that won't collapse. Now how do we get out of the outer court? It's not very difficult really.

Let me read it to you. It's what the Lord spoke this to me when I was praying on the platform this morning. It's the church of Philadelphia in Revelation chapter 3, 7. He says.

The angel of the church of Philadelphia write these things says he that is holy and true. And has the key of David. And he that opens and no man shuts and shuts and no man opens.

I know your works. I've set before you an open door. And no man can shut it.

For you have a little strength. And you've kept my word and you've not denied my name. I'll make them of the synagogue of Satan would say they're Jews and are not but do lie.

I'll make them come and worship before your feet to know that I've loved you. Because you kept the word of my patience. I'll keep you from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world.

To try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold I come quickly. Hold that fast which you have that no man take your crown.

Now here's the open door. The open door if you're looking from an Old Testament temple perspective as it is. Remember when at the moment that Jesus died.

The veil that separated men from God was rent in two. And access was made into the very presence. The very heart of God.

The tabernacle of David. The key of David means that key that leads us to a place of unbridled joy and worship. In the midst of the battle.

That place which we go to and God says I'll give you my heart there. I'll give you my mind. I'll give you my spirit.

I'll give you a joy and a strength that doesn't come from this world. And I will keep you from the hour of temptation. What is the hour of temptation coming on the whole world? It's the temptation to fear and give up.

It's the temptation to riot. It's the temptation to complain. It's the temptation to be angry and look to blame somebody for the situation.

It's the temptation to give up on even God. And he said I've opened a door to you if you get up and go in that door. I will keep you from this hour of temptation.

That will come on the whole world to try them that dwell on the earth. I'll keep you from it. Because your value system will not be the value system of this world.

Your hope is not on everything staying standing as you see it with your natural eye. But I'll give you a spiritual eye. And I'll show you what lasts.

And I'll show you what is of value. And I'll give you a value system in your heart that will make you glad. And you'll be able to come into the house of the Lord.

And maybe you only have enough to make a peanut butter sandwich. And maybe your jeans are torn. And maybe your boots are dirty.

But you will be dancing in the house of God. Because your value system is not determined by the things of this world. And I will keep you from that hour of temptation that shall come on the world.

The whole world is about to be tried. The whole world is about to be shaken. Everything that we have known is about to be turned upside down in our generation.

And I want to challenge you with all my heart as I challenge my own heart this week. If there's any part of you still in the outer court. If there's any part of you that's still dwelling casually with God.

There's no safety there. There's no security there. You're building something that's not going to stand.

The door is open. The barriers are gone. Whosoever will may come now.

All ages, all races, all economies, all classes, all levels of education. Young and old. On servants and handmaidens.

On every person who calls upon the name of the Lord. You may come in to the presence of God and God's Holy Spirit will come upon you. God will give you the strength to stand.

And not just to stand but you will make a difference in this world. And I will make a difference in this world. I tell you the true church of Jesus Christ is not going out with a collapsed building.

Because our building is not made of brick and stone. Our building is Christ in us. The hope of glory.

Our building is people. Our building is people. It's people.

You look around you today. This is a marvelous shelter. But this is not the church.

The church is sitting next to you. That is the church of Jesus Christ. When we have a right focus we will not be taken down by the storms.

Hallelujah. Thank God. Thank God.

There's a song we sing. Maybe Greg if you could come. Take me past the outer court.

Take me past other people's praises. Take me past the priesthood. Take me past all of it and bring me in.

To the Holy of Holies. We have an invitation. We have an open door.

To touch the throat of God. The Old Testament saints. Literally would get up out of their graves and slap us in the back of the head if they could.

They'd say we only dreamt about what you have. Many of us had to stand and just wonder what was going on there once a year when only one person was allowed in. But you have a high priest that went in and tore that veil and made a way.

You know see the decision is how far do I want to go with God. That's the simple decision. There are some people who are content to dwell in the outer court.

And no matter what I say that's where they're going to stay. But sad to say to you. You're not going to make it.

But for everybody who wants to. You have the right. To get up.

And say Jesus. I want your life to be mine. I want your heart to be mine.

I want your strength to be mine. I want your will to be my will. Guide me.

And give me your heart. Give me your heart. For people.

Give me the will. To do your will. Scripture says he works in us.

To be able to do his will. We can't even do his will without him giving us the will to do his will. That's how helpless we are.

But there's an open door before us. That's the way I see it. I was crying out on the platform.

Give me your Holy Spirit. God Almighty touch my life again. Take me deeper.

Farther than I've ever gone before. Help me Jesus. To represent you.

Help me. God Almighty. I'm not content.

To dwell anywhere short of what you have. And I've seen that in so many of you this week. I've seen it and it's gladdened my heart to the core of my being.

To see so many coming in. And it's not always the people you most expect. It's amazing.

They're just young and old coming in. Some serving coffee. Others making sandwiches.

Who haven't got the strength to go out and clear out basements. And others heading out. And this is only the beginning folks.

This is only the first of many storms. This is a physical one. And the others are going to be spiritual and social and financial.

We have to. We have to. There's no options left now.

We have to be the church. For the sake of people in this country, we have to be the church. For the sake of the children dying in our streets, we have to be the church.

We have to stop playing these outer court games. And come through that door and say, Jesus, I give you all of my life. I give you my future, my family, my dreams, my plans.

I give it all to you. Take me. And to the grave.

Use my life for your glory. That's when you and I begin to move into the supernatural of God. Supernatural wisdom and strength and life and favor.

It's all here. It's all promised. Father, I thank you for enabling me to deliver your heart.

And I ask you that you give us the grace as a people, as a church in New York City. I ask for the grace for all of the churches in New York City. To go beyond outer court religion.

And to move into the very heart of God. Give us this heart. And I ask this in Jesus' name.

Now, if this is your desire, it's mine today. And I'm the first one at this altar today. It is the deepest desire of my heart.

To be used of God. To help people. If that's your desire, I'm going to ask you as we stand.

That you just get out and meet me here at this altar. We're going to pray together. And we're going to believe this to be the first day of a miraculous season for New York City.

Let's stand together in the balcony. Go to either exit in the sanctuary. Just slip out of where you are.

Make your way down, please, if you will. And we're going to pray together. If I may give you a physical example.

Before we worship again for a moment. There was a storm coming up the eastern coast. It was over the ocean.

On a trajectory. And look at that as a type of your life and mine. We're on a journey.

We have a plan. Something we think our life should be. But when it met another wind.

It met another storm. Another wind coming from another. It turned it inland.

And you and I are. We're all. We all have a plan.

And something we think our life should be. But when the wind of the Holy Spirit touches us. It turns us inland.

It turns us towards people. It turns us towards human need. And I remember the day that I had a divine encounter with God.

And the Holy Spirit came on me. He came at the time when I was desperate to make a difference for the kingdom of God. I had been a Christian for two years.

But I was saddened by my lack of passion for Christ and power with people. And I just prayed, God, I want to live for you. And I want to make a difference.

And he sovereignly met me in a way I hadn't anticipated he was going to. And I want to encourage you today to let the wind of the Holy Spirit touch you. And wherever you're headed.

Let the wind of God's Spirit move you to where you need to go. And the prayer has got to be change the course of my life. Change my plans.

Change my very. When the secondary storm encountered it, it made it bigger than it was. And when God comes and indwells us.

He makes us more than we are. And moves us in a different direction. That's got to be the cry of your life.

So we're going to sing again. I'd like to sing that song like the rushing of a mighty wind. And as we lift our hands to the Lord.

If you feel the urge coming upon you to speak in another language, do so. Just let the Holy Spirit come. Just let God fill you.

Let him empower you. You have an open door right now. And the scripture says if you ask for the Holy Spirit.

God will give you the Holy Spirit. And the word of God is true. And you can trust the word of God.

And so we're going to lift our hands in this sanctuary. And we're going to ask God to fill us with his Holy Spirit. Every one of us.

No matter where you're from. Put away all of the fear. And we can all agree on one thing.

We need the Holy Spirit to do the work of God. And let's lift our hands to the Lord. And if you can't speak in tongues as we're singing, do so.

And pray for the person beside you. Pray for the person in front of you. Pray for one another.

That God give us the empowerment of his spirit that we need to do this work. Let's do this together now. Lift your hands.

Let's sing this song. And if you can, just pray in the spirit. Let's pray right now.

Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, God. Hallelujah. Lord, we thank you.

That we can sing the triumph of our soul. That it is well. We can face any storm, oh God.

Because you are our God. Lord Jesus Christ, I thank you. That you will save us from ourselves.

You will save us from a casualness. Lord, I thank you that you will bring down the walls of partition, Lord. That where we build sometimes of fear or sometimes of laziness.

Sometimes, Lord, of indifference. Sometimes through just exhaustion. But, Lord, you understand.

You said you had a word of patience today. And you are patient with us. And it's patient to the destroying of strongholds.

So, Lord, we can say. Because you are a God of all comfort and a God of all power. That it is well with our soul.

Because the storms, Lord, only pertain to this world. But in heaven, it is glory. And in heaven, there is victory.

So, Lord, I pray, oh today, oh God. By the power of the Holy Spirit. That, Lord, you would have your way in our lives.

That, Lord, we would allow you, Lord. To have every area of our life be surrendered to you. I thank you, Lord.

It is only through you that this will come to pass. But we have an open door. And you are looking through it.

And you are saying, take that one step. And I'll travel the rest of the way. So, we take that one step today in faith.

And you will travel the rest of the way. And you will take us into the life you have planned for us. By the power of the Spirit.

By the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ. That our lives will be lived, Lord, for the glory of men. For the glory of God and the souls of men.

I thank you. It is possible to have this kind of life in you. I thank you that fear, Lord, will not lead us and grip us.

Our lives will not be molded by fear. But by the love of Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Spirit.

So, Lord, it is well with our soul. Only those in you can sing, it is well. For it truly is well.

That is the truth. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you.

You see and you hear the cry of our heart, Lord. And you've answered it. You've taken our lives.

And, Lord, I thank you. Lead on, Holy Spirit. Do what you want to do.

I thank you. You'll be with us to remind us. You will be our strength when we have none.

You will be our power, O God, to live in the supernatural. Lord, this is not, Lord, dependent on our zeal. But it is dependent on your love and strength in us.

By the power of the Spirit. So, we just thank you today. This is all possible.

All things are possible, O God. Thank you for letting us leave this place. It is well with us because you are Jesus.

Thank you. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Praise God. We're back again today at 3 o'clock. Pastor William will be speaking at 3 and again 6 o'clock this evening.

Don't forget, Room 201. Admissions department are set up there and ready to receive you. Stay online.

We'll keep you posted as to what's happening here at this church. If you're visiting today, God bless you. We love you and hope it's been a blessing to your heart.

Turn and encourage one another, will you now? Let the love of God begin in the house of God. Take time to make a friend. We'll see you this afternoon.

God bless you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/24/SID24602.mp3>

Video: https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/sU1EMp6_xPQ.mp4

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