

Run for Your Life

by Carter Conlon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of making a choice between following God or the gods of society, and warns against the dangers of living with a divided heart and being deceived by false prophets and wicked men.

Duration: 1:16:08

Scripture: Proverbs 5:3

Topics: "Spiritual Renewal", "False Teachings"

Description

This sermon is a passionate call to the church to run for their lives from false teachings, prosperity-driven messages, and immoral practices. The speaker urges believers to dig their own well of living water, to be filled with the true fire of God, and to separate themselves from ungodly influences. The message emphasizes the importance of seeking God's presence, obeying His word, and rejoicing in the first love relationship with Him.

Transcript

Chapter 18, the Holy Spirit has given me a message for this evening that's entitled Run for Your Life. This morning, Pastor David brought a prophetic word for the nation. This afternoon, my wife Teresa brought a prophetic word, I would have to call it such, for the individual honest, heart-seeking Christian.

Tonight, the Holy Spirit has given me a word for the Church of Jesus Christ. By that I mean the body at large, everyone who calls themselves by the name of Jesus Christ, who would have the testimony of saying, I am by virtue of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ on Calvary saved. Everyone who defines their Christianity that way, this message is for them.

Now, Father, I thank you for the anointing. I thank you for the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. I ask you, Holy Spirit, to animate me tonight.

I ask you, Holy Spirit, that what I would speak and how it would be spoken, that you would organize my thoughts and even the intonations of my voice would be the heart of God. I truly tonight ask you for the grace to disappear, that you may appear to back away, that your glory may be seen. I ask that the church you gather tonight not be aware of any human vessels here, but just be aware of your presence, Lord, just be mindful of your word and stand in awe of your mercy.

My God, let there be a spirit of repentance come unto your church. I ask this in Jesus' name. Now, 1 Kings chapter 18 was a time of great spiritual conflict.

Once again, the children of God, the heritage of God had strayed from truth. They had fallen far, far, far away from the victorious days of Joshua when God's heritage first went into the promised land and under Joshua and his leadership had conquered, albeit they hadn't conquered entirely through their own neglect, but nevertheless those still were victorious days. But now, terrible tragedy had happened to the children of God and it was because of their refusal to separate themselves from the gods of the society round about them.

You recall Moses speaking to the people and telling them, the gods that you don't drive out are going to be a snare to you. They're going to be thorns in your sides. They're going to rob you, in a sense, of the true heritage of God that he desired to give you because you refused to separate from them.

They're going to swallow you up and that's exactly where we are years down the road in 1 Kings chapter 18. The people of God were captivated by a false god called Baal. Now Baal was the god of personal increase and prosperity and his worship included immoral practices and sensuality.

In other words, the people were captivated by the desire for personal increase. That means anything that could build themselves, as it were, anything that could prop up self anything that could make them prosper and it included an allowance to be immoral and yet still have a sense that they were in the presence of God. It was a licentious religion, a very wicked, very immoral, very sensual.

The people walked only by their senses. If it rained and the crops were good, then by their natural senses they would say that God, Baal, is pleased with us. He's pleased to send us increase.

He's pleased to send us prosperity. Obviously the sensuality, because that was the very core of their so-called worship, led them into immorality and led them into horrid and immoral practices. In the midst of this immoral religious practice, God raised up a voice of truth because, beloved, in every generation and among every people, God Almighty has never left without a testimony.

Never. He will always have a testimony. There will always be a word.

May not be popular, may not be the majority, but His voice will still be heard. He is God. He did create the universe.

He does govern the world. He does hold every one of us tonight in the palm of His hand and He will speak to anyone who wants to hear. Verse 19 and 20, Elijah issued a challenge to a wicked king called Ahab, who was ruling in that time, and he said, Now therefore send and gather unto me all Israel unto Mount Carmel and the prophets of Baal, 450, and the prophets of the groves, 400, which eat at Jezebel's table.

Now these are prophets that have a connection, as it is, to power. That was their lust. That's where they ate.

That's where they lived. Jezebel, as it is, was the queen. She had access to all the wealth, perhaps, and the prosperity of the nation, and these men lusted for it.

That's the table. They didn't want the table of God. That's the table they wanted to eat at, and so that's where they ate.

And Ahab said unto all the children of Israel, verse 20, and gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel. Now Mount Carmel was very significant, because Mount Carmel was the place where Joshua had previously defeated one of the Canaanite kings. So technically, Elijah was trying to draw them back to a place of remembrance.

This is what the Holy Spirit will always do with the people of God. He will always woo. The Holy Spirit doesn't come to condemn the church of Jesus Christ, in spite of how apostate she may have become.

The Holy Spirit still comes and tries to draw back that which is alienated from the heart of God, that which is in league with immoral leaders, that which is also lusting for power and provision and all these other things that society has to offer. Elijah, verse 21, it says, Elijah came to all the people and said, how long will you halt between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him, but if Baal, then follow him. Now the Holy Spirit is speaking through Elijah.

There was an indecisiveness in the heart of the people. There was a mysterious, as it is, inner knowledge that this is really not God. It's fine, and our senses are being touched, and there's a sense of provision, but it's not God.

And that's why the indecision, that's why they could go, but they could not fully yield to Baal, because there's a deep inner knowledge. This is not the altar of God. How long will you halt, he said.

The word in Hebrew for halt means, listen very carefully, it says to hop, to skip over, to spare, or to dance as a lame man. Elijah's saying to the church of his time, how long will you continue to skip over the truth? How long will you continue to spare yourself any deep dealings and deep callings of God? How long will you continue to worship as a lame man when you could be whole? How long, Elijah? Why do you halt between two opinions? Why do you stop at this place of halfway to heaven and halfway to hell, and you cannot make up your mind where you're going to live, which side you're going to commit yourself to? And the scripture says, and the people answered him not a word, now that's an incredible thing. He is issuing them a challenge.

They know this is a man of God. They know. They would have a testimony.

If they left that place that particular day, the people would walk away. I'm not now talking about the prophets of Baal, I'm talking about the people that were gathered. They would walk away.

If somebody were to mention the name Elijah, without hesitation, they'd say, he is a man of God. Wherever he goes, the fire of God goes. Wherever he is, there's a sense of awe, there's a sense of God that goes with this man, that travels with him.

Oh yes, he is a man of God, yet when this man of God puts the question before them of who is it that you're going to serve? They don't answer. They can't answer. Strangely enough, that's the way it is even sometimes here.

Times Square Church, men of God will stand before you, clearly cutting between soul and spirit and joint and marrow and going right to the thoughts and intents of the heart, and yet people sit, no response. The question is always the same. God says, will you come back to me? Will you come to that place of remembrance? They answer not a word.

No response. Hoping perhaps the conviction will just go away. You see, the people knew in their hearts that Baal was not God.

That's why they could neither yield to him nor answer. And we ask ourselves the question, well why? Why this mysterious silence? Now firstly, some people genuinely felt that they had been touched there at this altar. And false religion does offer a comfort, folks, I want you to know that.

It does. False religion can make you dance. False religion can make you happy.

False religion can give you a sense that you're prospering. Oh yes, false religion can make you happy. It can give you a sense of satisfaction.

People do it all over the world and some places they're having a lot of fun doing it. And they felt perhaps they've been genuinely touched there and in their hearts saying, well do I really, I know it's not God. But I've been touched there.

And so should I leave this? Elijah, to go with you, I mean, Elijah, all these prophets can't be wrong. 850, they can't be wrong. Elijah, you're only one man, you're only one voice.

They can't all be wrong. And I've been touched there. I've heard that so many times.

I've tried to counsel people over the years that have been involved in ludicrous foolishness in the name of Jesus Christ. And their answer is always the same. You try to open the Bible, you try to show them some things, and they push away the word of God and say, but you don't understand, I've been touched there.

I've been touched there. You see, but folks, they inwardly do something. The hesitation always says something.

I always know when a man is in adultery or fornication because when I meet him with the woman he's with and say, is this your wife, he hesitates before he answers me. It's true. He wishes that she were his wife.

He has found what he thinks his needs met there, but she's not his wife and he knows it. And so when you ask him, he hesitates. And then he says, well, yes.

And his very answer gives away his heart. Jeremiah chapter 5. Keep a marker in 1 Kings 18 so you don't have to look for it again. Jeremiah chapter 5. Prophet of his day, Jeremiah cried out to God with a deep burden in his heart.

Verse 23. Jeremiah was a man who thundered from heaven and brought a word. Folks, how many times does history have to repeat itself before the church will begin to cry out and say, God, please don't let history repeat itself in my life.

Don't let me be another in the long lineage of apostates that have held to bail and wouldn't let go. Jeremiah says, this people has a revolting and a rebellious heart. They are revolted and gone.

Now the word gone in Hebrew means they've already left in their heart. They're gone. They're standing, they're listening to Jeremiah.

But the Lord is speaking to Jeremiah and he's saying to Jeremiah, they're already gone. You may be looking at them, you may be preaching to them, but they're gone. And folks, that's a tragedy because it

repeats itself throughout history.

And there are people who call themselves by the name of Christ today, but they're gone. They're gone. They're long ago in their heart have left him.

They don't know him. They know little or nothing about him anymore. They do know that what they're in is not God.

But in their heart, they have left the one that they do know is real. And neither, he says in verse 24, say they in their heart, let us now fear the Lord our God. There's no desire for the fear of the Lord.

That's old fashioned. That's old school. That's long ago Pentecost in America.

We're of a new generation now. There's a new thing happening in our midst. We have a new God now.

They're already gone and neither say they in their heart, let us now fear the Lord our God. We don't want the fear of the Lord. We don't want, talk about the fear of the Lord.

We want to be able to come to our altar. We want to be able to have sensual worship, practice immorality. We don't want any fear of God in our lives.

Let us now fear the Lord our God. They don't say this. That giveth rain both the former and the latter in the season.

He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest. Verse 25, he says your iniquities have turned away these things. In other words, you would not lay down.

There was a deep dividedness in your heart and you wouldn't lay it down. And because you wouldn't lay it down, it took away your desire. I hope tonight, if anything, you'd see how dangerous it is to live with a divided heart.

A divided heart, especially if you're aware of it, will take your desire for God away from you. It'll take it away. It's like a barrel full of oil and there's a hole.

Somebody drills a hole in the bottom. It takes a while, but it will go. Your desire will go.

Your discernment will go. And your sins are withholding good things from you. For among my people, now here it is, verse 26.

We're starting to get to the key. Among my people are found wicked men. They lay wait, as he that set snares.

And they set a trap and they catch men. I can hear the thundering cry of Jeremiah. Saying, oh, that the church of his day would wake up and see that they were warned.

They were being warned by the word of God. That there are wicked men that lay wait like somebody snaring a rabbit. Hiding in the bushes and setting a snare for the unwary.

Setting a snare for those who are not yielded to God. Who are still living by unbridled lust in the very depths of their soul. They're not yielded to God.

They're halting between two opinions. And here are these men setting their snares and setting their traps for the unwary. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit.

Therefore, they have become great and are waxen rich. That is always, always a warning sign. Those that are always focused on money.

Always talking about money. Always coming up with new gimmicks to get money. This is exactly what Jeremiah is talking about.

They're dirty birds in a dirty house. And they've become great only in the sight of men. Not in the sight of God.

And they've become rich by deceiving the people. They're waxen fat, verse 28. They shine.

They shine. You can tell them by their shiny, glossy advertisements. They shine.

Folks, this is not funny. This is not funny. You read some of today's Christian magazines, especially the charismatic ones.

And it's like reading Jeremiah in this chapter. You look at them and you see exactly what Jeremiah is talking about. Fat, rich, shining, false prophets.

And they are permeating the church of Jesus Christ today. Filling the house of God with their filth. Yet they overpass.

Here's what they do. They overpass the deeds of the wicked. They judge not the cause.

The cause of the fatherless and yet they prosper. And the right of the needy do they not judge. That verse really means this.

They care nothing about the plea of those who are in genuine spiritual need. They care nothing about anybody but themselves. Now verse 29.

Here's the Lord speaking now to Jeremiah. Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land. The prophets prophesy falsely.

And the priests bear rule by their means. By their means means by their natural strength. They are preaching a gospel of natural strength.

They know nothing about the covenant keeping power of God. They know nothing about the surrendered crucified life or the exchange life as it's been called in the past. They know nothing about the Holy Spirit coming and enabling a man or woman to live for God.

Because that's not the focus of their message. They bear rule. In other words they lead the people with a gospel of natural strength.

And Jeremiah says, and my people love it to have it so. And the people love it. I've been dumbfounded in the last several years to see the absolute ludicrous foolishness that has permeated the church of Jesus Christ in North America.

And watching the people and they love it. They're being led down a garden path to hell and they love it. And what will you do in the end thereof? The word end in Hebrew means in the last days.

What will you do? What will you do? In other words you've been led in a gospel of natural strength. What will you do? When all hell breaks out in the face of the earth. What will you do? What will you do in the last days? Go back to 1st King please again.

Now listen to me. I'm not mad at anybody here tonight so. I don't want anybody thinking that.

I have a burning in my heart. There's been a burden that God has placed on me for years now. I'm pleading for the church.

I'm not condemning anybody. I plead for every, even for every leader. If they can turn, if they can still hear, I plead for them.

Not here to condemn anybody. Not here to call down fire on God's house. I'm talking about judgment fire.

I'm here to plead. Now we go back to 1st Kings chapter 18. Then verse 22.

Then Elijah said to the people, I, even I only, remain a prophet of the Lord. Now we know that wasn't completely correct. There were 7,000 others that hadn't bowed their knee to success and prosperity.

But Baal's prophets are 450 men. Verse 23. Let them therefore give us two bullocks.

That's two sacrifices. And let them cut the one bullock for themselves. Choose one.

In other words, choose your sacrifice. Cut it in pieces and lay it on wood and put no fire under. I will dress the other bullock and lay it on wood and put no fire under.

And call ye on the name of your gods. And I will call on the name of the Lord. And the God that answers by fire, let him be God.

Now, I want you to mark that in your spirit. Because we're going to talk about that fire. That fire's not what you might think it is.

The God that answers by fire. Fire's not a feeling. Fire's not a presence.

Fire's not a tingling. Fire's not some sensory experience. There is something else that Elijah here is talking about.

Mark it in your mind because we'll be back to it later. And the people answered and said, it is well spoken. That's a good idea.

Okay, we'll lay out our sacrifices and the God that answers by fire is God. And Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, You choose one bullock for yourselves and dress it first for your many. In other words, you choose your sacrifice and you prepare yours first.

And call on the name of your gods but put no fire under. In other words, yours is a quicker work than mine, Elijah was saying. Yours takes no time at all.

Yours starts with a survey on the block. What do people want to come to God's house? Then you purchase a building and then you arrange for some corporate financing. Because the corporate world is not offended by your gospel.

They will buy into it readily. The unsafe will buy into it because they can feel very comfortable there. And they can still prosper and live immoral lives and never be challenged by the word of God.

It's a quick work. You see folks, that which is not of God always has no durable foundation. Not only in the church but in the individual Christian life.

You don't live the Christian life. We don't grow as a Christian by running from one tape to another. One sensory experience to another.

There is a building that goes on. There is a cornerstone we must fall on. And Jesus said we must be broken on that cornerstone.

The brokenness means we must be fashioned and made into the image of that stone. If we are not exactly as the stone is, then the wall as it goes up will be crooked. It will start off one degree.

By the time it gets to the top it will fall over. And that's why many of these so-called churches of Jesus Christ rise up so fast and seem to go so high, so far. And you look down the road 15-20 years and you just have a trail of disillusioned people.

And an empty building full of unclean birds. Now here the prophets of Baal begin to attempt to call down the presence of God. Verse 26 says, They took the bullet which was given them.

They dressed it. They got it prepared. They called on the name of Baal from morning till noon.

Saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice. Nor any that answered.

And they leaped upon the altar which was made. That's very significant. They had made an altar and every man took his turn as it were.

And leapt on the altar. Perhaps a display for the other prophets of Baal. Look how holy I am.

God's going to answer me. Look at my dedication to God. I'm on the altar.

Look at me, folks. Look at me. You see, that's the very heart of men who don't know God.

Look at me. They leapt on the altar. That means they rose above the crowd as it is.

And for a moment they shone. Then either jumped off or got knocked off. And the next person took his turn.

Leaping on the altar. Calling out to a God that doesn't exist. And it came to pass at noon that Elijah mocked them and said, Cry aloud.

For he is a God. Either he's talking or he's pursuing or he's in a journey. Or perhaps he sleeps and must be awakened.

And they cried aloud and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets. Till the blood gushed out on them. Oh, they were so sincere.

I remember speaking to one couple and trying to caution them about what they were involved in. Trying to caution them about the gospel they were beginning to associate with. And they said, Oh, but Pastor, you don't understand.

The leaders are so sincere. They're so sincere. They really believe in what they're doing.

Oh, folks, it's not enough to be moved by sincerity. There's got to be truth behind it. There has to be truth behind it.

I don't even care if a man looks insincere as long as he's preaching the truth. And it's touching my heart and convicting my life. Superficial cutting.

Crying aloud. Little cuts in the flesh. Oh, another dealing of God.

Oh, look at this. Look at this. Look at what God's done here.

Oh, look at that. You see, the Bible says the word of God is quick and powerful. And it doesn't produce superficial little cuts in our body.

The word of God goes right in soul, spirit, bone, marrow, right to the heart. Right to the thoughts and intents of the heart. The word of God is not a little superficial cut.

The word of God is a two-edged sword, and it's very sharp. And it cuts very deep. And those who really love God and know God, the word of God comes and, as a surgeon does, just takes the cancerous nature out of us, the old nature, and replaces it with the nature of God.

That just doesn't happen because we come to an altar. It happens because we agree with what God says. And we trust Him for the power to change.

Verse 29. And it came to pass, when midday was past, that they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded. In other words, they worked themselves into a position of exhaustion.

Not enough to leap on the altar, but now they begin to prophesy. Now, the word prophesied in the Hebrew is nava, and here's what it can mean. It can mean to speak or sing as a prophet by divine power.

So it has a positive, as it is, application. But it can also mean, and it does in this case mean, to rave, to play the madman, to act insane through agitated, spasmodic movements, which are often applied to false prophets. Now, that's right out of Zodiaki's Hebrew-Greek dictionary.

In other words, they were acting abnormally, and they were shaking, through spasmodic bodily movements, which are always applied to false prophets. I'm going to prove it to you. Go back in your Bible, keep your 1 Kings, a marker, go back to 1 Samuel.

And you're going to see something here. Chapter 18. I'll show you what happens to a man who knew God, and walks away from Him, and still is leading the people.

The Bible tells us clearly that Saul was anointed of God, he was called to lead, tells us the Spirit of God came upon him, he prophesied, there was a time in his life when he really did prophesy. The Spirit of God came upon him, he began to lead the people, the Bible says he was turned into another man by the Spirit of God. He had every chance that you and I have today.

But there was a stubbornness in his heart, he was unwilling to yield his life to the Word of God. That's why Samuel wept for him for, I believe, quite a long time after God rejected him, until finally the Lord said, stop weeping for him, I've chosen another man after my own heart. First Samuel chapter 18 verse 10, I want you to picture this Saul now, called to lead, anointed, touched with the Holy Ghost.

He's now sitting as king, he's a leader. Chapter 18 verse 10 it says, It came to pass on the moral that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul. Now I'm not going to get into the theology of did God send an evil spirit, but I'm going to tell you something, God allowed an evil spirit to come upon his life.

On the moral, the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he, what, prophesied in the midst of the house. Now here's Saul prophesying, it's an evil spirit that is upon him now. The word prophesied is nevi, same word.

It means to rave, to play the madman, to act insane, through agitated spasmodic movements applied to false prophets. An evil spirit came upon him and he prophesied in the midst of the house. And David played with his hand.

Now here's Saul prophesying, here's David just worshiping God. And there was a javelin in Saul's hand. Folks, this is really significant, I'll tell you why it's significant.

David was worshiping God. Saul is prophesying. Now the whole thing looks holy.

If you were to walk in, you'd say, oh, look here's one man prophesying, and it doesn't mean what he's saying is necessarily wrong. Here's one man prophesying, now normally it's gibberish, it makes no sense, it doesn't follow the Bible. If you follow it long enough, it deviates.

It may start in truth, but then it takes a strange twist. It eventually leads the people to follow it right outside of the written word of God. So here's David worshiping, here's Saul prophesying, but there's something in this that the understanding eye doesn't see.

The man prophesying is full of rebellion, he's full of envy, he's full of self-ambition and hates, and he hates the true anointing and worship of God. Now, there's a javelin in his hand, and the javelin is there because he could never surrender. There was a recent movement in America and Canada and throughout the Western world where the leaders were saying, purporting itself to be revival.

It was characterized by much prophesying, but with the prophesying came condemning threats against anyone who'd put it to the scrutiny of Scripture. You're going to die. Anybody that resists this, you're going to die.

God's going to kill you. Does it sound familiar? There was a javelin in his hand, prophesying, looking so holy, but looking to kill the anointed of God, the true that exposes the false. Now, let's go back to 1 Kings 18 again, please, if we will.

Verse 30, And Elijah said to the people, Come near to me. And all the people came near to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the son of Jacob.

Now, listen, this is significant because at this time, Israel was split into two kingdoms. And God says, if it's my altar, there's no division. There's no division between black and white and brown and red and yellow.

There's no division if it's my altar. If it's the altar of God, if it's the place where I'm going to send my fire, my presence, there is no division at this altar. The fact that he took twelve stones was a virtual slap in the face for those who were constantly saying, we are the righteous side.

They are the unrighteous. We wronged them. They wronged us.

We have a history. It goes back a long way. We're all here, but we're divided.

He took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name. And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he made a trench about the altar as great as would contain two measures of seed. I did some research on that, and I found out the trench was about three feet wide.

Actually, one translation actually puts it as he made a trench three feet wide. Three feet wide all around the altar. That's 36 inches.

That's quite a trench. All the way, he dug a trench. This took a long time.

He was in no rush. That's why he told the other prophets, you go ahead, you do your quick sacrifice. Do your quick thing.

What I'm going to build is going to take a while. It would have taken a while to dig a three foot trench all around this altar and to rebuild it with the proper number of stones. And he put the wood in order.

You see, beloved, at the focus, at the center of all Christianity, there's some wood that has to be dealt with. It's some wood that God himself planted on a mountain called Calvary 2,000 years ago, and on that wood he laid his sacrifice. And it really depends on how we look at that sacrifice as to whether or not we will ever grow as a Christian if we comprehend what was done there and begin by faith to lay hold of the complete, absolute victory that was won for us on Calvary and trust the Holy Spirit to begin to make it a reality in our lives.

He put the wood in order and cut the bullock in pieces. The Apostle Paul tells us clearly that we are to present our lives as a living sacrifice. Once we get back to the cross again, once we yield our lives to the purposes of God, we can say like Paul, I am crucified with Christ.

That means my will, my plans, my ambitions, but nevertheless, I live. And yet not I, but Christ lives in me. Paul goes on to say, I live this life by faith in what Christ did for me.

That's the source of my life. I've come to Christ. I've taken Paul, or God has taken Paul and put him on the cross, and Paul is dead.

But I live because I have faith in what was purchased for me on Calvary and I trust God to give me the life that he has promised me. Hallelujah. Thanks be to God.

He put the wood in order and cut the bullock in pieces and laid him on the wood. And folks, there's a time. We have got to lay our lives down for the purposes of God.

This is not a Sunday school picnic, the church of Jesus Christ. This is not an invitation to have continuous good times. This is a war for the souls of men.

And he said, fill four barrels with water and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood. The truly yielded life to God. The truly yielded man lays down his life as it is for the purposes of God and says, cut me in pieces if you have to.

Cut me. Not just little superficial scratches and a little bit of oozing blood to somehow give somebody around me a sense that I'm holy, but cut me. God, cut me deep.

Go to the core of who I am without you and get it out of my life. Pour water on it. And then when you've done it, do it again.

And when you've done it, do it again. That's what Elijah said. Do it again the second time.

And they did it the second time. Then he said, do it the third time. And they did it the third time.

That is the continuous cry of a genuine Christian. Do it again. God, every time you show me something and I get free, there's just a new sense of life and intelligence comes into me.

God, do it again. Do it again. Cut me deep and wash that filth out of me with the water of your word.

Wash it out of my life. Cleanse me. Cleanse me and change me.

And the water ran down about the altar and filled the trench also with water. In other words, the sacrifice was soaked in the word of God. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. I thank God that when I was a young Christian, I opened this book. Oh, I thank God I love this book.

Thank God I read this book even when I didn't understand. I read it and read it and read it, trusting the Holy Spirit to open it to me. I thank God that he soaked my life at a young age in his word.

When the false came, I knew what was false and I knew what was real because I had been soaked in this book. I knew the difference. And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that's the end of the day as it is, that Elijah the prophet came near.

Now, he came as near as he could come. You see, there was a three-foot trench of water round about the altar that was full. He had dug it there on purpose because no man can share the glory of God.

The prophet of Baal leapt on the altar for public exposure, public acclaim, God's man of the hour, anointed servants of the Lord. But Elijah backed away, technically, and came as near as he could to the altar. But the nearness was not to the altar.

He was not looking for public exposure. His nearness was to God. It is a totally different context.

Elijah drew near to God, backed away from the altar. If he had been at the altar when the fire came, it would have consumed him. He backed away or walked as close as he could.

Folks, there is a litmus test of a man of God. A genuine man or woman of God will back away, will distance themselves from the glory of God, will not touch the glory of God, will not allow people to praise them, will not look for man's praise, but look for praise that comes from God alone up in heaven, will not compromise the gospel of Jesus Christ, will not preach to tickle the ears of man, but will preach to those who want to know the truth and want their lives changed by the glory of God. Elijah came near and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned back their heart again. This is the cry of a genuine man of God. I'm only here, Elijah's saying, for these reasons.

God, hear me. God, hear me. Hear my prayer.

Accept my sacrifice. Accept my life. Accept my works.

Accept the effort that I put in to what you called me to do. Accept it, O God, that the people may know that you are God, and that their hearts can be turned back to you again. There is no other reason that a genuine man of God lives.

He lives to turn the people back to God. He lives to bring down the true presence of God into the church, and to see that which is false turned out, not for the sake of proving a point, but for the sake of the beloved church that Jesus died for and bought with his own blood and loves with all of his heart. And the fire of the Lord fell, verse 38, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.

The fire of God fell. The writer of Hebrews says, Our God is a consuming fire. You see, if you really have been in the presence of God, there is a consuming work that is going on inside your life.

What is old is being consumed by the presence of God. It is passing away. Behold, all things are becoming new.

Image to image, you're being changed as you behold Him, even through a glass. Even if you don't see Him, you're still being changed because you're beholding. You're looking in the right direction, and you're being changed from image to image and glory to glory, even as by the glory of the Lord, by the Spirit of the Lord, you're being changed.

The fire of God came and consumed the burnt sacrifice, consumed the life as it is that was laid down and said, Cut me, wash me. And the fire of God came. Hallelujah.

I can stand here today before heaven and say, The fire of God. Don't anybody clap. And I hope you can say it too tonight.

To be able to stand before God and say, I asked God to come. I asked Him to do work in my life. I asked Him to change me.

I asked Him to use me. And the fire of God came. And He has consumed things out of my life and continues to consume that which offends His nature and the working of His kingdom.

And the wood and the stones and the dust. Now, I want to tell you something. Why the dust? The word in Hebrew for dust is F-R, A-P-H-A-R.

Listen to what it means. It means dry earth. In other words, the fire of God came and consumed or will consume our powerlessness or our lack of God's presence.

The dry earth. Don't forget what we were created from, folks. We were created from the dust to the ground.

And the fire of God came and consumed the dry earth. Consumes. When the fire of God comes into your life, He consumes.

The Holy Ghost consumes your powerlessness. Consumes your sense that God is not in your life. And you begin to be aware that you have the power of Almighty God now resident within you.

And He consumes the dryness, the powerlessness of the human vessel without God. It also means fine dust blown by the wind. God, when He comes in true fire, will consume that part of us which has a tendency to be blown about by the wind.

The apostle Paul tells us that he has said in the church, that God has said in the church in Ephesians. Let me read it to you. Ephesians 4, 11 to 14.

He gave some apostles. These are God's anointed. Some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers.

Now these are God's men. Here are women. Here is the sign of God's men.

For the perfecting of the saints. For the work of the ministry. In other words, to bring everyone into a position where they're yielded to God and they've found God's will and purpose for their life.

For the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith and to the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man. Unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Now this is the ministry that God sets up in the church. The true ministry is to not bring you to themselves. Not to pick your pocket.

Not to offer you some vain hope. But that you be filled with Christ. And the fruit of that, verse 14, it says that we be henceforth no more children.

Tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine and by the slight, or that means, slight is like a magician. By the slight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. The fire of God came and consumed the afar, which means dry earth.

It means fine dust. That part of our nature which has a tendency to be blown around by the wind. But I tell you, once you've known the real, you know every phony thing that's coming in the wind.

It also means the grave. The fire of God consumes the grave. It consumes the curse of death.

It consumes the inability to change or to rise from the dead. The fire of God consumes the grave. The fire, it also means the world.

Isn't that amazing? The fire of God consumes the world in us. It takes our association with the world out of our hearts. When we make the decision to make the break, God says, I'll send the fire.

I'll send the fire. I will consume what is not of me that's in your heart. And lastly, afar means gold dust.

And by definition, it means that which appears to be God and is not. Isn't that incredible? We've got entire movements today that are running around saying there's gold dust in the air. See, that's the evidence there's no fire.

The fire of God consumes that which appears to be God but is not. Beloved, several years ago, listen to me like you've never listened to me ever in your life. Several years ago, a particular gospel landed on the southern shores of the United States.

You might say that the American church was invaded. Gospel of laughter, of jokes, gospel of foolishness. I remember seeing this just a few weeks perhaps after this all began.

I looked at it and I said to my wife, well, at least it takes absolutely no discernment to see what this lunacy is. And then much to my shock, it swept almost the whole western world. Great corners of the charismatic Pentecostal movement.

I remember crying out to God, God, how could it be? How could it be? How could this thing happen to your church? You see, folks, we've forgotten something. Here we are in New York and the Twin Towers have come down and the Pentagon has been attacked. And rightfully we can say the walls are down.

And the justice of God is touching a nation that has rejected truth. But we forget the judgment begins in the house of God. The arrival of this gospel was the judgment of God on a slumbering church.

A church that wanted prosperity and security. They wanted no cross, no word, no repentance, no cutting of the sword, no living water. They wanted to feel good.

And so God, you'll see in the Old Testament, poured a spirit of drunkenness on what called itself the church of Jesus Christ. It was the judgment of God. It began in the church, and I remember saying to other people, it will not be long and the judgment will be touching the shores of North America.

Because it's begun in the house of God. I knew it when this started. The judgment was at the door.

I speak from a heart of passion. I condemn no one. I speak from a heart of passion.

Like Elijah did. He said, mighty God, you've got to come again. That your people are captured.

Your people have been taken captive by Baal. Verse 39 says, when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and they said, the Lord, He is the God. The Lord, He is the God.

In verse 40, Elijah said to them, take the prophets of Baal and let not one of them escape. And they took them and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slew them there. And I want to explain to you the significance of that.

We're obviously not called to physically harm anybody in our generation. If anybody ever makes that suggestion, that is not the church of Jesus Christ. That's not the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It has nothing to do with the kingdom of God. But the word escape in the Hebrew means smooth. That's what it means.

In other words, he said, let them not slip here. They've been exposed. You now know what they are.

You've seen the presence of God. Don't let them slip away. Don't let them keep deceiving you with their smoothness anymore.

Get away from their altars. Take them to the brook as it is and put an end to their influence over your life. Beloved church of Jesus Christ.

I know tonight I'm speaking not just at Times Square Church, but there'll be churches all over North America. In particular, United States and Canada. They're going to hear this message.

Beloved church. Get away from their altars. Run for your life.

Apostle Paul. Let me read it to you. Don't turn.

2 Corinthians 6. He says, what agreement. Verse 16 is the temple of God with idols. You are the temple of the living God.

As God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them. And I will be their God. And they shall be my people.

Verse 17. He says, wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord. And touch not the unclean thing.

And I will receive you and will be a father to you. And you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. Touch not the unclean thing.

This is not talking about homosexuality and pornography. These are unclean altars. This is a table of devils.

And the Holy Ghost says to Paul, touch not the unclean thing. Come out from among them. Run for your life.

Because this is about your life. It's not just about an opposing theology or conflicting viewpoint on Jesus. This is about your life.

My mind is forever branded. With the story that I heard of police officers from the city of New York. As people were fleeing from a crumbling building.

There were police officers and firemen and others that were running towards the building. Saying, run for your life. At their own peril.

And in some cases I believe they knew they were going to die. But there was a sense of duty. I was crying out to God.

I said, God. Oh Jesus. Don't let my sense of duty be less for your kingdom.

Than these beloved firemen and policemen were for those that are perishing in a falling tower. We're living in a generation when truth is falling into the streets. I want to be among those that are not running away from the conflict.

But running into the conflict. And say, run for your life. Run.

From gospels that focus only on success and prosperity. Run. Run.

Run. From those who use the name of Christ only for personal gain. Run from those that are picking your pocket in the name of Jesus.

Run. Run from gospels that only focus on self-improvement. Three steps to a better personality.

Three steps to this and four. Run. Run from churches where men and not Christ are glorified.

Run. Run. Body of Christ.

Run. Get out. Don't touch the unclean thing.

Run from churches in America and Canada where there is no Bible. There's no cross in the theology. There's no soul-searching word.

There's no repentance from sin. There's no mention of the blood of Jesus. Run.

It's unclean. Run. Run.

Run from churches where the worship leaves you cold. There is no sense of God because they don't know God. Run.

Run from churches where you're comfortable in your sins. That's a table of devils. If you come into the house of God and you've got sin in your life and you're not convicted of it, you're at a table of devils.

Run from pulpits that are filled with political men. Who are using the pulpit of God for a personal political agenda. Run.

Run from those who preach division between races and cultures. Run. Run.

Get out. Turn it off. Get away from it.

They know nothing of God. Run. Run from ungodly spasmodic movements and endless empty prophesying.

Beloved church, run for your life. Run from preachers that stand and tell stories and jokes. Run like you've never run before.

Run for those that are only after your money. And they use one gimmick after another. One foolish thing after another to get your money.

Run. Turn with me now to Proverbs 7. I'm going to be closing in just a moment. Proverbs 7, verse 6. For at the window of my house, I look through my casement.

And I beheld among the simple ones. I discerned among the youths a young man void of understanding. Passing through the street near her corner.

And he went the way to her house. Now this has a physical application, these passages of scripture. But there's a deeper spiritual meaning in this.

I've always believed the woman spoken about in Proverbs 5 and 7 is false religion. In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night. And behold, there met him a woman with an attire of a harlot.

The word for harlot in the Hebrew means adultery or apostasy. There met him a woman who was clothed as an apostate as it is. And subtle of heart, that means intelligent.

Presenting an intelligent argument to a very simple young man who had little knowledge of God. She is loud and stubborn. Now the word stubborn in Hebrew means morally apostate.

Restless, has a lack of stability. This is right from Zodiacy. Is as an untamed cow which will not carry its master's yoke.

She is loud, she's morally apostate, she's restless, she lacks stability. She is an untamed cow. She will not be yoked by her master.

And her feet abide not in her house. Now she is without, now in the streets, now lies in wait at every corner. So she caught him and kissed him.

And with an impudent face she said to him, I have peace offerings with me this day. Have I paid my vows? This day I've paid my vows. In other words, I'm spiritual.

I'm a spiritual person. I have peace offerings and I've paid my vows. Therefore, came I forth to meet thee.

Diligently to seek thy face and I have found thee. Oh, the person says, oh, I have revelation that nobody else has. Oh, wait a minute, wait a minute, what's that Lord? Speak to me now, oh God.

Oh, what are you saying? Oh, oh, oh. Don't laugh, because that's on television right now. It's an altar of devils.

I came to seek you, to diligently seek your face and I've found you. Listen, I've decked my bed with coverings of tapestry and carved works and fine linens of Egypt. In other words, there's wonderful things here, there's provision here that you won't find anywhere else.

I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, which was the burial spice of Jesus incidentally. And aloes and cinnamon. In other words, I've come as close as I can to being like Christ.

It smells good in there. There's a sense of worship. Come, she says, let us take our fill of love until the morning.

Let us soulless ourselves with love. For the good man, here's how you know it's a spirit. The good man is not at home, he's gone on a long journey.

He's taken a bag of money with him. In other words, he's not coming back soon, don't worry about him. And he will come home at the day appointed.

And with her much fair speech, she caused him to yield. With the flattering of her lips, she forced him. He goes after her straightway.

As an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks. Verse 23, till a dart strikes through his liver. And as a bird hastes to the snare, and knows not that it is for his life.

She's after his life. And the word life in Hebrew means breath, soul, spirit, and mind. She's after the breath of God.

She's after that which God wants to do in his life. Proverbs chapter 5, we'll close with this. I hope today that raising my voice has not offended you.

I have no alternative. There's a sense of God's heart in me for his church. I've asked him to animate me today.

I was prepared to stand here and just speak to you as I am now. Whatever it takes to keep people's ears open, or perhaps to open them in this church age for the very first time. Proverbs 5.3 says, for the lips of a strange woman.

Now the word for woman is interesting because in the Hebrew, Proverbs 5.3, the word woman means deviating. It means crooked. It means straying from the path of truth as it is.

For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil. Look, I've listened to some of these preachers, and I'll tell you, they're exactly this. Smooth as oil and promising sweetness, but they are devils.

They're absolute devils. They know nothing about God. But her hand is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.

Her feet go down to death, and her steps take hold on hell. Verse 6 says, lest thou should ponder the path of life, which is God's way. In other words, her ways are movable that you cannot know them.

Like a serpent. You begin to think you're focusing on something that, this doesn't sound right, and then she moves this way. And goes over here, and then you say, well, that doesn't sound right, and then she moves over here.

And she keeps moving. And the word no means you can't know it by your natural senses. You cannot discern it by your natural mind.

It all sounds good, and when you think you're getting close to something that bothers you, she moves. Her ways are movable. Hear me now, therefore, verse 7, Proverbs 5. O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.

This is God now speaking. Remove thy way far from her. Come not nigh the door of her house, lest thou give thine honor unto others, and thy years unto the cruel.

Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labors be in the house of a stranger. And thou mourn at the last. And the word at the last, basically, is in the last days.

Thou mourn at the end, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed. Overpowered by lust. Sensuality.

False understanding of God. Consumed, but not by the fire of God. And then you say, verse 12.

At the end, you say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof. And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined my ear to them that instructed me. I was almost in all evil, in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

You get to the end. Can you imagine? Perhaps for some, that's before the throne of God. And you say, how I hated instruction.

What a fool I have been. How I despised a reproving word from God, that was only sent to give me life. Eternally and abundantly.

How I've not obeyed. Even when I did hear, I didn't want to obey it. We heard about that wonderfully today.

Nor inclined my ear to them. I didn't lean forward to those that were instructing me, who spoke from God. I thought I was serving God, but I was almost in all evil, in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

In the last three verses, four verses, 15 to 18. This is a word now for you today. Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

God says, listen, look up for a minute. If you will come to me, if you will come to me in truth, if you will believe on me. Out of your belly are going to flow rivers of living water.

I will teach you how to dig your own well. I will open your eyes, I will show you this book, I will lead you into truth, I will guide you with mine eye. He says in the scriptures.

Drink waters out of that which I'm going to give you, and running waters out of your own well. Thanks be to God. The whole church in the world can backslide.

But those that are genuine have a well that has been dug. They're not going to be moved by whatever anybody says. I know what God says, I know who God is.

He has given me living water, and I'm not satisfied with the rantings and ravings of fools. I have living water. And there's some people listening to my voice by taping the future.

You've got to get out of where you are. You've got to dig a well in your own house. Find some friends that are willing to walk with God.

Start talking to them about the things of Jesus. Get together and begin to pray, and God will meet you and give you living water. Verse 16.

He says, it's not just for you, but let thy fountains be dispersed abroad. And rivers of water in the streets. God says, I'm not just going to give you to drink.

I'm going to give you so much, it's going to overflow you. And it's going to be dispersed everywhere you go, and it's going to flow in the streets. Everywhere you are, you're going to know me.

From the least to the greatest, you're going to know me. You're going to know who I am. You're going to know me in power.

You're going to know the true fire of God. You're going to know it. And your waters will be dispersed in the streets.

I think of my own life. I think of a young man that was so timid, I couldn't stand up to speak. I think of a young man that suffered terribly with panic attacks when I was young.

I think of God using my life for his glory. I think of God being so faithful, and all I did was start by getting in the book. And praying and seeking his face for myself.

Not that I'm anything at all. But I'm not unique. I am only a type of the church of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Dave is only a type. I know many great men of God. And there's one thing in common with all the men of God that I've known that are wonderful.

Greatly is the men of God. They dug their own well. They got their own water by God's grace.

They were given water. A spring of water came in. They were not trying to spare the rod in their own lives.

They said, God cut me, cut me deep. And then washed me with your word. And then they laid their life down on the altar and said, use me for your glory.

And yes, there's been great personal cost in many of their lives. You know, to leave the altar of Baal, it does cost you. The whole thinking of society in that day was contrary to Elijah.

Even the king wanted to kill him. Verse 17 says, let the moon be only thine own and not strangers with thee. The Lord says, the water that I give you, let it be the water I gave you.

Let it not be strangers. Let the people who are outside of my heart, let them not be feeding you water. Let thy fountain be blessed and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

Rejoice with your first relationship. Rejoice with me, God says. Let me fill you again.

Let me touch you again. Let me build your life again. Let me consume what's unlike me again.

Let me touch you again and rejoice with that first love. I loved you before you loved me. The Lord says, come back and rejoice with that love.

I pray for your church. Almighty God, deliver your bride. Oh God, don't let the heathen rule over your house.

Deliver your church. Oh God, deliver your ministry. Deliver those who have genuinely been called of you.

God, deliver them. Oh God, in this last hour of time, help us to get back. I've poured out my heart.

There's nothing more I can do, Lord. Oh God, you have to go after this apostate church. This generation, Lord.

You've got to go after them, Lord. You've got to set your people free. All I can do is warn, but they've got to run.

They've got to run. Your word says, draw me and I will run after you. Holy Spirit, I ask you now to draw.

Draw like you've never done before. Draw people who are listening to this message. Lord, draw them.

Even if they don't agree, draw them. Let them be a witness of the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, you've got to go.

Go into homes around America now. Go into homes in Canada. As the sound of my voice, Lord, just travels into these corridors and homes and lives.

Draw, Holy Spirit, draw. I pray, God, that you draw. I pray you turn from sin, Lord.

Turn, God, from the wrong altars of our generation, Lord. Turn your people back again. Have them say, the Lord is God.

The Lord is God. Lord, I ask that your fire, your true fire, your holy fire, Lord, would come and touch hearts. Come and touch lives, beginning in this house, Lord.

You said, let your fountain be dispersed abroad. Let it be in the streets. I ask, oh, God, that be true for this message today.

Amen. Beloved, pray for the church. Pray for Canada.

Pray for the church of Jesus Christ. Weep between the porch and the altar and say, spare your people of God. Give not up your heritage to reproach.

Don't let the heathen rule over them. We repent. We repent, Lord, of our longings for prosperity and our longings for comfort.

We repent, Lord, of our longings for a life of ease and our desire to put away the cross and put away the blood and put away the word and put away repentance. We repent. We've sinned against you, God, as a church.

We've sinned against you, Lord. We see the judgment on the nation. We've been blind to the judgment in your house.

Oh, God.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/1/SID1410.mp3>

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/filPVo8bWluw.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/carter-conlon/run-for-your-life/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net