

# Say Yes

by Carter Conlon

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*Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the importance of saying yes to God's call and the legacy of obedience exemplified by David Wilkerson.*

**Duration:** 17:25

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 16:9, Psalm 101:3, Proverbs 3:5-6, Isaiah 6:8, Matthew 9:37-38, Luke 9:23, Acts 9:6, 1 Corinthians 4:15-16, 2 Timothy 2:15, James 1:22

**Topics:** "Obedience To God", "Surrendered Life"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of saying 'yes' to God's calling, drawing inspiration from the life of David Wilkerson and the need for obedience and surrender to God's will. It highlights the impact of one person's obedience in starting Times Square Church and challenges listeners to be willing vessels for God's work, regardless of age or position, by simply saying 'yes' to His leading.

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## Transcript

Thank you, Lord, for lighting up the candle. Thank you for keeping the testimony of this church burning brightly in this generation. I want to talk to you this morning for just a few moments about Times Square Church, the next 30 years, not just the 30 years that have are passed, but the next 30.

And I want you to give it your best year because 30 years from now, if this church is still here, I will be hanging over the balcony of heaven with that great cloud of witnesses. You do not want me in this pulpit at 94. Trust me right now.

You do not want me here. My mind is bad enough as it is already. Now I'll be joining.

And many of you will be there too. So don't laugh too hard because you're going to be there with me. And all the young people in the balcony, you're going to be 60, 65 years old.

You know, so anyway, see, notice there's not much cheering going on up in the balcony right now. If I were to put what God's put on my heart into just two words, it would be say yes. Say yes.

Isaiah chapter six and verse eight. Now, Father, I thank you for the touch of heaven on this moment in this church. I thank you, Lord God, for how faithful you have been.

You have visited us every time we meet. Your presence is here. Countless thousands of souls have come to the saving knowledge of who you are in the last 30 years.

And thank you, Lord, for all that you have done through this local church body. But today we're calling out to you and asking for that same anointing in even a greater way to lead us into the future. Guide this testimony, guard it.

Don't let it diminish. Don't let us rest on past successes. Lead us into the future, Lord.

I ask you, God, for weight on these words today, that they would land heavy on every heart and every mind. They would cause us to come to a place where we too are willing to say yes. And we ask this in Jesus name.

One verse, Isaiah chapter six and verse eight. Also, I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send and who will go for us? Then I said, here am I, send me. Now I want you to notice that at this point in Isaiah's life, he's not on the mountaintop in his own self-assessment anymore.

He has been in the presence of the living God. He has come undone in God's presence. He has realized that he has nothing in himself to speak about the holiness of God, the righteousness of God, the kingdom of God is a man who just is drawing close to the Lord.

And ironically, as you draw closer to the Lord, quite often, you'll start to feel that undoneness in your heart because flesh cannot stand in the presence of a holy God and everything of the human spirit is suddenly exposed for what it really is. And in the midst of his undoneness, in the midst of his own sense of smallness, in the midst of the dealing he just had with the living God, in the midst of finally understanding that this is a kingdom of mercy. If you don't know that yet, you will in the not too distant future.

Live long enough and you will know this is a kingdom of mercy. Everything about God is mercy. It's all mercy.

In the next 30 years, you and I have to become a people that learn and strive to become people who just simply learn to say yes. Today, we're commemorating 30 years that came to fruition through the life of one man, David Wilkerson, through whose life countless millions, including you and I, are still being blessed today. We are in this facility because of a man who simply said yes to God.

We know the presence of God the way we do because of one man who just simply said yes to God. Paul, the apostles in 1 Corinthians chapter 4 verses 15 and 16 said, for though you might have 10,000 instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the gospel.

Therefore, I urge you, imitate me. In the original King James, it says, be followers of me. I want you just to go back and we're going to reflect for just a little bit this morning on the history that brought this church into existence.

David Wilkerson was eight years old when he was in a tent crusade and heard a preacher calling to full abandonment to the will and the ways of God. At the age of eight, he responded to that calling. He went forward in a tent, a sawdust tent, fell on his knees and said yes to God.

A sense, a deep sense in his heart that God had ordained his life, as he told me, for a specific purpose that he didn't fully understand. But at eight years old, he was called, don't ever minimize the decision that children in this church make to follow Jesus Christ. Don't ever take it lightly.

Many, many, many great leaders in the future are called when they are just children. And a few years later, he said yes to the call to study and to prepare for the ministry. As Paul says in second Timothy chapter two and verse 15, be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

He went on to study and get his understanding, may I put it that way, of the doctrines of the kingdom of God. It's so important. Young people today, listen to me.

You have to study now in this generation. You have to be able to intelligently, first of all, understand who you are in Christ. And secondly, you have to be able to present the truth that you believe in a way.

And there's an intelligent way to present that truth without argument and without just stating simple fact with nothing behind it to back it up. That's one of the reasons why we have a Bible school in this church called Summit International School of Ministry to teach, to train. So young men, young women can learn to preach, teach, publish, and defend the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I urge you to seriously consider saying yes to God. If you feel that calling in your heart, that yes, you may not be a preacher, you may not be a missionary, you may not be a pastor, but in whatever profession you find yourself in, you're going to be a minister of the gospel. That's the call of God on your life.

And it's imperative, especially now that you know who you are in Christ and you know how to present and to defend what you believe about him. As a young minister, God called David Wilkerson to pastor a little country out of the way church in rural Pennsylvania. It was small.

It was just a small work. It was indescriptive. It was in the middle of nowhere.

And he said, yes. So many people despise the day of small beginnings, but David Wilkerson didn't despise that day. So many people want to get a call of God and go right to the top.

They want the crowds. They want the notoriety. They want all of the accolades that come with successful ministry, but they don't want to start where you start.

You start at the beginning. If you want to really be a true disciple of Christ, start with a broom. Start there.

Start with a vacuum cleaner in the house of God. Don't be afraid to say yes, because many of the things God will do in your life will be testing you for a future call to obedience for something that he has for your life. While he was pastoring that small church in Pennsylvania, suddenly one day, the voice of God came into his heart and told him, I want you to get rid of your television set.

I want you to get that away from your eyes. I've got something deeper for your life. In obedience to God, he sold his television set.

And after he was rid of it, the Lord said, now I want you to start praying. You know, David, the psalmist, he said, I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes. Now, I'm not suggesting all television is wicked.

Please don't misunderstand me. But it's so important now that we get away from our eyes, those things which might be dulling us to the higher purpose of God that he has for us. Whether it's the internet, whether it's videos, whatever it is, whether it's movies, whatever you're putting in front of your eyes, that's bringing a dullness into your heart.

The voice of God comes to you if you're called to represent him and starts asking you to put some of these things away from your life. And thank God, David Wilkerson again said, yes. He was called when he began to pray to come to New York City, to go to a place that he's not familiar with and to a group of young people with whom he had absolutely nothing in common.

He had no training. He had no teaching to do this. He just had a leading of God.

And as much as he knew, he'd been obedient to the voice of God. And he came into the New York City area and the play that you're about to see, those who haven't seen it before tonight, tells the whole story of that called the cross and the switch blade. When he first came to try to find help, these young gang members who had just committed murder in the city and were on trial, he ended up in the paper holding up his Bible.

And basically in the natural, it looked like everything blew up in his face, technically made a fool of, to go back to his own congregation, looking like a total abject failure, only to have that same voice come back to him and say, go back again. And again, he said, yes. The willingness to look like a fool that Christ might be exalted, the willingness to walk a pathway that we don't necessarily understand with our natural mind, but we've made a choice in our heart to obey God.

In the latter part of his life, after huge success, establishing Teen Challenge all over the world, a book that has sold multiples of millions of copies, thousands of millions coming to Christ, an incredible moment in his life in his middle fifties when he could have been traveling and just telling the story and people still would come in crowds just to hear the story because it's a phenomenal story in our generation. But walking in Times Square one day, just visiting the city, he was overtaken with a debauchery that was slowly working its way into this part of the city. And he started to pray and said, God, you have to send somebody, send somebody to do something in this city, send somebody to raise up a testimony.

And the Lord said, I'm sending you to raise up a church. And one more time in his middle fifties, he was called to say yes. And it was a fight and it was a battle.

You don't take this ground easy, folks. Times Square, whatever happens in Times Square can affect the world and every power of hell knows that. And so you got to fight to get your way through.

And it was a battle. It was a fight. Every, you had to fight for every, every inch of ground that the Lord was calling him to take.

But God raised up a church in New York city. And once it was successful and once it had established a reputation and testimony, David Wilkerson is now in his seventies on the platform, worshipping and God speaks again to him. He says, I want you to go to 56 countries and encourage the pastors there is 70.

I don't want to scare you with this message. But when we learned to say yes, and some of those pastors conferences, he wouldn't let the DVDs of it be shown in the church, but they were phenomenal. The presence of God would just fall in stadiums.

Pastors would be on their faces. Even the cleaning staff were on their faces in the back rooms. God's presence came down so powerfully.

When I suggested we should show it to the church, he said, no, this is just private between me and God. You see our savior, Jesus Christ said yes. When he didn't want to go to the cross, but the will of God was clearly stated that he should.

He said, yes. When he didn't want to suffer, he said, yes. When he didn't want to suffer betrayal, he said, yes.

And because of his yes, you and I are here today with the hope of eternity in our hearts. The founder of this church followed in his footsteps and said, yes. And the blessing that came into this world through one life that said, yes, is not even debatable.

It's immeasurable. Now it's our turn. Now it's your turn.

I believe that the eyes of the Lord are constantly going to and fro throughout the earth, looking for somebody that he can show himself strong through. Somebody that is simply willing to say, yes, God, I will abandon my plans. I will abandon my image of myself.

I will not be hindered by my sense of smallness. I'll not be hindered by my sense of unworthiness. If you call me Lord, I will say yes.

And if you open the door, I will go through that door and I will do what you called me to do. This is how the kingdom of God has always advanced. Men have tried to promote it in other ways, but their promotions do not produce converts or disciples.

Just people who come into buildings to sing songs and hear fancy stories about a historical moment. It's the men and women who say yes to God. It's those who make the choice, regardless of age, whether they're eight years old or 70 years old, they still say yes to God.

When he calls them, they make the choice to study, to show themselves approved unto God. Workmen, workwomen who are not going to be triumphed over by the lawless spirit of this age we're now living in. Men and women who do not consider any work of God too small, any act of kindness too insignificant.

Men and women who are just there and available for God to pour through their lives in whatever way he chooses to do so in every moment that they live. They are available for him. If he says, go speak to that person in the supermarket, they say yes and they go and they speak.

It's not all about big ministry. There will be a few who preach to the crowds, but the majority will not. But I want to suggest to you that majority is the true ministry of Jesus Christ.

It's a true body on the earth through whom life comes, healing comes, freedom comes. Lives are transformed through this body of believers. It's people like you and I who just, when God begins to say, put that away, we simply say yes.

There's no debate. There's no argument. We simply put it away.

Even if there doesn't have to be an evil in it. Don't misunderstand me. It's just something that's occupying your time.

It's dulling your heart to what God has for your life. And he says, put it away. And you just simply say yes and put it away.

When he says, start to pray, we don't take the charge lightly. We go to God and we begin to pray, whether it's individually or collectively, we meet together with the body of Christ. And even if we feel foolish in what we set out to do, when God calls us to do it again, we say, yes.

You can approach a person on the street and fully feel the Holy Spirit has led you only to have it blow up in your face. You walk another block and the Lord tells you to do it again. And when we get old, older, our hearts must remain open.

You see, if it doesn't, you'll wind up in a rocking chair, watching football the rest of your life. That's only for the guys. The girls are not going to do that.

You're going to watch something else. It's our turn to say yes.

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