

Speak to the Foxes

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon 'Speak to the Foxes' calls believers to address the small issues in their lives that can weaken their testimony for Christ and emphasizes the importance of integrity and preparation for spiritual challenges ahead.

Duration: 48:21

Scripture: Song of Solomon 2:15

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Personal Holiness"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of addressing the 'little foxes' in our lives that can hinder our testimony for Christ. It highlights the need to deal with small compromises, sins, and weaknesses that may seem insignificant but can have a significant impact on our spiritual walk and witness. The message encourages believers to allow God to search their hearts, remove hindrances, and walk in supernatural faith and provision for the days ahead.

Transcript

Praise God. Good morning, Times Square Church. God bless you.

Welcome again to all of our visitors today, and I do trust that you will take time to fellowship with us after the service today over the annex in room 204, I believe it is. This coming Tuesday begins a three-day fast for this church, from Monday night at midnight through till after the service on Thursday night. We will fast from solid food, never from liquids in this church at any time, and I want to encourage you, those who can, to fast with us.

Now, if you can't fast, some people are not very good at that. I ran into a young person in the church who just said, you know, pastor, I just can't. I can't fast.

I'm so food-obsessed after missing one meal that I can't pray. I can't enjoy myself. I just sit in my chair and rock.

So, if that's your case, then obviously, if you have a medical condition or you're pregnant or whatever the situation is and you don't feel you can, you could fast a meal or you could give up breakfast or lunch or something like that and join us, but please don't let that stop you from coming out. Don't feel like you're a hypocrite and you can't come out to pray because you can't fast, but for those who can, we encourage you

to join with us. I think it's of pivotal importance we're praying for the future of this church.

We are, without doubt, living in a very dark day, and I rarely say this, but I have a message for next Sunday morning as well, and it's called, A Sure Path Through the Coming Storm, and I want to encourage you, if you can't be here, listen to it online. We are, as a church, we've known an incredible blessing of God right from the inception of this church under Pastor David Wilkerson in 1987. There's been life here.

There's been songs here. There's been numerous people come to Christ. I remember the first year, second year I was here, we baptized a thousand new believers.

A thousand people are professing to be coming to Christ in sincerity, and today the testimony has not diminished, it has increased. Our worldwide prayer meeting is now being accessed by people and groups from 145 different nations. We're on radio in 100 stations across the country, and I expect that to increase in the future.

We're on television in Europe, all across Europe, numerous cable stations in this country, and other things as well, large viewership on our internet site, but that's no guarantee of the blessing of God in the future. The Lord's been gracious to us. He's kept us, but if you and I are going to be a testimony in the days ahead, I remember the Lord spoke to Pastor David Wilkerson and told him that this church was ordained to be a lighthouse in a coming storm, and so I'm telling you that it's time to polish the light.

It's time to clean the windows, check the hinges on the doors. It's time to get ready for this storm. If we are going to be a testimony in the coming days, there are some things that God's going to have to speak to our hearts about, yours and mine, things that we're not aware of, things that we've embraced, and they're there, they're part of our lives.

We don't see it as wrong, but it is weakening, and maybe so, maybe it's not necessarily wrong, but it can be weakening to the testimony of Christ in our lives. The Lord's going to help us to see these things. Remember, it's the tenderness of God that's drawing us to himself now.

It's not the judgment of God. It's not the anger of God. He's not looking for fault in you and I. He's drawing us because he loves us, and he's saying, my son, my daughter, I want to give you strength in the days ahead, and now we have to talk, just as Isaiah said, we have to reason together about some things.

Title of my message this morning is Speak to the Foxes. Speak to the Foxes, Luke chapter 13 and Matthew chapter 17, both of those chapters, those where we'll start. Luke chapter 13 and Matthew chapter 17.

Father, I thank you, God. It is evident your presence is here with us today. There's no debate about that.

You brought us here as a body to speak to us. Lord, a thousand times, you could have justifiably walked away from us, but you didn't. You stayed with us.

You've tied the honor of your name in with the testimony of this church and thankfully with many others in the nation. We bless you for your humility. We thank you, God, for simply being as kind as you are.

Lord Jesus Christ, we want to walk with you. We want to honor you. We want to know your power in the days that are upon us.

We want to be a church that has living testimony and can gather, can sound the trumpet and gather people from all over the city and even all over the nation to a moment of prayer, to a moment of intercession, to a moment where men and women and children may have a chance to hear the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. God, you have to give us strength to do this. You have to give us a testimony, Lord, for we can't testify without your presence.

We can't, Lord. We can try our best, but we fall short of your glory. It's only your life within us that can give us strength.

So I'm asking you, Father, in Jesus' name to remove everything, God, out of every corner of every temple that has become a hindrance to your life, being seen clearly from within us. Help us, Lord God, to not call things, Lord, by other names than what you call them. Help us, Lord Jesus Christ, to turn away from that which weakens the testimony of your life inside of us.

God, give us the grace. God, give us the strength. Give me the ability to speak this today, and give us the power to hear it.

We stand against every weapon of darkness. We stand against everything of the devil sent against the testimony of every life in this house. Satan, we resist you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God, we thank you, Lord, that you've set before us an open door and no man can close it. And you said if we'll go through, you'll give us to eat of the tree of life. You'll give us strength.

You'll give us power. You'll give us names, God, that only you know, and you will reveal it to our heart to give us strength that doesn't come from anything of human will or reason. God, help me today.

God, help this church. God, help us to hear what you're speaking. Help us to go forward.

Help us, Lord God, to be a testimony that must be reckoned with in this generation. Oh, Jesus, Son of God, we call out to you as you called out to your Father. Father, glorify thy name.

Lord, you have glorified it, and you will glorify it again. We trust that. We believe that with all of our hearts.

We don't come to you with strength this morning. We come in our frailty. We don't come knowing it all.

We come needing to know what you want to speak to our hearts. We don't come with a plan. You are the only plan.

We want the fullness of your life to be evidenced in us and displayed through us. We want you to guide our path. Lord, your word is a light for our path and a lamp for our feet.

God almighty, let that be true in our lives. Let it be true, Lord. Give us the grace to yield our will to you.

Give us the grace, God, to walk in the way that you have for us, Lord. God, give us strength in the days ahead. Help us, Lord, to love people like you do.

Help us, God, to speak, Lord, in these days of darkness. Give us power. We thank you for it in Jesus' name.

Luke chapter 13, verses 31 and 32. On that very day, some Pharisees came saying to him, this is Jesus, get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill you. And he said to them, go tell that fox.

Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Now, that word perfected also means resurrected, and other translations say, on the third day I shall arrive at my goal. Song of Solomon, in chapter 2, verse 15, tells us of a request.

Now, Song of Solomon, most see it, and if ever you do want to read, read Hudson Taylor's commentary on Song of Solomon. It's a phenomenal commentary on it. But the Song of Solomon is a representation, in measure, of Christ and His bride.

And in Song of Solomon, there's a request that comes to the bridegroom from people who know Him. And in the New American Standard, in chapter 2, verse 15, says it this way. Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes that are ruining the vineyards, while our vineyards are in blossom.

In other words, we're in a fruit-bearing time. We are in a season where everything we have planted, what we have watered, what we have believed for, it has come to fruition. But there are little things that, if they're left undealt with, can take away some of the testimony which our lives should have been.

When you look at the size of a vineyard, a fox is just a little thing. But they can eat the tender grapes. They can devour the produce as it is.

They can take away the the beauty and the testimony of everything that we've worked for. In Matthew, chapter 17, we see an example of this. And it's at a time when, in verse 24, when Peter walked into the temple, it says, When they came to Capernaum, those who received the temple tax came to Peter and said, Does your teacher not pay the temple tax? And he said, Yes.

Now, of course, we know this is a lie. It wasn't true. He didn't pay it, and he didn't know if Jesus paid it.

And when he had come into the house, Jesus anticipated or took notice of him and said, What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take customs or taxes? From their sons or from strangers? And Peter said, From strangers. Jesus said, Then the sons are free. Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first.

When you have opened its mouth, you'll find a piece of money. Take that and give it to them for me and for you. Now, Peter was in a season of relative youth in his walk with God.

Up to this point, most everything had gone well. It was, you might say, it was a fair weather walk with the son of God. It was exciting.

Miracles were happening. They're being sent out two by two. They're beholding Satan fall, as Christ told them, as lightning from heaven.

Miracles are happening. This is all of their desire that they've ever had is being met. They know the Messiah is with them.

They know the power of God is upon them. But Peter was going to need much more faith than he had at this point. Just like you and I are going to need faith that's deeper in the days ahead than the faith we have now.

I'm telling you, listen to me, we're going to need deeper faith than we have now. And much was going to be required of Peter and he would need great faith to accomplish it. But there were small things in his life that if they weren't dealt with now, they could diminish his fruitfulness in the future.

He lied. Now I'm sure that in his mind, he had good reason to lie. You know, you and I have the capability of taking wrong and making it right.

That's one of the problems of the human heart. After all, it was about taxes in the Roman times. And these times that they lived in there, I was reading a commentary one time on all the taxes.

You wouldn't believe the number of taxes they had. You had a tax on your income. You had a tax on your outcome.

You were taxed if you wanted to use the roads to take your produce to market. You were taxed almost every time you turned around, there was a new tax. There's a marriage tax, a penalty tax, a death tax.

The Romans had even gathered all the people just 30 years ago or so, and they had counted them all just for the purpose of more taxes, just so they could tax everybody even more. And now to add insult to injury, there was this small little user-friendly tax, may I call it, in the temple. It's something you just gave it probably most likely for the maintenance to assist with the maintenance of the temple, a temple tax.

And Peter in his mind, I'm sure coming in saying, I pay enough taxes. I'm not going to pay taxes to go into the temple, to the house of God, forget this, I'm not paying taxes. And so when he's approached by somebody that came to him and they said, does your master, does your teacher pay the temple tax? He goes, yeah, sure.

Yeah, he does. You know, but he comes into the house after seeing this and Jesus takes note of him and begins to speak to him. It's only a small thing, you know, the temple tax, only a little tax.

It's only small. It's like a fox on a vine, but it can rob you of faith. And Jesus takes notice of Peter as he comes in, just as today, God's going to speak to some hearts, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, God is going to speak to us as a church about things that we don't think are a big deal.

I know this in my heart because I'm not, I didn't, I didn't sit down and try to craft what am I going to say on Sunday morning? I prayed, said, God, what do you want to speak to us? As we go into this week of fasting and prayer, what really is important to you? And he spoke to my heart clearly and said, I want to talk to my people about the little things that are in the hearts and daily practice of my people, that they don't see the weakening power of it. Now, when Peter comes into the temple, it's into the presence of Jesus. It's an, it's an interesting thing because Jesus enters into a dialogue to basically tell him that we don't really have to do this.

We're covered. The sons don't pay taxes, only strangers, and we're not strangers to the house of God. Therefore, Jesus tells him plainly, we're exempt from this.

There is no penalty for us. It's a type of you and I realizing that our sin is covered. Our failings are covered.

Our shortcomings are covered by the sacrifice of the cross of Jesus Christ. David the psalmist said, oh God, if you marked iniquities, who could stand? If there was a mark against us, if it was imputed to us every time we thought something wrong or did something wrong or went somewhere wrong or read something wrong, if it was imputed against us, none of us would have any hope this morning. We're covered.

You understand that when you came to Christ, you were covered. That's what Jesus was telling Peter about this temple tax. We're covered.

There's really nothing that says we have to pay this because we are the sons of the one who owns the temple and the sons don't pay tax. Only strangers pay tax. Praise God.

Now Jesus leads him though to understand in verse 27 that when we do wrong, even the little things, he said, now lest we offend them. Jesus hadn't even been there. He was somewhere else when Peter was asked this question, but Jesus leads him to understand that when we do wrong, even little things as Christians, we draw not only our own testimony down, but that of Christ's into a diminished place in the eyes of those who are watching us.

When we do little things, we don't consider them big, but I can imagine people in the temple saying, you know, that guy lied. He hangs out with Jesus. I know Jesus doesn't pay the temple tax because, and you, the story, the story tells us that because at the end when Peter went to catch a fish, Jesus said, the coin you find in his mouth is going to be for me and for you, for the both of us.

Neither one of us have paid the temple tax. Even if we still have the victory, our testimony is diminished. People are looking at us and the little things that we do do make a difference.

The little things we speak, the little things that we have embraced, the little things that we've become familiar with doing, the things that we can come into house of God with and just brush them off. Where God tries to speak and say, are you doing? Yeah, sure. Yeah, no problem at all.

Let's move on. This is about grace. Let's talk about grace today.

You know, I was given, I was handed, I had this message before this example, but I was handed a prime example of this with the upcoming NFL Superbowl. And one of the teams got into the Superbowl by apparently under inflating a football. I think most of you, most of you are aware of this, right? You've heard the debate on it.

I don't know who did this. I really don't know. But I'm telling you something, it doesn't make the victory that brought this team into the Superbowl rather hollow.

The fact that you and I are on the sidelines and you want to believe that people are people of integrity. You want to believe that athletes are playing by the rules. You want to believe, and it's just a little thing, right? Just a pound of air in a football.

Why should it make such a difference? I mean, think about all the training that goes in and all the salaries that are paid and all of the grunting and groaning on the field and all the physical conditioning that has to happen and all the plans and all that. And the whole thing can be diminished by just a football with a pound of air out of it. And now it's a hollow victory, isn't it? And you're going to go into the Superbowl next Sunday is going to be played, and that's going to be in everybody's mind that's watching it.

There's a team out there on the field. Now, whether they did or didn't, it's not for me to judge, but there is an appearance that they cheated to get there. And if they win, if they should happen to win the Superbowl, people are going to be drawing back and say, but they cheated.

It takes away from the victory. They still have the victory of the game that got them into this, but there's something been taken away, even though it's just a little thing. That's my point.

It's just a little thing, but it, it affects the whole team. Doesn't it? It affects everybody, everybody from the general manager, right down to the water boy on the bench. Everybody is affected.

Everybody is tainted by maybe just one person's action. Although we don't know who that might be. Everything is tainted.

Everything is. And when you and I allow these little things into our lives, even though we can point to all we do, right. I go to church once in a while.

I pray, I do good deeds. And you could, you could point to all the things you do on the field and all the spiritual exercises you get involved in and all the warfare conferences you've been to. But if you're missing a half pound of air somewhere, it taints the whole thing.

I tell you, no matter what the outcome is next Sunday is going to be a hollow victory, which is all the more reason that you should be in the house of God Sunday night and not watching a football game. I had to get that out. It's out now.

It's going to be hollow. And that's all everybody's going to talk about. It's only a little thing, right? Oh, pastor, don't get onto me about abandoning the house of God for the Superbowl game.

It's just a little thing, right? I'll tell you when any sport in this country has the power to empty the house of God, it is idolatry. You're going to have to deal with it. It is what it is.

I'm not against sport. I'm not against it at all. So don't misunderstand me, but I am against anything that has the power to empty churches in this nation.

When we should be worshiping God, a little thing can stain a great victory. That's my point today. In Proverbs 24, let me just read this to you.

The writer says, I went by the field of a lazy man and by the vineyard of the man devoid of understanding. That means that the man who was not willing to receive instruction. I went by his vineyard.

Remember the cry of those who knew the bride groomers, take the foxes, catch the foxes for us before they spoil our vineyard. And it was all overgrown with thorns and the surface was covered with nettles and the stone wall was broken down. When I saw it, I considered it well and I looked on it and I received instruction, a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest.

So shall your poverty come like a prowler and your need like an armed man. And actually the real translation of that is your poverty will come like a person who's traveling and they're spending freely, but they have no source of income. There's nothing coming back in on the other side.

They're just constantly doling out and doling out. Just a little sleep can do that. Just a little slumber, just a little folding of the hands, just little things.

We don't recognize what they can do. I'm sure when Akin went in with Joshua into the promised land and there's, there's hundreds of thousands of people involved in this, this pursuit to honor God in the earth. And just a, it's just a little thing, just a, just a few bars of gold, just a little bit of silver, just a few garments.

What's the big deal? Not realizing that a little thing can bring a great deal of weakness into the testimony of God. A little sleep, a little lie. Hey Bob, saw you at the game Monday night.

I thought you booked off sick Monday morning. Well Frank, yeah I was feeling rather down Monday morning, but by four o'clock I started to feel real good and I just happened to have a little lie, just a little lie. But Frank knows you're a Christian.

Frank knows. A little unrighteous anger. There's a righteous anger that is warranted and it's not sin, but there's an unrighteous anger as well.

A little theft, the taking home of little pencils and pens and paper and stuff, envelopes from the workplace, just a little theft. It's not much, what's the big deal? They don't pay me enough anyway. A little gossip, just a little gossip.

I'm not a big gossiper, I'm just a little gossiper. I don't tell everything on everyone, I just tell little things about a few. It's not a big deal.

A little cheating. We talked about that earlier in this message. Just a little cheating, just a pound of air.

What's the big deal? I mean there's 12 and a half other pounds of air in this thing. Why is everybody making such a big deal out of this? Just a little bit of cheating. Just a little peek in forbidden places.

It's only a little one. I mean God knows I'm not like that. God knows I'm not going to go there.

Oh really? A little sip of alcohol, just to calm my nerves. After all, Jesus changed water into wine, didn't he? Just a little sip. Oh there's so many people today, just a little sip.

But I'll tell you something, whatever you do a little of, when depression comes and discouragement comes, you'll do a lot of. You will go to what has been offering you comfort. Do you understand that? That's where you will go.

It's an amazing thing when you begin to think about it, the hindrance of these things. I remember, you know my story, some of you, but when I was first saved and I was a cop and I had never heard a sermon on this ever. Every day when I came home off of night shift, I would stop at this restaurant on the highway and they had an incredible ham and eggs breakfast with huge home fries.

Sliced right out of the potato, deep fried. It was awesome. I loved it.

I'm a brand new Christian. I love God with all my heart. And so I sat down at the table in the restaurant.

I'm a brand new believer in Christ and I had my bacon, ham, my eggs, my Bible, and a beer. I didn't see anything wrong with it. Nobody had ever told me anything, you know.

For me at least, I used to drink a lot and I'm just drinking a little, just a little bit. And I was reading my Bible where the angel came to Zacharias and Elizabeth and told them that there's going to be this baby that's going to be born, this new life, and this man is going to be one who introduces Jesus Christ to his generation. It's going to be a herald of his coming.

And the angel said, and wine will never touch his lips. And I looked at that and said, that's interesting. If that was a condition of this man leading many to the knowledge of Christ, then I'm professing from this day

forward that wine is not going to touch my lips.

And I remember reaching out and I pushed that bottle across the table. That's 37, 36, 37 years ago I put that away. And here I am today and wine doesn't touch my lips and there's nothing that alters.

Alcohol can alter your speech, can alter your mind, it can alter your, even just a little bit of it, just a little bit, can alter you. And having been a police officer, you have to understand, I've seen the broken bodies and the beat-up furniture and abused kids. I've seen what alcohol does in this culture.

So there is no cultural context of alcohol in America, as far as I'm concerned, in North America. The man who led me to the Lord, I remember he told me, he said, I used to be a drunk and a womanizer and a gambler. And I was so taken by how different this man was.

I remember one time offering him a beer just to see if he'd take it when he came to share Christ with me. You see, and if he had, if he had ever, or if I had gone to his house, knocked on his door, looked through the window and saw him sitting with a glass of alcohol at his table, I might not be here today. I would have assumed that that man is just like I am, but he's just added religion to it.

That's all he's done. But he could say, but it's just a little thing. But for me, it wasn't.

For me, if you are truly a new creation, you are. For me, it was black or white. There was no middle gray area in this thing.

You either have old things have passed away because that's what he was telling me a Christian looks like, or old things are still there. There was no middle ground. If he told me that I could have a transformed life, that more attracted me to Christ than the cross itself in the beginning.

It wasn't about the cross with me. It wasn't about hell and heaven. It was about a transformed life.

And this God sent a man before me whose life was transformed by the grace of God. I pushed every button in him that I knew to push. I tried to prove him a fraud and I couldn't.

He kept coming. He kept witnessing. He kept loving.

He kept caring about my soul and he was not a hypocrite. He was not a fraud and he wasn't compromised. And because of it, I read the gospel of John in the new Testament, then saw the cross, then understood my redemption.

But I think to this day, God forbid that anybody should ever walk in a restaurant in New York city or ever come to my home and look in my door and see something in my life that would cause them to say, Christ is not real. God forbid, even though it's just a little thing, folks, it's just a little thing, but little foxes spoil the vine. Remember, Jesus said to Peter, we're covered.

I know we're covered. I'm not ever going to suggest you have a glass or something. You're going to go to hell.

I don't, you're not going to, you're covered, but your testimony can be greatly diminished. And is that really worth it? That's something you and I have to think about. Is it worth it? How much do we really care that Jesus Christ be glorified through our lives? How much do we really care that what we speak is truth? What we see is true.

How we live is true. How much does it really matter that we are a lighthouse to this generation, speaking and living of the ways of God? How much does it really matter to us? Yes, we want to go deeper. Yes, we want a more powerful testimony, but that's not going to happen if we're not willing to let God deal with the little things, little things, just little foxes on the vine that take away, that spoils the fruitfulness of vineyard when it's in blossom, a little bit of prayerlessness, a little bit of laziness, a little bit, just a little slumber, a little sleep, a little folding of the hands will bring you, the writer said, into poverty, spiritual poverty.

You'll go out, you'll spend everything you know, but nothing is coming in from the other side. And what a tragedy, it's only little things that are causing this, things that we're already covered for, realistically. It's amazing, just a little fox.

But think of the promise that Jesus gave to Peter, again in Matthew chapter 17, verse 27. The sons are free, says in verse 26. In other words, we don't have to pay this tax.

There are certain things I can do, but Paul says in Corinthians, you can read it for yourself, it might be lawful, but it doesn't mean it's good. It might be allowable, but consider the consequence. The sons are free, nevertheless, lest we offend them.

That's the key. Jesus knew we didn't have to pay the temple tax, and neither did Peter have to pay it, but lest we offend them. Lest our testimony should be diminished when we come into the temple.

Lest they should be able to point to us on the street and say, thieves, they don't pay the temple tax. Even though we know we don't have to, lest we should offend them. Now here's where it gets really interesting.

The question is, why didn't Jesus just reach into his pocket and give him the coin? Why did he give him the instruction, go down to the sea, cast in a hook, take the first fish that comes up. When you've opened its mouth, you'll find a piece of money. Take that and give it to them for me and for you.

So what's the point of this? If it was just about paying the few cents that was part of the temple tax, why didn't he just give it to them? Jesus, if he didn't have it in his pocket, he could manufacture it there as much as he could in the fish's mouth. So why did he do that? Here's what he was teaching Peter. And here's what he's trying to teach us.

If you will deal with the little things now, I will open to you the way of supernatural faith and provision. I'll open to you something of God that will bring the name of God to honor. You can just see Peter going down to the seashore.

Where are you going? God told me to go catch a fish and he said there would be money in its mouth to pay the temple tax. And you can imagine the other fishermen saying, man, the guy has lost it. He's been hanging around with this teacher.

And you can see when he comes back an hour later and he's got the gold coins in his hand and said, just as he said, I caught a fish out in its mouth and in its mouth was enough for me and for Jesus. The provision was there that I needed the provision to be honest, the provision to tell the truth, the provision to stop doing what I know is not right. It's diminishing the testimony of God, the provision of joy that I was looking somewhere else to get the provision of comfort that I was seeking in other places.

When I make the choice to do right, I found a supernatural provision that is not available to those who don't walk in truth. There's life, there's joy, there's faith, there's vision for the future. There's an ability to

trust God.

There's a power in our voice to call people back to God himself. There's spiritual authority over darkness to pull down things that exalt themselves above the knowledge of God. There's power in our home to speak across the table to our children, to our families.

There's ability to see into the incredible depths of the word of God and everything comes to life. Everything begins to live when we just will let Jesus go into the corners of the temple and say, I want to talk to you about something. I want to talk to you about something that you don't have to do if you don't want to do it.

I want to talk to you about it because you not doing it is leading both of us into reproach more than you and I will ever realize it. That brings us back to our opening scripture in Luke chapter 13. On that very day some Pharisees came to him and said, get out and depart from here for Herod wants to kill you.

Jesus said, go tell that fox, behold I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow and the third day I shall be perfected. That means I will reach my goal. When the enemy tells you you're not going to make it, when he tells you there's another way to do things than the ways of God, you have power to speak to that fox.

You tell him, no sir, I have been given power to confront evil. Healing is flowing through my life. Not only am I confronting evil, but healing is flowing through my life.

Healing, where I go, healing goes. There's a savor of God. I'm not bringing something through my workplace that calls itself Christianity, but stinks as I pass by.

No, I'm bringing that sweet presence of God with me everywhere I go. That presence of hope, that presence of Christ, that which offers vision and power and provision and strength and hope in heaven, I'm bringing that with me everywhere I go. I have power to confront evil.

I have healing that's flowing through my life and trusting in God and in God alone, I am going to finish my journey and I'm going to reach the full potential of what my life is called to be. Go tell that fox, go tell that fox the devil is coming down. Go tell that fox people are going to be healed.

Go tell that fox that I'm not turning away from the will of my father and I'm going to get to the end of my goal and I'm going to finish this journey that God's given me to finish and I'm going to do it for the glory and the honor of almighty God through Jesus Christ. No fox is going to drive me from the plan of God for my life. No little thing and that was a little voice that just kept coming and saying give up, give up, give up, you're not going to make it, find another way, do it another way.

That voice was always there and Jesus knew it was a fox trying to destroy the fruit of the vineyard that God had given him. You and I have been given the power to speak to those little things now. They're just little things but they do have great power in the long run.

We'll still get to heaven. I'm not talking about going to hell here but the stadium of this world will watch us play just like they'll watch this game coming up next weekend and it's tainted. Our testimony is tainted.

We've drawn Jesus into something through these little things. It's so important folks. I'm not trying to be nitpicky and neither is God.

He wants to give us power. We have to polish the light now, polish the windows, check the hinges. The little things can make a huge difference in the long run.

We have power to speak to them now and say to these foxes I will entertain you in my life no longer. By the grace of God I will be rid of you. By the grace of God the bridegroom will catch you and throw you into outer darkness.

By the grace of God I will no longer entertain you. By God's grace I'm going with Jesus and my life is going to glorify him. Foxes are just little things folks.

I've had to fight them just like you do. Just little things. The little things that come up to surprise us sometimes even but take away our strength but we have power over these things and really there's no shame in it because God already knows they're there.

If it's hidden it's only hidden to us. We're still covered, still loved, still going to heaven, still going to stand before his throne and know how deeply we are loved. The issue is now about the testimony of our lives.

How deep do I want my life to be a testimony for Christ? Peter was going to need courage in the days ahead. He had up to this point not confronted real danger and he was by nature cowardly. The scripture shows us that when it came to the things of God.

But historians tell us at the end of his life he was crucified upside down. He was going to need courage that he didn't have. You and I are going to need courage in the days ahead.

We're facing an onslaught of evil. We're going to need courage and now is the time to deal with the little things the little temple tax so that we can stand strong in the days ahead of us by God's grace by God's grace and we allow the Holy Spirit to speak to us not to condemn us. You must understand this it's not to condemn us it's that we might be given strength.

We might be drawn into the supernatural because I know there's people here like Peter might say look I just have been lying about taxes for so long I don't know how to speak right when it comes to it. I just so resent all of these taxes even in the temple. But Jesus was saying if you'll pay it if you'll do right if you'll do right I will open to you the provision.

I'll bring you to a place of faith that you're going to need to be to get through the days ahead. I'm going to teach you that when you walk my way you will never lack my supply. Never supply of courage and strength the physical provision everything will be yours if you will do it in truth hallelujah.

Father I thank you with all my heart Lord for just allowing me to speak this word today. I thank you Lord that you've already been speaking to my heart little things little plans little dreams little visions just little things that could take my strength. I thank you God for the grace to speak to these things and say you will not you will not govern my life you will not lead me.

I will not be brought into weakness through you. I thank you for courage my God I thank you for courage Lord that only you can give. I'm going to need courage in the days ahead that I don't have naturally.

It will have to come from you and so I'm trusting you Lord for provision. I'm trusting you that I can join Peter and go down and catch that fish and find in it what I need. Father I thank you for these things.

Would you help us as a body to not write these things off this morning? Would you help us not to put it away? Peter could have easily have walked away on you and said no if I'm free then I'm not going to pay it. Oh how he would have regretted that. You were teaching him about the supernatural.

We will need your power in the days ahead. God please help us give me strength give this church strength. God almighty we want to shine for you as a city that's set upon a hill that can't be hidden.

We want to be salt and light in our streets. God give us the grace that we will need and do it now and we ask it in Jesus name. I'd like to give an altar call this morning for the main sanctuary for North Jersey campus for those that are in the annex.

If the Lord spoken to your heart and you already know what it is or perhaps you're just here this morning and you could say as I have this week Lord I don't know every corner of this physical temple you do and so I'm inviting you come in sweep the house. What I'm doing what I'm saying the plans of my heart anything in me that's going to lead me to weakness I invite you God to speak to me about it. I'm not going to try to shut your voice out because I know you want to give me strength and if that's the cry of your heart this morning as we worship for just a few moments I'm going to ask you to just come and join me here at the front of this auditorium.

I'll consider myself the first one here because I want God to speak to my heart. I want to make it through this and make a difference for God. Let's stand together if the Lord speaking to your heart just come we'll take a moment to pray together in advance before we fast for this week.

You know the intent of this message is not that you and I from this day forward walk on pins and needles spiritually speaking. No it's just when we're beginning to walk with God that he's free to speak to us. We're already covered that's the key you have to know that you're already covered if you're a believer in Christ.

It's not about heaven and hell anymore it's about being a testimony of Christ and and how much does that matter in my life and in your life that that we speak truth, we live truth, we walk in truth, we have this supernatural provision of God that that causes others to look at us and say where did you get that? When the early church burst out of that upper room they were going fishing. Jesus himself said I'm going to make you fishers of men and they came out of that upper room they were walking in truth and they were with one accord and in one place and they were singly in heart in purpose with God and that supernatural provision that coin that Peter found was in them now and they're standing there and it caused 3,000 people that had a belly full of religion to look at them and say our religion doesn't give us that where did you get that?

Well I got that miraculously from God that was a gift from God it's not available to those who simply are not willing to to be a witness for Christ you have to understand what I'm saying there's no real cost to this the cost is if we don't hear it and the cost is not necessarily to us it's to others that we could have influenced it's to places we could have made a difference it's to things we could have said it's to miracles that could have flowed healings that could have happened the devil tries to push you and I away and say you know this this path is is too hard for you take an easier way after all you don't have to do it this way and that's when Jesus said no no no I cast out demons and healing is flowing and on the third day I'm going to get to my goal by the power of God I'm going to get there Father I thank you Lord for these men and women Lord and those in their hearts Lord with us today Father just we want Lord God to be a testimony in this darkened time we don't want to be just a tourist attraction we want to be a lighthouse a light that is switched on a light that does beam for miles unhindered by any dirt on the glass or dullness Father we just

thank you for this God give us the grace Lord that we're going to need in the days ahead and we recognize you want to give it to us but we must hear you and so give us open ears you yourself said all the way through revelation he was ears to hear he was ears to hear and you were speaking to your church God help us to hear you I hope with my life to you Lord and I don't assume that everything I'm thinking is right and so Lord I ask you to sweep the corners out God everything Lord that hinders the testimony of your life I just don't want it help me give me the courage to put away what needs to be put away and to let go of dreams that aren't from you help me God help me Father and I thank you for it with all my heart in Jesus name amen and amen praise God oh hallelujah thank you Lord can we give him a shout of praise this morning and just thank God thank you Lord thank you God for your faithfulness thank you Jesus God is so faithful to us what a day this is going to be what an hour what an hour oh Jesus help us when we pray this week help us mighty God help us Lord God help us to pray Father we thank you for this incredible victory you want to give to us in Jesus mighty name amen and amen God bless you

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/26/SID26169.mp3>

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/qHvDZtbhvm4.mp4>

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