

Stay Outside

by Carter Conlon

This sermon emphasizes the importance of staying outside the walls of the church to reach out to the wounded, broken, and lost, drawing parallels to the story of the Good Samaritan. It highlights the need for compassion, outreach, and ministry beyond the church building, focusing on bringing hope, healing, and restoration to those in need. The message encourages believers to continue shining God's light in the darkness, trusting in His provision, protection, and guidance as they step out in faith to make a difference in their communities.

Scripture: Luke 10:25, Isaiah 58:6, Psalm 139:23, Matthew 5:14, Proverbs 11:30, Isaiah 58:10, Jeremiah 29:12, Isaiah 58:9, Isaiah 58:7, Matthew 25:35

Topics: "Compassion", "Outreach Ministry"

Description

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Transcript

Grace God. It's a real pleasure for me to be here with you this morning. I was born in Rwanda in the year 1953.

And you have no idea how precious Pastor Claude and his wife are to me. And how precious this church is. You see, when I was young, there was nothing like this.

When I was wounded, there was no witness. And I thank God for you with all my heart. I have asked the Lord to give me a word for you today.

Because this is your 25th anniversary. It's a time of great blessing and celebration. But it's also a dangerous time for any church.

Because something can happen that can take away your strength. And it can take away your witness. Let's pray together.

Father, I thank you. For the touch of your Holy Spirit. I thank you for your word.

Which is life. It's light. It's strength.

Your word shows us the way we should go. And calls us when we find ourselves without strength. And so I ask you for the anointing of your Holy Spirit.

To deliver this word to your people. And give your people strength. Strengthen this church, Lord.

And prepare this church for the next season. Thank you for giving your word. May, oh God, you speak through me today.

And give us the hearts to hear. In Jesus' name. I want to focus on one verse to begin from Luke chapter 10.

And it's a verse the scripture says where a certain person stood up. And he said, Master, what do I have to do to inherit eternal life? In other words, what do I have to do to stay alive? I don't want to spiritually die. I want to stay alive.

And I want it to last forever. So what is the thing that I need to do? How can I find this life? That you promised is available to all of your people. I was so surprised 10 years ago.

I was speaking in London, England. And I walked into a bookstore. And I saw a book I never anticipated I would ever see in my lifetime.

And it was a book talking about the revival that had come to my hometown. And it happened just about the time that I was born. I couldn't believe it.

Because my whole time I had been showing my testimony. I had been telling people I grew up in a town where there was no testimony of Jesus Christ. And I'm in my 50s now.

And I find out there was a revival in my hometown. Not just in Rue Noranda, but also in Val d'Or. There was a pastor at this time.

And a church. And they went outside. And this is the title of my message to you this morning.

Stay outside. If you want to stay alive. Stay outside.

And this pastor and this congregation went outside. And they began to preach the gospel and crowds started to gather. And people started coming to God.

But the law of the province of Quebec at that time. Said that you couldn't do these things. You could practice your religion, but you had to do it inside.

You couldn't take what you believed into the broader marketplace. And they threatened this pastor. If you continue to do this.

We're going to charge you. And we're going to put you in jail. But the pastor believed in his heart.

That the calling of God was stronger than the threats of people. And he kept going outside. And he kept preaching the gospel.

Until eventually the mayor of Rue Noranda. And the police chief. Arrested him.

And some of his followers. And put them in jail. The congregation gathered together.

And they fought this injustice in the courts. And they won the battle. They changed the law.

This oppressive law. Lost its force. And they were given the right to preach anywhere they wanted to.

But then a strange thing happened. After they won the battle. They're not heard from again.

It's like they went inside the church. And they began to either celebrate their victory. Which is something that we can all do.

Or maybe they just got tired. They got tired of the fight. Tired of going outside the doors.

And always having this hostility. For whatever reason. They went inside of their own church.

And I'm sure they had a good time. And they celebrated God. This church was two blocks from my house.

200 yards from my house. I passed by this church almost every day. I passed by it when I was a child.

I passed by it when I was a teenager. I passed by it when I was getting close to 20 years old. I never saw one person come out of that church.

I used to wonder. Who are these people? There was only about 20,000 English speaking people in my town. How come I didn't know any of them? I used to wonder when I would go by there.

I wonder who these people are. I wonder what they believe. I wonder what they do in there.

As I was passing by. Just like this parable that Jesus tells this teacher now. He says there was a certain man that went down from Jerusalem to Jericho.

And those two cities are significant. Because Jericho represents the beginning of our walk with God. It represents the moment that churches are established.

It represents the moment that churches are established. The moment that lives are redeemed. The moment that you have to go in and you've got to conquer these places that you were told you could never conquer.

It was in Jericho that this group of God's people. They took a prostitute with them. And they took her whole family.

And she became a part of the family of God. Not just a part of the family of God, she became a famous part of the family of God. It's that season where we start out and we have compassion for those that have no helper.

They have no way out of destruction unless we help them. It's that season where Pastor Claude climbed under a veranda, a porch. Because the police called, there was a girl under there that was going to take her life.

That was your Jericho. That was the beginning of your church. That was the heart that God gave to you at whatever personal cost.

You could have died under that porch. She could have lit a match and you'd be in heaven already today. But her soul was worth you going in there.

That's what Jericho means. It doesn't matter what it costs me. I'm going to go in and get those that have no hope.

I'm going to get those that have no helper. And I'm not going to leave them behind. I'm going to take them with me.

That's how most churches start. They start because they have that heart. But then eventually they get to Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is the place that is built after the victory is won. It's the place of the temple. Wonderful worship there.

The glory of God is in the building. But something happened to the people. We need to be careful.

Because when we have won the victory we can lose the heart and we can start to go inside and everything can be about what goes on inside. And we can forget that the glory of God was given to us when we were outside. The scripture tells us that there was a man there who fell among thieves.

That happened to me. The devil stole things from my life. He stole things from my life.

He stripped me of a sense of well-being. I was deeply wounded in my heart. I felt like I was half dead.

I started to get very angry. I started to drink a lot. I started to fight a lot.

And I would still be passing by that church almost every week. And I would still be wondering what happens in there. There's cars in the parking lot but where are the people? And why do I never see them come out of this building? Jesus said there was a certain priest who passed by.

And it talks about the offices that God gives in the church. We start to learn things. We start to teach others about things.

And I can just see this person going by. And he's now got a ministry in the church of some sort. He's got his notes under his arm.

And he's going in because he has to teach in the temple. And he walks right by a man who's wounded. And he was bruised.

And he forgot what his first ministry is all about. And he talks about a Levite as well. A worshiper.

He's got a new song to sing. He's got a new chord to play on the guitar. A new note to play on the trumpet.

And he's in such a hurry to get to the temple in Jerusalem that he no longer sees the man on the road. And if he does see him, he passes on the other side. I thank God for the third person in this story.

It was a Samaritan. This man had no ministry in the temple. This man couldn't sing in the choir.

But he saw the man who was still outside. I thank God with all my heart that when I was 24 years old, a man who had no ministry in the church saw me and he came to my house. He didn't make me come to his

house.

He came to my house. And he opened to me the word of God. Scripture says the Samaritan poured oil into this wounded man.

And he told me that I could have a new life in Christ. He told me that I could be forgiven. Told me that I could be a new creation.

Told us that God could heal our marriage. That he could help the wounds of my heart. He had no ministry in the church at all.

But he saw me. You see, I was the ministry of the church. And he saw me.

He stayed outside. Came to my house. And it cost him to come to my house.

It cost him time. I was not kind to him. Don't forget, I was angry.

And a lot of people you'll speak to about Christ are angry. They're tired of life. They don't trust anybody.

But he kept coming every week to my house. It cost him time. It cost him comfort.

I was so obnoxious with him. That when I gave my life to Christ he didn't believe me. He told me straight out I don't believe you.

I said no, it's true. It was because of him. Because of a Samaritan.

A man with no ministry. That I started reading my Bible. I read the Gospel of John.

And I saw Jesus Christ in it. I saw the cross. I saw the redemption.

I understood the mystery of salvation. I would never have read this book if somebody had not come to me. And to this day I thank God with all of my heart.

With all of my heart. That somebody came outside the house. Could you imagine a church that was once in revival in my hometown? A church that had a pastor that was willing to go to jail.

A church that preached the Gospel outside at any cost. And they finally defeat the law of that day. And then they go inside.

200 yards from my house. I wish somebody would have come out of that house. I wish somebody would have talked to me when I was a teenager.

The church was right by the arena. I played hockey. I would go there every week.

Discouraged. Wounded. Hurt.

I'm sure they were having a good time in that church. I bet you the worship was incredible. I think the word was probably biblical and solid.

But where were the people? I never saw a single person in 18 years. Not one. Not one.

Not one. Not one. I could see the church from my house.

And I never saw anybody come out of that building. But I knew people were going there. I didn't know who they were.

Because they had gone inside. And they forgot that the wounded people are outside. I would have listened to them.

I was so hurt inside. I would have listened. Now God says to his own people in the book of Isaiah chapter 58.

Here is the religion that I am looking for. It's a religion that goes out and says I'm going to make a difference in my society. People are gripped by wickedness.

And I'm going to ask God to use my life to open their prison doors. And give sight to their blinded eyes. And pour healing into their wounded hearts.

And to lift their burdens from them. And to see them get set free. I'm not asking them to come to me.

I'm going to go to them. I'm going to ask God for the eyes to see them. I was in Kenya recently.

And a little orphan girl about this high came up to me. And she said something to me profound. She said pastor you have spiritual eyes.

I said what do you mean by that? She said if you didn't have spiritual eyes you wouldn't see me. From the mouth of a child. If you didn't have spiritual eyes I would be too small for you.

There would be nothing I could add to your agenda. You wouldn't even notice that I'm alive. Is it not he said to give your bread to the hungry.

And thank God for what you have done in this church. Thank God for the testimony of this church. You have gone outside.

You have fed the hungry. Stay outside. Keep feeding the hungry.

Keep reaching those in need. Keep reaching those who have no help. Bring back those who have been abandoned.

It doesn't say to invite them. It says to bring them. It means you.

Bring them. You go get them. You say come with me to the house of God.

And you say come with me to the house of God. There's bread. There's healing.

There's provision. There's love. There's freedom.

Come with me. Come with me. God, God sees you.

God sees your hurt. God sees your pain. I know he does.

Because he lives inside of me. And he looks through my eyes. And his heart beats inside of my body.

And I know how he feels about you. So you come with me to the house of God. And the scripture says don't hide from human need.

Listen to me. Do not be driven inside of this house. Don't let the powers of hell stop you from doing what God has called you to do.

You will be opposed. You will be threatened. You will be ridiculed.

But God says this promise to you. If you will continue to reach out outside these walls, your light will break forth like the morning. There will be something of you that God says I'm going to do something through you.

And the darkness cannot hide the light that I'm going to show through you. Hallelujah. Remember this one thing.

Darkness cannot swallow light. Darkness can threaten the light. But it can't swallow the light.

The light has power to swallow the darkness. He says if you do this you're healing. I will bring healing to you.

You will be a wholesome people. And the fact that I'm with you will go before you. God says I will give you a reputation.

I will send it before you. I will cause it to be spoken. The voice of God is louder than the voice of your enemies.

I will give you a reputation among the people. And I will go before you. And I will come behind you.

And I will protect you from every power of darkness that would try to swallow you. And from everything of hell it says I'm going to pursue you and I'm going to overtake you. Remember these two things.

I will go before you. And I will give you a reputation. And I will go behind you.

And I will protect you. If you continue to reach out. And not only that.

The Lord says you will call out to me. And I will answer you. You will pray.

I will hear you. You will ask. And I will give you.

You will seek. And you will find. You will knock.

And it shall be open. There will be no power of hell that can come against you. If you take away the yoke.

If the reason you exist is to help those that have nobody to help them. And pointing your finger. And speaking wickedly.

Now here's what that means. I want you to picture the priest coming to the temple. And the worshiper with his or her instrument coming to the temple.

And they see this man on the road that's been beaten and wounded and left for dead. Pointing the finger means somebody should do something about that. Speaking wickedness.

Means pointing the finger. Saying well he's like that because it's his fault. It's not my fault he's like that.

He's like that because he's doing drugs. He's like that because of how he was raised. He's like that because that's what people from his neighborhood do.

So I take my Bible and my instrument and I make my way to the temple. The Lord says take that away from you. Don't let that be part of you.

He said if you extend your soul to the hungry. If you reach down to the afflicted soul. Then your light will begin to shine in the darkness.

And even your darkest times will be just like the noon day. And the Lord will guide you continually. And he will satisfy you in times of famine.

He will be strength to you. He'll be strength to your families. He'll give strength to your homes.

He'll give strength to your witness of Christ. And you will be like a watered garden. And like a spring whose waters do not fail, and the people that are raised up among you will build the old waste places and raise up the foundations of many generations.

That means generations that have been destroyed by sin. Homes that have been destroyed. Lives that have been destroyed.

Minds that have been destroyed. God says you, you who reach out. You who let my compassion be at the center of your heart.

You who go outside the walls of where you worship. You will be the ones that God will use. And you will raise up the foundations.

Homes will be rebuilt. Marriages will be restored. Teenagers will be saved.

Children will have hope. And not only that. You will be called the one who restores or repairs that place.

Who rebuilds the wall. That allowed that street to be a place where the devil was destroying people. You will be the restorer of streets to dwell in.

Let me finish just with this thought. If you will stay outside, God's going to do something through you much far beyond anything you've ever experienced. Deeper than anything you've ever known.

This is not the end of anything at 25 years. This is only the beginning of something that God is determined to do through you. You have an incredible opportunity ahead of you.

But don't let the devil drive you indoors. Stay outside. Because people like me, when I was a teenager, are still out there.

And they're still waiting for you. Don't let yourself be a hidden treasure from them. You open the doors of this church every Sunday.

And say, now my ministry begins. Not when you come in. But when you go out.

Now my ministry begins. By the grace of God. People are going to find Christ as Savior.

By the grace of Almighty God. God will be glorified. Christ will be glorified.

By the grace of Almighty God. This sanctuary is going to be too small one day. By the grace of God, young people will be sitting all over the floors in here.

By the grace of God, pastor, you're going to have to sit them on the stage. By the grace of God. Because we chose to stay outside.

Pastor Claude, I love you. You're a good man. And it's because of your heart this church is here today.

And I would like to pray for you and for your lovely wife, Chantal. And I'd like us as a church today to gather around your pastor. All of the leaders as well.

And we're going to pray. And we're going to pray this simple prayer. Keep us outside.

Keep our hearts out there. Don't let it change. No matter what comes against us.

No matter what voices are raised against us. Keep us outside. Your promise is life.

You promised light. You promised strength. You promised water.

You said you would be our protection. You said you would give us a good reputation. And so we settle at that today.

Let the lost say what they want to say. But this is my guide. This is my truth.

This is what God says. Praise God. Let's stand together.

And those who would like to come forward and gather around your pastor and his wife, would you please come. Those who want to stay outside in this church. Step out of your seat, wherever you are.

Just come, please. All the people, everyone who wants to be part of this. I'll give you a moment while we worship.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord. Wherever you are, just come.

Say, Lord, I'm going to be part of that army that goes out of these doors. And I'm going to reach somebody for you. Somebody wounded, somebody bruised, somebody broken.

I'm going to bring to this house somebody that nobody wants. Because you died for them. And I'm going to do it at my own expense.

This is going to be my ministry.

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