

Tasting the Lord's Supper

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon invites believers to embrace the fullness of God's kingdom and reject worldly distractions that prevent true satisfaction in Christ.

Duration: 1:06:20

Scripture: Matthew 21:28-30, Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 14:15-20, Luke 14:23

Topics: "Lord's Supper"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the high calling that God has placed on every person's life. He addresses the reluctance of some individuals to let go of their possessions and embrace the promises of God. The preacher uses the example of a man who bought a piece of land and another who bought five yoke of oxen, both of whom make excuses for not responding to God's invitation. The preacher highlights the importance of prioritizing our relationship with God and fulfilling the mission of spreading the gospel to all people.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church Pulpit Series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, PO Box 260, Lindell, Texas 75771, or calling 903-963-8626.

None of these messages are copyrighted, and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. Lord, we're thrilled to be in your presence tonight. We're thrilled to be your people.

God, we're thrilled to praise you. We're thrilled to enjoy fellowship in your house, and we're more thrilled to open your word. O God, I would ask for an anointing of the Holy Spirit tonight.

Lord, I have no strength, I have no wisdom, I have no power. There's nothing within me apart from what you give me, and have chosen to give me over the years. God, I lay before you the little bit that I've been able to prepare, and I ask, O God, that you touch it with the fire of your holy presence.

God, bring it to life, Lord, and give it the anointing of the Holy Ghost. Lord, touch every heart, touch every life in this house tonight. Let your kingdom come and your will be done in our hearts, here on this earth, and in this city, and in this church as it is in heaven.

Father, we thank you for this in Jesus' name. Amen. If you'll turn with me to Luke chapter 14, please, in the New Testament.

Luke chapter 14, Tasting the Lord's Supper. Tasting the Lord's Supper. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. A special welcome again for all of our first-time visitors.

We believe that if you'll open your heart, that Jesus will touch you with his manifested presence in your life, and bring you further on your journey from image to image, and glory to glory, in doing in your heart that which only he can do. Luke chapter 14, beginning at verse 15. And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

Then said he, that's Jesus, unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many, and sent his servant at suppertime to say unto them that were bidden, Come, for now, for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it.

I pray thee, have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them. I pray thee, have me excused.

And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. Interesting that the man who had married didn't even beg to be excused, he just assumed that Jesus would understand. So that servant came, and showed his lord these things.

Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.

For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden, shall taste of my supper. Tasting the Lord's supper. Now, this was midway, I guess, in the book of Luke, in the teaching ministry of Jesus.

And he was teaching, if you'll back up just a few verses from verse 15, he was talking about preparing a dinner. He said, in verse 12, he said, When you make a dinner or a supper, don't call your friends or your brothers, neither your kinsmen nor your rich neighbors, lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made to thee. In other words, when you're calling a feast or a banquet, he was giving a principle, he said, Don't just call those that can repay you, but if you really want the heart of God, call those who can't pay you back.

He said, in verse 13, When you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind, and thou shalt be blessed. Now, blessed, in the original text, is the word, Markios, and it means, you will be fully satisfied. Now, wherever you see this word, blessed, it means the same thing.

Fully satisfied. He said, just do this, and you will be fully satisfied, for they cannot recompense thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just. And I can see this particular person, it doesn't say who it was in the Gospel of Luke, being overwhelmed, just momentarily, and it says, And one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, and he said unto him, Blessed, that means fully satisfied, is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

And in effect, what this man was saying to Jesus, O Lord God, this is the longing of my heart. The longing of my heart is to be fully satisfied. And folks, that's the longing of everybody's heart in society.

It's what drives people to drink. It's what drives people from relationship to relationship. It's what makes the wealthy businessman never satisfied with what he has in the bank.

He still has to gamble and attempt to gain some more. It's what causes people to search for satisfaction in the things of this world, in relationships, and all this world has to offer, because there's something in the heart of man that is never fully satisfied, but yet longs to be fully satisfied. And this man who was sitting at meat with him, hearing him speak and hearing the principles of the kingdom of God, all of a sudden his heart just gushes out.

And he says, fully satisfied, or blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. Now his perspective was futuristic. He was saying, one day the kingdom of God is going to come.

One day Messiah is going to come. The Roman rule will be broken. And knowing perhaps that scriptures from Isaiah said there's going to be a day of the righteous reign of eternal almighty God over the earth and over man.

All things will be created new. There'll be a new heaven, there'll be a new earth. There'll be no more tears, no more sorrow.

Prophet Isaiah had promised these things in the spirit of God. And you hear this man saying, Oh, I can hardly wait for that day. I'm going to be fully satisfied.

And everybody who eats in that kingdom is going to be fully satisfied. And that, unfortunately, is the perspective of even many of God's people today. Coming into the house of the Lord and saying, Oh, when we all get to heaven, what a day of rejoicing that's going to be.

In the dear by and by we shall meet on that wonderful shore. Their whole perspective is one day we're going to be there. One day we're going to be fully satisfied.

One day we're going to taste of the things of God in their fullness. Now Jesus, instead of answering this directly, gives them a parable. And the reason He spoke in parables is made clear, I believe, when we read the Old Testament through the prophet Isaiah in particular, that the gospel was given only to those who had the heart and the ears to hear.

You cannot hear the gospel if your heart is not engaged to the things of God. I think it's one of the greatest tragedies of all time that you can sit in any generation under the purest gospel that God may give to that particular people at that time and still not have the ears to hear it. Maybe incorporating into the natural mind concepts of theology but not hearing really what God is saying.

And this is what was happening in this entire generation. Israel was unable to hear. Their Messiah had come.

The Messiah they were waiting for. He was there. He was in their midst.

Fully aware. Fully able to set up the eternal kingdom of God. But something had happened to the hearts of the people that He had redeemed by His power and with a mighty hand out of the slavery of Egypt and brought into their own place of promise.

And so He begins to speak to the people with a parable. And even today as it was in those days really if you don't have a hungry heart and if I don't have a hungry heart we will learn perhaps words and lessons but we will never be able to fully appreciate or advance in the kingdom of God. Fully satisfied said the man.

Fully satisfied will they be. Now Jesus is about to change His perspective if He has the ears to hear it. And that's what this message is about tonight.

For those who have come into this house and in your heart you're saying Oh one day. One day I'm going to be fully satisfied. One day way in the future when I've left this earth and this physical body I shall taste of the bread of heaven in the kingdom of God.

And then Jesus said to him A certain man made a great supper and bade many. Now this is inevitably God the Father made this great banquet feast. The banquet feast of His word.

The banquet feast of His love. His power. His protection.

His heart revealed to humanity from even before the beginning of time. Coming down to this earth to redeem a people unto Himself. He made a great feast and bade many.

If you'll go with me just for a moment. Put a marker in Luke 13 and go to Revelation. The last book in the New Testament.

Chapter 19. Just to prove a point really. Revelation.

Now this is something that the Lord has shown John that's coming into the future. Revelation chapter 19 verse 7. Well let's go to verse 6. John says And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude and as the voice of many waters and the voice of mighty thunderings saying Alleluia for the Lord God omnipotent that means all powerful reigns. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to Him for the marriage supper of the Lamb has come and His wife has made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen clean and white for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And He said unto me Write blessed Now the word blessed is makarios the very same word that is in this particular passage of Scripture in Luke chapter 14 we've just read. He said to me Write fully satisfied are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Are you called to the marriage supper of the Lamb? Are you called? The Bible says It doesn't say fully satisfied are those who arrive in heaven but fully satisfied are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And He said unto me These are the true sayings of God. This is true.

You and I are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb and therefore there is something that God's trying to speak to our hearts about that full satisfaction that comes to the hearts of those who can hear who are called to this marriage supper. In verse 17 This man in verse 16 he says A certain man as God the Father made a great supper and bade many in other words it was an invitation to many many of his people that he had redeemed. And he sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden Come for all things are now ready.

Now I believe that as we go through this parable that Jesus is talking about himself. He's talking about the Father in verse 16 and now he's talking about himself in verse 17. The word servant is doulos and it

means one who is in a permanent relationship of servitude to another his will being altogether consumed in the will of the other.

This servant was an absolute manifestation of the will of the Father. This is what he's speaking about and he sent his servant at supper time Now he said in John 6 38 Jesus said I didn't come down from heaven to do my own will but the will of him that sent me. In other words he was speaking of himself in this verse.

My will is completely wrapped up in the will of the Father. Now this verse becomes interesting because he's now sitting in the midst of his people Israel.

You know the story of Israel you know how I don't have to go through all the patriarchs and through the lineage of the Old Testament into Egypt and out again by the strong hand of God and through Joshua into the promised land to claim their possession and now the Messiah that's been promised to them is right in their midst and he came he said at supper time it wasn't two thousand years before supper he came right at supper time in other words it's time to eat this was the message of Jesus when he came it's time to be satisfied it's supper time I thank God when I was a child and my mother used to come out the door and I'd be out playing baseball in the back alley with my friends and she'd shout my name and say supper time supper she'd call me well I knew that it was time to eat and this

servant came and he came at supper time to tell them that were bidden he said come for all things are now ready they're now ready and Jesus was saying to those who could hear it I came to you the word of God became flesh and I came to tell you that now is the time that you can begin to taste of the Lord now is the time that the satisfaction this complete full satisfaction that you have put to a futuristic date has now arrived this full satisfaction was in Jesus Christ it was in no other person it was totally within the grasp of Israel to receive Jesus Christ as their savior and he could have set up his kingdom right at that time but God being omniscient that means knowing all things from the beginning of time knows knew that the people would never do that that's why through the Old

Testament prophets he was able to prophesy that the message of the gospel would be no longer restricted to just Israel his chosen people but now would be released to the Gentile nations throughout the entire world thank God for that for folks if that didn't happen then you and I would be without hope here tonight now in verses 18 to 20 Jesus begins to expose the reasons why many of that generation will never know the blessedness of the fullness that they seek they will never know the rest and the peace that was being freely offered to them it's really an incredible thing when you think about it because the people are in the presence of the living son of God they or that generation are being invited to partake of the feast that the scripture says is now ready and yet other sources of trust

apart from God had gripped their hearts so that with one consent they began to make excuse verse 18 it says they all with one consent it appears that something had come into the society it seems as a whole that there was no division in this thing yes Israel was coming to the temple yes they were going through the religious duty on the Sabbath day they're offering up the lambs and the bullocks and the turtle doves and the kids and all the rest of these things they're going through the ritualistic offering of incense and making prayers but something is in their heart and Jesus is identifying that thing that has gotten into the hearts of his people that is keeping them away from realizing on this side of eternity the full satisfaction that he had come to give them he was saying I've come

it's here and it's now the kingdom of God is now here the kingdom of God this was the message of John the Baptist make your way straight for the kingdom of God is at hand the kingdom of God was manifested

through Jesus Christ he was the kingdom of God come down to earth God incarnate in flesh and everything that every man had ever wanted was to be found in him and he made an invitation come he said all ye who labor and are heavy laden and I'll give you rest take my yoke upon you learn of me I'm meek and lowly in heart and you shall find rest for your souls this is not something just for heaven this is something I've come to give you on earth that's why Jesus himself said I've come to give you life and I've come to give you it more abundantly not only eternal life in heaven but life here

on the earth I've come to satisfy you I've come to fill the longing of your hearts I've come to take away the aching loneliness I've come to heal those that have been wounded in their hearts I've come to open prison doors to those that have been bound by circumstance around you I've come to give sight to the spiritually blind and to open the ears of the deaf and to tell you that now now is the acceptable year of the Lord this is the time and that's the message that Israel couldn't hear what a tragedy the very people of God couldn't hear when their Messiah came into their midst I can't think of anything that's more tragic than that I can't think of anything but worse than people coming to the temple of God and going through the ritual of worship going through the ritual of sacrifice and

weekly and monthly and daily attendance in the house of God and yet never experiencing the fullness that God has intended them to have through His Son never entering the fullness Jesus said it was a great supper and I was sent to the Father and I bid them to come but with one consent they began to make excuse and they said the excuse in the original text here's what the excuse means the word they began to make excuse it's to beg a person's release I beg you in other words they're saying let me go from this thing that you're calling me to to beg a person's release by expressing a reluctance to agree to the demand or by implying that the thing asked for is too difficult to obtain and really what he's saying is with one consent they began to come before me as I offered them the fullness that

they were looking for but with one consent they began to say this is too hard what you're asking us to do you're in effect asking us to release what we've come to trust in and to lay hold of something that we can only really adhere to by faith because we don't see it and you're asking us to release what we can see to lay hold of what we can't see and can only understand by faith and so with one consent they say it's too hard I can't let go of this oh folks I tell you throughout the 2,000 years of the church there have been so many people who have missed the fullness of God whether or not they missed heaven that's really between them and God but I tell you there have been many people who have missed the fullness of God because what they held in their hand they considered so precious and

were unwilling to let it go that they may obtain something that can only be given and begotten by faith it's by invitation it's like what Jesus was walking on the water and they were rowing in the storm and he came walking on the water and stood before the disciples they had with them at that time the security of the boat they had with them the security of fellowship they had the security of the oars and some sense of direction and all of a sudden this voice begins to beckon and Peter because his heart he so yearned for the Lord he said oh if it's you bid me to come if it's you God give me the courage to leave what I have trusted in give me the courage and he just said come the invitation was given and Peter stepped out and began to walk in a place that's impossible for the natural man to

walk in and God calls to you and God calls to me we're not called just to sit and trust in the things of this world there's a high calling on our lives on every one of our lives now they were saying to him it's too difficult to let go of these things and he was saying to them many of you will not come because you hold too dear what you already possess and to release it for something that you've not yet seen yet it is

promised to you verse 18 one man comes and says to him I have bought a piece of ground and I must need to go and see it I pray thee I pray thee have me excused I pray thee don't ask me to give this thing up now here's a man this is an incredible irony he said his security was in real estate he says I bought a piece of land and I have to go see it now the irony is that before

him is the man who had brought this people into the land and given them that which they possessed in the first place it was the son of God Jesus the Old Testament says was the rock that went the fire in other words he was the one that went before them through the wilderness he was the captain of the the Lord's host that met Joshua as they went into the promised land he was the one that fought for them and give them the power to defeat giants that were much more powerful than they were and brought them into the land and now he stands before them and says I've come to make you complete I've come to fill you I've come to give you all you ever long for and the first man stands before him and says but you know I have I've just bought some real estate and I have to go see it you know it's

incredible because having possession in the land that he brought them into the first place they now view this as their security and their future and once again as in Exodus chapter 14 the people were entangled in the land and unable to see the God before them who could lead them through to their heart's desire Psalm 37 verse 4 says delight thyself also in the Lord and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart delight thyself in the Lord second man or person comes to him and says in verse 19 I have bought five yoke of oxen and I go to prove them I pray thee have me excused oxen the son of God is inviting him into the fullness of fellowship he's inviting him to be complete and satisfied and he says I've got ten cows that I've got to go and look at five yoke of oxen you see he views

these cattle as his strength I go to prove them to see if they're as good as I've been told and if they are they will be the strength of my future I see this man saying oh look at the fields I'm going to be able to plow with these oxen and this is going to be the college fund for my kids and this is going to be my retirement I'll be able to look after my aging parents and we'll be able to buy a nice home I go to prove these oxen you know it's so tragic and hurtful that the strength of Israel sits before them and yet once more the people's tendency is to choose what they can see over what they cannot once more just like in the days of Moses they're choosing a cat this particular man is choosing cattle over God you know that tendency is always in the heart of man to trust what we can see

and to trust what we think is the source of strength to trust what we think will give us a future when Jesus is saying I came to fully satisfy you fully satisfy a man who trusts in cattle will always be worried about his cattle and God in his mercy maybe sends some kind of a foot rot disease to those cattle so that his heart will turn back to God again I go to prove them he said I go to prove them and see if they're as strong as I've been told to see if they're as good contrast that to David you remember the psalmist David when Saul tried to put his armor upon David and David said I haven't proven these things but I have proven him and he takes off all the man-made armor all a trust in the devices of the flesh and steps out with just five smooth stones and a sling and a confidence in God

and with that confidence defeats a giant that's been taunting the armies of Israel David said in Psalm 28 verses 7 and 8 he said the Lord is my strength and my shield my heart trusted in him and I am helped therefore my heart greatly rejoices and with my song will I praise him the Lord is their strength he is the saving strength of his anointed in verse 20 scripture says another said I've married a wife and therefore I cannot come here's a man or a woman or a man in this case saying I'm trusting in other relationships turning down the eternal bridegroom's extended hand for that which seemingly offers more of an

immediate satisfaction I have married in other words my heart is already betrothed to someone or to something else I beg of you I beg of you Lord don't ask me to leave off giving

this love of mine my fullest attention and affection God I've found something that has enamored my heart I've found something that grips my heart and Lord you're asking me to give it up you're asking me to let it go it's been my dream I remember one time a young lady who no longer attends this church I've shared this before came to Christ and was gloriously converted I remember the tears I remember the zeal I remember the joy and I remember the day the Holy Spirit began to speak to her about giving up a certain career and she met me back behind the platform one night and she said it can't be it can't be it can't be I said what can't be and she said it can't be that God would be asking me to give up this thing it's been my heart's desire since I've been a child and now I've attained it and

now the Lord is telling me to give it up oh it can't be God it can't be the voice of God now folks we'd never preached on this thing it was the Holy Spirit speaking to her heart she was coming forward and what was really happening is Jesus was saying I've made a supper for you I've got a banquet for you I've got satisfaction for you that you've not ever dreamt about I've got a plan for your life I've got a purpose for you first of all let go let go of this thing that grips your heart it was the Holy Spirit that was wooing her the Holy Spirit was drawing her but she as the scripture says stood before the Lord and said I can't let it go it can't be your voice asking me this has been the love of my life it's been my heart's desire I've attained it it can't be God it can't be God and then a

few weeks later she came back behind the platform one day and she said oh it's not it wasn't the voice of the Lord I'm convinced of it now God would never ask me to give this thing up now I wasn't saying anything I just said obey God whatever he speaks to you you should do it and then I watched now as the tears began to stop the stop responding to the altar call started sitting a little farther back and within about a few months gone out of the house of God gone I pray thee I pray thee excuse me I pray thee Lord have me excused have me excused how tragic how foolish to ask God the Son of God to be excused from being complete in Him now think it through for a moment is there anything more tragic in the life of a Christian is there anything more foolish in the house of God than to ask God

please excuse me I'll come to your house I'll offer up goats and donkeys and I'll give Him the offering and I'll sing my heart out Sunday morning but don't ask me to give this thing up in my life I beg you God excuse me excuse me from this you know the Lord is a gentleman He will never force you or I to do anything never it is a complete voluntary thing that we do on our part He's given us a free will He didn't create robots in the garden of Eden that He could just wind up and would worship Him and serve Him He gave us a free will because it's always been in the heart of God to have fellowship He wanted a bride that's all He's ever wanted now I don't fully understand that but I'll tell you something tonight that I know that I've come to a knowledge of that I meet a need in the heart of

God and you meet a need in the heart of God there's a need in God's heart that nobody else can meet but you or I I don't know if it's because God is lonely I don't fully understand these things I just know that in His love there was a need to create and there was a delight in His heart to come down in the cool of the day and to fellowship with Adam and create different forms of creatures and to see Adam begin to name them and to give Him dominion over these things and to help Him share in His creation that was the heart of God the desire of God and since the day that Adam fell there's only been one desire in the heart of God it's to bring you and bring me back again into that fullness of relationship with Him where we are satisfied and complete as Adam was that day in the garden

Hallelujah now in verse 21 it says so that servant came and showed his Lord these things and then the master of the house being angry we're going back again to God the Father said to his servant go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city and bring in hither the poor and the maimed and the halt and the blind now we're still in Israel at this time God the Father knew that even though He sent His Son that the people of that generation with one consent would make an excuse not to come into the relationship that He had determined and designed that they should enter into and so His Son is still in Israel for the three years that He was in public ministry in verse 21 and He's talking now about Himself but it's in a parable and the Father it's just being angry and sometimes you know we

look at these things and we miss a couple of words now Jesus was the very express image of His Father what was in His Father's heart was in the Son's heart and it's hard to imagine that God the Father would be angry at this I think angry that His people were robbed of the fullness angry that after all of His kindness that they made a choice to worship cows and people and all these other things pieces of ground and real estate their hearts were enamored and entangled in all of these things and then He told His Son or His servant He said go quickly into the streets and lanes of the city now keep in mind in Israel that it was only a three year period and bring in hither the poor the maimed, the halt and the blind now put a marker there and go with me to Matthew go back to Matthew chapter 21

now this is exactly what Jesus was doing at this moment He was calling those who could hear in Israel the Bible says the Father was angry the man who had made the feast and sent His servant and said bring in the poor the lame, the blind and the maimed Matthew chapter 21 verse 12 we see Jesus manifesting the heart of the Father and it says and Jesus went into the temple of God and cast out them that sold and bought in the temple and overthrew the tables of the money changers and the seats of them that sold doves and He said unto them it is written My house shall be called the house of prayer but you have made it a den of thieves and the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple and He healed them what did the master say go get the blind go get the lame go get the maimed and bring the

men to the banquet and that's what Jesus did He set out to bring those who could hear you think of it now in His three year ministry who were the people who followed Him harlots, prostitutes, lepers the lame, the blind the maimed those that had no education those that the Pharisees could stand on the hillside with all of their righteous indignation with all of their phony doctrine that kept them and their followers out of the kingdom of God with all of their hardness of heart with all of their entanglement in the land and stand and sneer and scorn at this man and his ragtag band of followers who seemed to be pressing in en masse for something that they thought was perhaps just foolishness in their generation and Jesus went into the temple manifesting the heart of His Father and overthrew

the tables of the money changers and the seats of them that sold doves and He said it is written My house shall be called the house of prayer but you have made it a den of thieves He was saying your entrapment you've tried to bring your love of the land your love of cattle, your love of ease your love of relationship you've tried to bring this into My house and yes you have succeeded, you brought it in and what you've done is you've taken away the reverence of who I am you've taken away from you've robbed the widows of their right you've robbed the orphans and the poor of their right to find Me as God you've given a false understanding there's no longer prayer this lackadaisical attitude in My house to who God the Father is has produced this thievery in the house of God where people come

in and all they're interested in doing is getting a good deal on a goat or on a dove and they're forgetting that they're meeting with a Holy God they're forgetting that I'm all that they'll ever need to be satisfied the

lack of prayer the lack of seeking Me is evidence that your hearts are entwined in the things of the land all around you and as such you've made My house that's supposed to be a place of reverence it's supposed to be a place of seeking Me it's a place where there is a constant cry an awareness of the holiness of God and an awareness of the power of God to meet every man, every woman every young person's need you've robbed the people you've made it a den of thieves that's what He's talking about it wasn't just the money changers and the selling of doves you've taken away My

presence from the people you've robbed them of an understanding and as He said these things the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple and He healed them also in verse 28 He said what do you think, what think ye a certain man had two sons this is Matthew 21 again 28 and he said to the first son go work today in my vineyard and he answered and said I will not but afterwards he repented and went and he came to the second and said likewise and he answered and said I go sir and went not whither the twain did the will of his father they say unto him the first Jesus said unto them verily I say unto you that publicans and harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you for John came to you in the way of righteousness and you believed him not but the publicans and harlots believed him

and ye when you had seen it repented not afterwards that you might believe him he said I give you an invitation and you refused it but the publicans and the harlots prostitutes, tax gatherers the offscouring of society, they heard it they heard the invitation and they've come in and they're going to receive the fullness but you yourselves are going to be left out and verse 22 said the servant said Lord it is done as thou has commanded and yet there is room oh thank God there's room thank God thank God there is room in his kingdom and the Lord said unto the servant now I see this to be the church in verse 23 Christ did what he was commanded to do and now he has sent us as his body to be his body on this earth and to do this last work that needs to be done and the Lord said unto the servant

go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in that my house may be filled compel them now that's an interesting thought Jesus said go into all the world preach the gospel to every creature baptizing them in the name of the Father the Son and the Holy Ghost and Lord he said I'm with you always even to the end of the world compel them to come in to my house that my house may be filled I believe this to be the present ministry of Christ through his church now the word compel is interesting and when we look at it, it becomes difficult to some degree to understand this passage in the original text it's anakazo and here's what it means to force, to compel by external violence to compel in a moral sense as by an authoritative command by troublesome or persistent persuasion and

by prevalent example that sounds a little bit radical when you first read it in other words, force them so prick their conscience so move upon them it's as if you're standing before people and commanding them to come into the kingdom of God by troublesome and persistent persuasion and by prevalent example that really sounds like many of us when we first got saved, doesn't it? you remember when you first got saved I remember when I first got saved we have so much zeal and so little wisdom I remember Pastor Patrick, can I tell you a story tonight? wouldn't mind if I Pastor Patrick was telling me we were sharing one night about when we first came to the Lord and the zeal that God used to give us I'll tell myself first I was in a church service one time and I was invited, it was Police

Appreciation Sunday the police force sent me to represent the Ottawa police force that I was part of at that time and then there were Royal Canadian Mounted Police Ontario Provincial Police and all these different police officers there and they were appreciating us which was very nice and I was sitting in the front row Free Methodist Church, it was a very moving ceremony very moving message and then the pastor at the

end, he got up and dismissed the church, no altar call no opportunity to receive Christ, I'm a brand new Christian and so I jumped to my feet and I turned to the church and I said wait, hold it, hold it, nobody can go and then I began to preach to them I said pastor, no offense, but we cannot dismiss this church without giving people an opportunity to receive Christ as their

Savior and I began to tell them what God can do in their lives, now normally you get thrown out of church, but I'm in uniform with a gun beside me when the police stand up and begin to do that who are you going to call to kick him out? but that was not my motivation there was a zeal inside that said you compel them I was not able to contain it I thought, I couldn't stand the thought of one person in that meeting today, having been moved upon by the Spirit of God, not knowing how to be saved so I preached the message to them and led them in a sinner's prayer and asked for a show of hands, the whole gambit we had a wonderful time in the house of the Lord Pastor Patrick told me the time after he got saved, we were sharing this the other day because we've been asking the Lord with wisdom now,

God bring us back to our first love if we're drifting away, if we're becoming religious if we're becoming goat sellers and dove sellers in the house of God, if these things are getting into our hearts, if we're being enamored by even ministry and even in that, are losing out on the fullness that we've been called to in Jesus Christ, God help us Holy Spirit get a hold of us first as the ministers of the Lord we were walking, we were sharing these things and Pastor Patrick, Pastor Neal's got some great stories, he'll tell you sometime about these he was worse than I was but Pastor Patrick got saved and he shared with me that he was angry and before he came to the Lord and he was into body building and weight training, all this stuff and he came to the Lord and God just radically changed his

life and he was at home with his family and they're watching the football game on television and in the middle of the football game, he got up and stood in front of the TV and raised his hands and said Oh God, save my family, they're lost God save them, God save them now his family thought that he'd lost his mind but he hadn't there was something in him that was forcing him the kingdom of God had come into his heart and was manifesting through his life with this burden to see others brought into the kingdom of God now folks, I want to tell you something about new Christians, you may not like them on your job, but you have to deal with them you have to deal with them, there's no putting them away, they're in your face all the time all the time, because there's a zeal, they're apprehending

something they're laying hold of something that you don't have I remember before I got saved, there was this this Christian policeman that used to read his Bible in the lunch room, every day now in the lunch room, the police force, it was card playing and cursing and swearing, and that's usually what went on at lunch time stories about what was going on, on different calls and shifts, and then right in the middle of this is this guy with his Bible, and he'd sit there and he'd just read his Bible, that's all he would do and he would unnerve the whole room the whole room being a virtual uproar because this man, all he did was read his Bible, you have to deal with these new Christians, I wasn't saved, I remember and I'd say, Vince for goodness sakes, why do you have to do that here, why do

you have to bring all this stuff on your head, I said all you do is come under criticism all the time and he says, you know I said why don't you at least just stand up for yourself, just stand up for yourself why do you sit there and take all of this abuse that's heaped on you, all the time, and he said the Lord will look after me, the Lord will protect me and I remember one day I was in the lunchroom and these guys were railing on him and I said to some of them at that time I was fairly wild and I said you guys knock it off, you leave him alone he's not hurting you, he's not hurting me, he's not hurting anybody else, I remember Vince

just looking at me and saying, see I told you, he said the Lord will look after me compel them compel them to come into the kingdom of God, now go with me

please quickly to Matthew chapter 11 because in that chapter is a clue to what this really means, compel them to come into the kingdom of God Matthew chapter 11 verse 12 now here this is an incredible scripture and I've heard a lot of misinterpretation of this scripture over the years but here's what it says, Jesus said and from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven, so he's talking about a very short period of time, he's talking about the time that John appeared on the scene until now is when he's actually speaking, we're not looking at a very large period of time here but he's talking about there's been a new something new has arrived the kingdom of heaven was somewhat exclusive at one time now he's saying from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of

heaven suffered violence and the violent take it by force now there's a lot of really strange people even in the body of Christ that have taken this verse and they go into the streets with plastic swords and they do all kinds of foolish things thinking that this is what this scripture is all about all they'd have to do is get a concordance and look it up and find out what it really means and save themselves a lot of heartache, now one American translation says it this way I went through many translations plus the original text to get the meaning of this and I'm going to try and give it to you the kingdom of heaven suffered violence one American translation puts it this way from the time of John the Baptist men have been taking the kingdom of heaven by storm, they've been taking it by

storm and then it says and the violent take it by force I'll read you some translations the Christian New Testament says men have been using force and seizing it the Moffat translation says these eager souls are storming it, the Williams translation says this, they are seizing it as a precious prize, here's what Jesus is saying from the day of John the Baptist till now something has been happening men have been taking the kingdom of heaven by storm and they are seizing it as a precious prize, that's what Jesus meant when he said compel them compel them to come in the Hendrickson commentary says our Lord is describing the energy with which some souls are pressing in and urging the need of such energy if salvation is to be obtained what do you mean by this pastor, well this is what I mean,

Jesus walked by Jericho Matthew chapter 20 verses 29 to 34 he walked by Jericho and you remember the story of Joshua coming and the people walking around and shouting a great shout and the wall fell and there were two blind men the scripture says standing or sitting by the way and when they heard he was passing by they began to cry out Jesus thou son of David have mercy on us this is the end of side one you may now turn the tape over to side two the people around them told them to be quiet be quiet, be quiet this is the son of God, be quiet this is the anointed prophet that God has sent to Israel, but they would not be quiet, they were pressing in they were taking it in a sense by force they were moving towards God and they said Jesus I believe the more people told them to be quiet the

more they began to shout Jesus Jesus son of David have mercy on us and the scripture says Jesus stopped and had the men brought to him and said what would you have me to do they said Lord that we may receive our sight and the bible says he touched their eyes and immediately they received their sight and they began to follow him, immediately their eyes were opened and they had the knowledge, this is the son of God, this is the Messiah everything that we long for is found in him, certainly the man who can give us sight, but it was the cry, it was the cry that was in their heart, that caused them to take notice it was the cry that caused them to call them near to him and touch their eyes and give them their sight and then give them the will and the power to follow him Mark 5, I think the

woman with the issue of blood pressed through the crowd having suffered many things by the physicians of her generation spent all her money and pressed through the crowd and said if I can just touch him I will be made perfectly whole and ironically it was not the religious, it was not the knowledgeable other than perhaps a few like Nicodemus and others and Joseph of Arimathea and others who should have had the knowledge of who he was it were the harlots and the publicans and the blind the lame, the maimed that were pressing in as a storm and seizing heaven as a prize now Jesus said the Lord said unto that servant go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in that my house may be filled and the word of God to you and I today is that we are by our pursuit of God by simply

our pursuit of God to compel those around us who do not know him to have to stand up and take knowledge that indeed God is with us to compel them and folks I want to tell you something that is why new Christians usually win more people to God than people who have been 10 years in the Lord because new Christians are pressing in, they're pressing in, they're violently pressing in to the kingdom of God, they want every grain of truth that's in this book, they say God I will not be denied, I've been denied all my life but now I've found truth and I will not be denied one measure of freedom that you purchased for me and they press in almost with the violence in a sense, they press in, being undaunted, not stopping and it causes all around them to be compelled in a sense to come into the

kingdom of God remember when I first got saved there were so many people that came to Christ in those first couple of years I feel that I'm safe on heaven's ground to say somewhere between 50 and 100 people in the first few years of my walk with God came to the saving knowledge of Christ now whether they walked with God or not eternity reveals that why did they come, is it because I didn't even know the Old Testament, I couldn't even find some of the books there, but I knew Him and with all my heart I was pressing in and the ferocity with which in my heart I was pressing into God was compelling other police officers that I worked with to ask what is different about you what is it that we see in your life why this insatiable pursuit, why don't you ever talk I had one of my partners say,

why don't you ever talk about anything other than Jesus he got saved by the way I used to share freely because there's nothing else on my mind I'm not interested in yesterday's football score, I'm not interested in all these other things Jesus has changed my life and I want to grow in Him, I want to know Him I want to learn about Him, compel them by lifestyle, compel them by singleness of the eye compel them by your own storming in and possessing Christ as a precious prize compel them lastly by coming to the place of being able to say I am full, I'm full I'm complete everything God has promised me He has given me I have peace in my heart, I have understanding in my mind, I'm set in my right mind, I know where I'm going, I know where I've been, I know where I am I know my source of

strength, I know my life, I know that I'll bear fruit till the day I die because God's Spirit is upon me compel them to come in by your pursuit of God that's what the message is all about you see a church that stops seeking God and pursuing God becomes a place of death becomes a place of buying and selling and religious doves and all these things begin to come into the house of God then in come the poor and the lame the blind, those that need God the death in the people of God causes the truth of the fullness that's available to be stolen from them, and that's why in Times Square Church when we call to fasting and to prayer it's not just an empty religious exercise, Paul the Apostle said to Stephen, he said stir up the gift that is in you, stir up yes God is the source of my strength and

yes He's made covenant with me to carry me and to give me all the power that I need what do I have to do on my part? stir myself up come to Him like the two blind men did, if there's an area in my life that I'm not

gaining the victory if there's an area in my life where I've not known freedom call out to Him and say that Son of David have mercy on me, and then when I finally feel that I'm full, it's not to stop there because it's not all just about me it's about other people who don't yet know God the same cry out to be in the church in this generation to say Lord God, Son of David have mercy on them have mercy on the blind in this society, and the lame, and the poor and the maimed, and the nobodies, the nothings who don't have anybody to cry out for them God I cry out for them, have

mercy on them have mercy on them hallelujah and then he says something really tragic in verse 24 he says, for I say unto you that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper none of those who are indifferent to the fullness that I offer them none of those who hold to other affections securities and trusts, none of those divided in eye and heart, will taste of my supper oh yeah, they may come into my house they may wave their hands and sing the songs, but they will not taste of my supper now I'm going to show you what this means, one last scripture, Psalm 34 please, turn there with me Psalm 34 you love His word tonight? amen I hope I'm not being too hard on you Psalm 34, what is the Lord's supper? you're going to be surprised I think verse 7 the angel of the Lord encamps

round about them that fear Him and delivers them here's the Lord's supper, oh taste and see that the Lord is good do you see that there? this is the Lord's supper here it is, this is the banquet, this is the fullness of God, here it is, right here it's right here, oh taste and see, oh taste and see taste and see that the Lord is good, but folks, you've got to press in, you've got to want it you've got to take it with violence, by storm, you've got to seize it as a precious prize, that means you've got to let go of the cattle, you've got to let go of the land, you've got to let go of the other relationships and say this is the source of my life, this is my strength, this is the abundance that God promised me, it's all in here and I want it with everything within me hallelujah taste and see

that the Lord is good and blessed, guess what the word blessed is satisfied, fully satisfied is the man that trusteth in Him, oh fear the Lord ye his saints, for there is no want to them that fear Him the young lions do lack and suffer hunger, in other words those who are self-seeking or led by their own desires and power and cunning shall never have enough, but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing, he's saying I will satisfy you, blessed blessed are those who taste of bread in the kingdom of God, Jesus was saying it's now, if you want it it's now, it's all here, if you desired, if you want it I'm stirred church of God, I'm stirred in my heart, I want to live, I want to live for God, I want to love Him, I want to serve Him all the days of my life, I never want to get smug

or ministerial or satisfied or powerless or powerless I want to seek Him as much now as I've ever sought Him in my life and I'm trusting Him for the power and God says but you have to want it, you have to want it not just for Bible knowledge, not just so that I can tell you another Greek meaning of another word, but I have to want it I have to want this fullness in my own life and desire it and God says if you do, your life will compel them to come into the kingdom of God hallelujah, hallelujah I want people to be compelled to come into the kingdom of God not necessarily by my words, but by the pursuit of my heart this is the call to the church, this is the call to Times Square church, that when we leave this sanctuary, when we go into our homes and our communities and our neighborhoods

and even throughout the world as a missionary church, that our lives compel people to come into the kingdom of God, compel them to come in hallelujah, folks let me tell you I know we're running a little late, but I gotta tell you this when I was young in the Lord I most times didn't have to say anything there was just something I was so hungry for God I'd run, I'd go down the hall so that I could sneak into the bathroom

and open my little, I used to have what I call a derringer this is a sword, a derringer is a little Bible, just a little small one, and I'd be able to open it up and I'd get another passage of scripture and oh, oh, this is good stuff and I, God God, I oh I want to be like that, I want to be like that, I want to do that, God I'd love to be able to preach your word, now I

was fearful at that time, but I said oh I'd love to be able to preach your word and I'd put it away and come back down the hall, come back into my office and I remember one day a guy sitting at the, at his desk his name was Tom, he had been put in the office because he was dying, he had diabetes and the diabetes had gone into his hands and his feet and it was really he'd suffered six massive strokes and they had put him there just to answer the phone literally until he died, I remember walking into the office and I never forced Christ on anybody and I would tell them once when I'd get a new partner I'd say I'm going to tell you this one time and I'm not going to talk to you again about it unless you want to know it's funny, you know, I'd talk to some guys and we'd drive for three weeks

together and then all of a sudden he'd say something back to me as if our conversation had never ended, in other words they're still thinking about it, well what do you mean by, they'd never left, I remember one day walking into the office and Tom said to me he said there's just something different about you you know it's not like I was preaching to everybody but I had an insatiable hunger for God I was pressing in, as Jesus said I was seizing it by violence, this is mine, and I'm not going to have this taken from me, and Tom said to me one day he said what is it that's different about you, and then I just opened my mouth and began to tell him, I said I found Jesus as my savior, Tom he's the longing of my heart everything I've longed for I've found in him, he's changing my life and he's

given me hope and even beyond that I know that I'm saved I know, I know, I know that I'm saved, my sins are washed away, and as I began to speak to him, his whole countenance began to change, we prayed together in the office he surrendered, he gave his life to Christ and God healed him, God healed him within a couple of weeks the doctor told him, he went to the doctors and the doctor said Tom, you have experienced a miracle the doctor said to him, you've got somebody upstairs that loves you, he said because this disease is not reversible and yet your disease is going away, it's vanishing in your body, compel them compel them to come in compel them times square church compel them by your pursuit of God, don't get caught dead in the church don't get caught religious don't get caught selling

doves instead of seeking God, don't get caught changing money instead of seeking the master, don't get caught in form and tradition and the deadness and stench of religion, let it be a living relationship, a living pursuit of a living God, from this day till Christ comes and takes us home hallelujah my holy call is very simple tonight there are those that are sitting here saying pastor you're preaching right into my heart I am getting entrenched in the land I am trusting in cattle I am getting enamored with other relationships and there are other loves getting into my heart and I smell the death of religion starting to get a hold of me, so a few people are now asking for a reason for the hope that is in me I'm not leading people to Christ I don't have the desires I once did Lord you spoke

to the church in Revelation you said get back to your first love again, remember where you've fallen from, I'm coming back but this time I'm coming back with knowledge this time I'm coming back with a renewed passion God I want to serve you with everything that's in me and when the church calls for prayer and fasting, I'm going to pray and fast, not as a religious duty but because I want you with all of my heart, I want my life to compel the people in my neighborhood to come to the saving knowledge of Christ the people in my office, the people that I meet on the street, I want my life to compel them to come into the

kingdom of God, this is my heart's desire Hallelujah Hallelujah, Hallelujah I want to taste of this book again
I want this book to be life to me I want this book to be my

desire, the absolute word of God, if that's the cry of your heart tonight there's some here tonight that say
pastor I've got to repent and there's some others that say I just need this, I don't even understand it but the
Holy Ghost is speaking to me and what you're saying is mine, it's for me I want it with all of my heart you
know folks if I could jump off the platform without hurting myself I'll join you at this altar tonight but if that's
in your heart as we stand together, would you please come we're going to pray together and ask God to
send a Holy Ghost revival, call it whatever you will but just to send an anointing of seeking Him like never
before that we can taste and see that the Lord is good Thank you Lord, Thank you Lord Thank you Jesus
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah

Hallelujah God I thank you Lord Lord I thank you for your grace and your mercy I thank you for your
forgiveness we come before you tonight Lord we ask you that in every area of our hearts you've gathered
us as a people just like you gathered Israel, you set them in a certain place and you set us in a certain
place and yet the land and the businesses of the day and relationships began to crowd you out to the point
where you came and they no longer knew who you were Oh God because of it they couldn't taste of your
supper they couldn't taste of the provision that you've provided for them to fully satisfy them here and now
Oh God I pray in Christ name Lord for the areas in our lives Lord where we have failed you God the areas
where other loves are coming in and threatening to crowd out the

hunger that we once known for you Oh God I pray that for Times Square Church I lift up this church and
this body I ask for the purging fires of the Holy Ghost God I ask you to come in Jesus come in with mercy
and overthrow the tables Oh God throw out the doves Lord throw out the doves out of this house Oh God
out of our lives out of our hearts we are the temple of the Holy Ghost Lord all religiousness Lord throw it
out God all of the hypocrisy coming into your house with other loves in our heart God throw it out Holy
Spirit drive it out of us Oh God it is written that our house this house should be a house of prayer God
move upon us to seek you again move upon us to seek you in a new way Lord like we may not have been
seeking you for years gone by God drive out form and tradition Lord let

there be a passion for you Oh God a passion that compels others who are without the knowledge of God
to have to acknowledge that indeed you have come and you dwell within these earthly bodies hallelujah
hallelujah hallelujah hallelujah Oh Jesus thank you Lord thank you God thank you for hearing our cry
tonight Oh God thank you Lord for not turning away from us thank you for your compassion and your
mercy Lord we want to taste we want to taste of your supper Oh God we want to taste it we want to taste it
and to love it and to know it we want to be full and satisfied here on this side of eternity God bringing into
your kingdom as many of us who can hear the word of God everywhere we go and in what we do we ask
you Holy Spirit for the power to release from our hearts anything that would take

us away from loving you with all of our heart soul mind and strength God we believe that it's reasonable to
love you it's reasonable to give you all of our heart and all of our life hallelujah you are the God who
created us oh Jesus thank you Lord thank you Father hallelujah hallelujah pray with me please right now
Lord Jesus I'm hungry for you I want to taste of you your word says oh taste and see that the Lord is good
there is no want to them that fear him oh God take out of my heart all things that offend you and put in my
heart a love and a desire for your word your truth and your manifested presence I love you Jesus I want to
love you with all of my heart until the day that you come and take me home don't let anything else don't let
religiousness crowd out the fullness that you want

to bring into my life Holy Spirit I call upon you now quicken me enable me to seek God anew and fresh in his word and through prayer and in his house and among his people oh Jesus thank you for hearing my cry like the blind men on the side of the road you touched them and like the woman with the issue of blood she touched you and you healed her and I believe tonight that as I cry out to you you have touched me you have healed me and you're drawing me once again back to the place of life and satisfaction in the things of God let my cry come before you morning noon and evening at home, at work and in the house of God oh Lord Jesus so touch me with your fire that your presence in my life will compel those who live in darkness to come into the house of God thank you for hearing my cry in the

mighty name of Jesus my Lord my Savior my God Glory of thine oh God thank you Lord thank you Father Hallelujah Hallelujah this is the conclusion of the message

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