

# Tears

by Carter Conlon

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**Scripture:** 2 Timothy 1:6, Ecclesiastes 12:13, Proverbs 3:5, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 9:24

**Topics:** "Consecration", "Boldness in Faith"

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## Description

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## Transcript

If you would have heard Ross speak this morning, you wouldn't be clapping as loud as you just did. But I'm never threatened by previous speakers because, as I always say, I can take the bar down from any height. I'm not threatened by any speaker.

A phenomenal message this morning on the struggles and trials of life and how they don't come to overthrow us, but they come to enhance our understanding of Jesus Christ and his power in every life. I have been moved in my heart by what I see, Pastor, happening here in this congregation because I don't think you realize how rare this is. This is not the standard house of God any longer, unfortunately, in our time.

There are many, many dry eyes and dry hearts and dry minds in the house of God today. But the one thing that I have seen in this house that has really touched my heart is the tears, your tears. You look in this video, you're going to see, that we just watched, you'll see tears coming down people's faces everywhere.

Yesterday at the end of, I don't know if you were just crying out of gladness that I was done, I said in conclusion, but there were tears everywhere. There was this sudden bursting, in a sense, of weeping. And

sometimes we know why it is and sometimes we don't understand it.

Why, you know, I even had a friend say, I'm not prone to tears. It's not part of my life, but suddenly it just came upon me and I couldn't resist it and started to weep as God began to speak to my heart. So I want to talk to you today about tears.

It's a message that God put on my heart for you as a church congregation from 2 Timothy chapter one, if you have your Bible or whatever. I don't have the courage to use an iPad because I would pull up a guy called Car Commercial as surely as I'm standing here. I tried it once and the thing went blank and so I'm done with it.

I'm just going to stay with the printed word and trust it. Father, I want to thank you, God, for this church. I want to thank you for the people of God that are in this place.

Thank you, Lord, for what you're doing here, God. It's another time, another season, another generation, another calling, another people. God, we thank you for all the things that you've done in the past, the great stories that we know all the way from the day of Pentecost right through to today.

But there's always another time, another season that requires another calling and another generation. And I thank you that the calling on this church is beginning with tears. Thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, that there's something about that that is deeper than we can understand.

I pray, God, that you would override the frailty of my human body and my own mind and thinking. And once again, Lord, that you would just flow through me because this is about the people. It's about this pastor and his wife.

It's about the elders, the leaders in this church. It's about the people that you're calling to be part of what you're doing here in this place now. I thank you, Lord, that your plans and purposes are always far beyond us.

And, God, thank you that you're going to give me the ability to just maybe write something on the cornerstone of this congregation. And, God, I thank you for it and I praise you for it in Jesus' name. I'm going to speak from my heart.

I wrote a lot of things down, but I don't want this to be a sermon. I want it to be something that I feel that God has spoken to my heart concerning you and concerning the calling that he's placed on you as a church body, individually and collectively, the testimony that he desires to be made known through you. And, you know, as once happened in the life of David, you know, when God's plan and purpose was going through his life, he was about to meet resistance, obviously, but he had that word from the Lord, the arrow is beyond thee, David.

The plan of God is deeper, farther than you and I can ever understand. He has something in his mind and something in his heart. His thoughts are above our thoughts.

His ways are above our ways. But if we can follow him, his name will be glorified, if we can carry on and do what we're called to do. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, 2 Timothy chapter 1, verse 1, by the will of God, according to the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus, to Timothy, a beloved son, grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers, night and day, greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I might be filled with joy. You know, I was thinking of many of us when we're called of God, it comes with tears. When God is calling us to something that's beyond our natural ability, I remember my own life, the season of my life.

I wasn't used to weeping. I was a police officer, and I was raised in a home and a family where men don't cry. You know, when you got in a fight in your hockey team, you just didn't cry after the fight when you went back.

You just didn't. That's just the reality of it. That was my upbringing.

That was my raising. But coming to Christ and the calling of God coming into my life, which was deeper and farther than what I could understand, tears came with it. I remember when I knelt at the first altar, I just burst into, and it was not characteristic of me, but there was something about this calling of God, and I believe that's what happened to Timothy.

Timothy, the apostle Paul, came to visit his house, obviously, and placed his hands upon Timothy. And when he placed his hands upon Timothy, a calling of God was given to this young man, and tears accompanied this calling. I want to tell you as a congregation, the hand of God is on you.

The hand of God is on you individually and collectively for a purpose that only God knows. You and I don't know the full purpose of what God is going to be doing in the future. But I do know that there's tears here, and it's always a sign that there's a calling upon us that's deeper than anything we can fully understand.

It's as if our heart is so longing to embrace something that we would naturally consider impossible, but God calls it possible. And in Timothy's case, there's just this gratitude that God would even consider using my life. There's a sense of awe of what I'm going to be facing in the future.

And of course, in Timothy's case, there's a natural fear in him as a young man. And Paul seemed to have this incessant ability to get under a pile of rocks every time he preached in the crowd. And to follow Paul was obviously not... How would you like that on a resume? Looking for people who are willing to go out and get beaten half to death every time you join with me on my crusades and preach.

I don't blame Mark for taking off, honestly. Mark was probably about 19 years old when he was with Paul and he said, I'm out of here. You know, I'm into life, but I'm not into the quick death that this man seems to be embracing.

I'm just not for this. But there was... Paul said there was this... When I met you and laid my hands on you and the touch of God came upon you, there were tears involved in it. Now, this is the beginning of the calling for another generation, another time, another season, and other ministers being called of God.

Now, there were others that had gone on before, but it's interesting, in 2 Timothy chapter 1, Paul talks about Timothy. I long to see you. I remember your tears.

I remember the unpretended faith that was brought to you through your mother and your grandmother. I remember the gifting of God that came upon you when the hand of God touched you. You see, when we are touched by God, there are giftings of God given to us, things that we might not even be aware of.

Giftings of the Holy Spirit. There are abilities imparted to us by the Spirit of God to do things that He has determined to do through our lives. And Paul knew this about Timothy, that Timothy, you're going to be much bigger than you think you are.

You're going to do a lot more than you could naturally do. But as we get to the end of chapter 1, he talks about this now, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, including two names of two men that he mentions who probably had a lot of promise, but they turned. And you think about the numbers that have gone before us that have turned from their calling.

I think of the tears. God knows them. He's bottled them.

He knows every tear that has been cried at every altar maybe in the last two, three generations in this country and how it must break the heart of God when people set out and they have a calling on their lives and they embrace it initially at least, but when opposition arises, and generally it's opposition, not all the time, they're turned away and say, no, I didn't sign up for this. I signed up to be blessed. I signed up to be healthy and prosperous.

I signed up to be the head and not the tail. I didn't sign up to be hated or called a hater or a bigot. I didn't sign up for, but this generation of course was the opposition that had come against them is now here and is going to increase in the days ahead.

Let's not be deceived about it. It's going to be difficult to be a Christian. And I was thinking about what causes people to turn away who are called of God? What causes us to start with tears and then at the end not finish well? And I've got to tell you, I've seen some real train wrecks in the kingdom of God.

I've been at the bedside of people who did not finish well in their last days. What causes them to turn away? And I was starting to think about Solomon. He is obviously called of God.

It was an amazing calling that God placed on this man's life. I mean, he was to build and be the guardian of the Shekinah glory of God on the earth, the place where God chose to dwell. A house where people would not only from the nation come in and have their prayers answered, but even strangers would be able to come in when they heard about the reputation and the glory of God in that house that was supposed to be a house of prayer.

Thank God you're a house of prayer. That's all I can say. Because that was the design of the house of God.

God would be brought to glory through his answering of the prayers of the people when they're overcome, when they're overwhelmed. And even to the point, if they were taken captive and they find themselves in a foreign nation and turn as Daniel did and open the window and face that temple, that place where God said I'm going to answer prayer, that he would even bring them home from their captivity. And God gave this man wisdom beyond anything that we will ever know.

He was the smartest man that ever lived next to Jesus Christ and the earth and he will be. He was told that nobody will ever have the wisdom you have. But he's, you know, it's funny, he was so smart, but he couldn't follow what he knew.

One of the problems in Solomon's life, and it is a problem in the Christian world, is that he wasn't opposed. It was too smooth of a sailing for him. Pastor Ross spoke about that this morning.

Thank God for opposition. You know, my son's a Marine, my oldest son, and, you know, he was, but you never say he was a Marine. If any Marines here, you always are a Marine.

I was corrected on that more than once in my life now. And he told me, he says, Dad, in the military, he said, we're trained to fight and if we don't have an enemy, we lose focus. And when we start losing focus, we'll even start fighting among ourselves because we have to have an outlet for what we're trained to do.

And what happened to Solomon is this, God gave him a kingdom of, there was peace all the days of Solomon, there were no wars and Solomon didn't have to fight that way and it's not a good thing when you're not opposed. You know, opposition, even when the children of Israel came into the promised land, some of their enemies were left there to prove them. Some of their enemies were left there actually to train the next generation how to fight when you read the scriptures.

God could have just eradicated them all but he chose not to do it. He could take away every enemy in our lives but thank God he doesn't. Because it can happen like it happened to Solomon.

He walked in, and the second part, he walked so long in victory without opposition that he began to casually hold the truth that he knew. You know, in Deuteronomy 17, I'm not going to turn there, I'm just going to paraphrase it, but in Deuteronomy 17, if you were to be a king in Israel, you had to take the law and before you could sit on the throne, you had to hand write out the law of God. And you had to hold it close to your heart and he was instructed to read it every day and to abide by it.

And in the law that he was given, in Deuteronomy 17 verses 14 to 20, I'm just going to paraphrase, but God said to Solomon, you are not to accumulate horses. Because if you accumulate horses, you will formulate your own strategies. If you are opposed, you will formulate your own strategies or you will end up with a source of strength that I didn't give to you.

So don't accumulate your own plans, may I put it that way, your own strategies. Don't make allegiances with foreign countries for your protection. And of course, those allegiances were sealed with wives.

If you made an allegiance with a foreign nation, the king of that nation would give you his daughter or sister or some relative and make you technically part of the family. So saying, if our enemies fight against us, you come and defend us and we'll come and defend you. So this is how Solomon ended up with so many wives and so many allegiances.

And he said, and don't accumulate silver. Don't start stockpiling money because if you do, your trust is going to shift. I am your provider.

I am the one who will be there and you'll lose focus, you'll lose sight of who I am. And then you look in First Kings chapter 10 verses 26 to chapter 11 verse 1, what did Solomon do? He brought horses in abundance out of Egypt. It's amazing.

He gathered all, literally thousands of horses. He started making allegiances with foreign nations and intermarrying in a sense, taking their women to be his wives. And he made silver literally as abundant as gravel in your parking lot out front.

He disobeyed the word of God. I don't know what it is about smart people. I thank God that I'm stupid and I'm going to make it to the finish line.

But I don't know what it is about smart people. They seem to have this innate tendency, and I've dealt with this many times in my life now, to somehow feel that the word of God doesn't apply to them. It's the most insane thing.

I've had people in my office and just couldn't believe what was coming out of their mouths, defying, moving against the most basic things in scripture that are very clearly revealed, but somehow, we talked about it yesterday, that inherent sin nature in humanity, in the book of Genesis, takes over, and they start calling evil good, and good evil. They start becoming as judges or as God, in a sense, in themselves. And they're completely without conscience.

I've seen it too many times. Even preachers are preaching to people, as Solomon obviously did. He had great wisdom, and I'm sure he's espousing it everywhere he goes.

He's not living it himself, and it's very clear. He's actually had to write it up by hand. If you go in the book of Proverbs, where it says, my son, my son, my son, all the warnings are there.

I believe God's speaking to him and saying, my son, my son, my son, my son, beware of the wicked woman. Beware of this religious seduction that's going to take away your heart. And he writes it down.

He's getting a living word from God. He's writing it down. Read it yourself in the book of Proverbs, but he's not listening to anything that God is speaking to him.

And the third thing in Solomon's life is that he became bored with the work of God that he was given to do. About 20 to 22 years, that's my estimation. I might be wrong in that, but that's what I, from what I've been studying, he was faithful.

He was faithful to build a temple. He was faithful to build his own house. And he'd come in every day and the people are praying.

The sacrifices are going on. And the gold and glory and glitter is all there. The Queen of Sheba and others are coming in.

They're astounded at the divine order that's in this place. And the human tendency is we get bored with things. That's why marriages are breaking apart, because people just get bored with each other.

And I can just see in my mind Solomon coming in and he comes in at, maybe he was initially coming in at five in the morning and suddenly he starts coming in at seven. And he used to leave at four in the afternoon. He starts leaving at two.

And, well, everything's going on the way it used to. And he's bored. He's bored with the work of God.

And it's something in the human heart that can happen to any of us. When we've walked with God and we've known victory and we've known success and we've known the word of God, that we can begin to be bored with the calling that God placed on our lives. And when you go into Ecclesiastes chapter two, verses three and four, it's so stunning to see this man say, so I set out to see what makes people happy.

Well, for heaven's sakes, he's the guardian of the glory of God on the earth. And he says, I set out to see what makes people happy. What stupidity for the wisest man that ever lived.

He actually left the answer to pursue the question. And you know the first thing he did? What was the first thing that Solomon did as he started to backslide? You don't know, do you? He started to drink wine. Tell me this.

Why is wine such a big deal in the Pentecostal church today? Why are people fighting so hard to drink? You know, Solomon said in Ecclesiastes, he said, everything that happens has happened before. There's nothing new under the sun. And the wisest man in the world wasn't smart.

He started with drinking wine to try to make himself happy. Can you imagine? He's got the calling of God, the wisdom of God, the glory of God, the servants of God. He's got the whole known world in admiration of what God's doing in his life.

And he says, well, I'm gonna drink and see if that makes me happy. Amazing. Just absolutely amazing what he started to do.

And did he know that this beginning of backsliding was going to take him to the place of building heathen temples in the nation of God. Temples to Moloch, which were child sacrifice. Do you understand what he did? I heard David Wilkerson preach on it one time, Sunday morning, whatever the word, Sabbath morning, Solomon gets his house together, gets in his chariot with all his white horses from Egypt and all his wives and heads out to go to worship and goes right by the temple of God and goes to the temple of Ashtoreth to worship.

And in his mind, he said, well, what's the big deal? God is God. God accepts all worship. You know, you begin to think like, is it, what happened in America? You know, when I first came here, I was really stunned because I came from Canada, which is a very liberal country, but not really in line with the things of God.

And I was really surprised when I came to America and it was popular to be a Christian in the 90s. Everybody was a Christian. Athletes were Christians.

Movie stars, whether they were or not, they were all Christians. Politicians were Christians. They were not afraid or ashamed to stand up and say, I'm a Christian.

I was really surprised. Everybody seemed to be a Christian. And it was generally accepted that was a good thing.

Never a good thing when the church is not opposed. It's never a good thing as we read about in this, when boredom starts to set in and when we begin to casually hold the truth of the word of God. So the question arises, didn't we casually hold the truth of God in this nation? I want to just share with you a little bit, not just, I'm going to scan it, but it's George Barnum.

Most of you know about him. He does surveys on what's going on in the Christian world and his organization is highly respected for their results and just the fact that they're accurate. And this is an article by a man called Ken Ham on George Barnum's survey where he says, seven out of 10 U.S. adults call themselves Christians, but only six in 100 have an actual biblical worldview.

The rest of the Americans, according to research from the Cultural Research Center, are holding to seven major worldviews. Biblical theism, Eastern mysticism, Marxism, moralistic therapeutic deism, nihilism, postmodernism, and secular humanism. During a recent address to the Family Research Council in

Washington, pollster George Barnum shared that most Americans blend their beliefs and are now creating a customized worldview.

In other words, the dominant worldview in America and really the West is syncretism. A little of this, a little of that, blended into a worldview that's custom-made by each person. Think about Solomon just for a moment.

With such a worldview, there's no ultimate authority. Truth is determined by whatever seems right to each person. Ligonier Ministries recently released their biennial State of Theology survey and the results are a mess.

They found that evangelicals, evangelicals in America, are the people who, like you and I, say, I came to Jesus Christ and confessed my sin and I have received him as my Lord and Savior, just to define who these people are. Evangelicals in America hold to a host of beliefs that are far from Scripture. Think about Solomon just for a moment.

56% of evangelicals believe that God accepts the worship of all religions, including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Nearly half of evangelicals believe that God learns and adapts to different circumstances. In other words, God changes.

Even though the Scripture says, I am the Lord, I change not. But they believe that he changes. 70% of evangelical Christians in America strongly agree that Jesus is the first and greatest being created by God.

The eternally existent Christ was created as a being. And of course, if you believe that, then you don't believe he's eternally God. It's a heresy that for hundreds of years has been condemned by the Christian church.

38% of evangelical Christians believe that Jesus was a great teacher but not God. 60% 60% of evangelical believers in America, this is a recent survey, say that the Holy Spirit is a force but not a personal being. 27% think that the Holy Spirit can tell me to do something which is forbidden in the Bible.

57% of evangelicals believe that everyone sins a little but most people are essentially good by nature. 37% of evangelicals agree that religious belief is a matter of personal opinion. It is no longer about objective truth.

This survey reveals that what Christians believe is a total mess. They hold a contradictory belief about a variety of things from who God is and what his nature is to how they should view the Bible and to how people are saved. It's a mixture of Christianity and the thinking of our present culture.

Paul says, Timothy, God's calling you but many who have gone before you have turned away. They walked with me, they walked with God and at a certain point for certain reasons, whether it was where they were opposed or they were not opposed, they set their judgment above the judgment of God. They started to casually hold the word of God or maybe they turned to just marginal little sins that they didn't think were a big deal, not knowing where it was going to lead them or what it was going to turn them into.

You know, I mentioned drinking and I just felt a shock wave go through the church for some reason but here I'm going to tell you my story. I'm just going to diverge for just a little bit and then go back to Paul and Timothy. When I was saved, I was 24 years of age and I just wanted God with all my heart.

I had come to an altar, I had cried, I had wept before God, I was cold with tears folks and when I would go home from working, I was a cop, so I would drive home in uniform, I lived out in the country on a farm and there was this incredible restaurant there that had the best breakfast in the world, still does as far as I'm concerned. I would stop there on the way home when I worked night shift and I would have my Bible, a nice big Bible like this. I would get my bacon and eggs in order and have a beer.

So Bible, bacon, beer on the table and I'd never heard a sermon on alcohol. Nobody ever said anything to me. I'm brand new to the Lord.

I'm just starting to read. I just love the word of God and I'm sitting there at the table and I'm having my bacon, eggs and my beer and I'm looking at, I'm reading the Bible and I went to the part where the angel of God appears to Zachariah and Elizabeth, Zacharias and Elizabeth and says you're going to have a son and he's going to be great in the sight of God and he's going to turn many from their sins to the Savior. I'm paraphrasing but that's essentially and then it says and wine will never touch his lips.

I thought wow. I'd like God to use my life like that. I'd like to be used by God to lead people to Christ and I remember thinking well if that's part of the program, if this man was going to be used to turn many to Christ and wine would never touch his lips then it's not going to touch mine.

I physically put my hand around the glass, push the glass of beer to the other end of the table and that's 45 years ago. I've never touched it since and recently I was in Bulgaria and they were having communion in the church and in the communion they used real wine so I refused communion in that church. I am not going to violate the principle that God put in my life because pushing that away across the table, God has used my lips and many many people have come to Christ throughout the world.

I'm not willing to compromise that conviction. Now I didn't give up drinking because somebody said thou shalt not drink or it's an evil thing. I gave it up because I wanted something more than just a buzz coming from my lips.

Do you understand? I wanted something more and for those that are fighting for the right to drink in the church, I fear for you. I honestly do because it speaks something about your spiritual condition. Why do you want anything in your body that's going to alter your lips, that's going to alter your spirit, it's going to produce.

Once you've known the anointing, you don't want the buzz from booze anymore in your life. I'll tell you straight out, you don't want it anymore. So that's a sidebar, no extra charge for that.

I didn't plan on speaking on that. So Paul says, I thank God whom I serve with a pure conscience. Without ceasing, I remember you in my prayers night and day, greatly desiring to see you, mindful of your tears that I might be filled with joy.

So Paul's saying, there's a whole new generation coming and he sees Timothy as part of that and he sees the calling that's, there's a calling on you. I want you to understand that there's a calling on this church. Those tears are not happenstance, it's not because you've got a great worship team and you've got a wonderful pastor and his wife, it's beyond that.

The Holy Spirit has come here and he's touching you and when I finished speaking yesterday, you literally burst into, the whole room just burst into tears. There were very few that were not weeping and you don't even know why that happened. It's the touch of God, it's the hand of God.

And Paul says, when I call to remembrance, the genuine faith that is in you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and I am persuaded is in you also. In other words, Paul's saying to Timothy, others stayed true to their calling and they brought you to the same place. Oh, thank God.

I don't know who brought you to Christ but thank God for those who did. Thank God for those who were not backslidden. Thank God for those.

Listen folks, to this day, to this day, I thank God for the man who came to my house. I thank God for the man who had the heart to stay even when I mocked him and made fun of him and loved me and kept opening the scriptures and brought me to the saving knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I thank God that somebody brought to me this incredible truth.

Just like with Solomon, he didn't get there on his own. His father David gave him the pattern of the temple. His father David stored up all the resources he would need to do what he was called to do and we are in the same place.

We have the pattern of the temple given to us in the word of God and by the Holy Spirit. And the knowledge of God tells us that we have all the resources available to us to do the very thing that God is calling us to do. What it requires now is the willingness to go forward.

The willingness in your heart and in my heart to say, God, I'm going to run this race your way. I'm not going to change the rules. I'm going to do what you called me to do and what you say is good, I'll call it good and what you say is evil, I'll call it evil.

God, help me to stay true. Don't let me drift. Don't let me get bored with your work which is really the saving of the lost.

That's the work of God on the earth. It's bringing this incredible message that Christ died for people because he loves this entire world. Paul says now in verse 6, I remind you, stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

And pastor, I want to thank you for leading your church in fasting and prayer the way you do because you're stirring up the gift. You've stirred me being in this church. I've had a lot of victory and I've gone a lot of places and I've seen a lot of things but I feel my heart, I'm just starting now this last leg of the journey and coming around the final turn and I don't want to be a lazy runner.

I don't want to be always talking about the past. Thank God for the past but I don't live there anymore. I want to talk about the future.

Stir up the gift of God. Do whatever you have to do. Get up an hour earlier and pray.

It's not going to be handed to you on a silver platter. There's a measure of, I don't want to just, it's just discipline. May I call it that? Just stir up the gift of God.

God, don't let me become passionless. Don't let me become bored in the house of God. Don't let me become bored when I'm reading your word.

Don't let me become bored when I'm going to prayer. Whether it's corporate prayer or personal prayer. God, and if I am, forgive me and help me, Holy Spirit.

Stir me, God. Stir my heart because there's a calling on me that's bigger than I understand and you're taking me places that I don't, I can't even, it's deeper than I can even comprehend in my natural mind. Then he tells him, he says, after stirring, he says, God's not given us a spirit of fear but a power, love, and a sound mind.

Therefore, do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me as prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings of the gospel according to the power of God. It would appear that these in Asia turned back because of opposition. There's an appearance of that.

I can't prove it, I don't know. Paul doesn't say, but most likely that's what happened and now Paul is kind of reaching to a new young man, a new moment, a new calling, a new people, a new family that's saying, now you're being called of God. The tears are evidence and so stir the gift up that God gave you when his spirit came upon you and don't be ashamed of those of us who have gone before.

Don't draw back. Don't be afraid because of the path we've laid out before you. Don't draw back because of the path you might enter into a season where you might have to suffer for the sake of the gospel of Jesus Christ and folks, let me just say it straight.

We're going to suffer in the days ahead. Yes, this opposition we're experiencing is only starting. The enemy is becoming emboldened.

It's going to be a hate crime to believe, to have a biblical worldview in the not too very distant future. It might be within the next couple of years. It's going to become a hate crime for preachers to preach the scriptures as they're revealed and as they're written.

And there's going to be a measure of suffering. Society will begin to turn against people and as you can see, you get canceled, you get fired. First of all, I can't be canceled because I don't care what people think.

Secondly, I can't get fired because I'm not employed by anybody in this world. Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. In other words, Paul's saying to Timothy, don't draw back.

Don't be afraid, Timothy. God's given you the power to go forward. God's given you the love you're going to need for that casts out the fear of people.

The love for their souls. To even go to those who will viciously oppose you in the faith you have in Christ. God will give you a love that casts out the fear of them and a sound mind to know that this is right.

This is what I'm called to do. This is what my life is called to be. Verse 9, He said, Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling and appointed purpose, not according to our works or our abilities, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.

But now, has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. To which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. And for this reason, I also suffer these things.

Nevertheless, Paul says, I'm not ashamed. In other words, I'm not ashamed and I'm not triumphed over. For I know whom I've believed.

And I'm persuaded that he's able to keep that which I've committed to him until that day. Be persuaded today. Be persuaded.

Say, God persuade me. God persuade me. Though I have to go through storms, though I have to go through trial, though it may be difficult in the days ahead, I am in the hand of God.

And nobody can take me out of the hand of God. And God's going to take me all the way through the storms of this life and one day open his hand and just deposit me at the throne of God. The throne of eternity.

I am in the hand of God and nobody can take me away from God. Hold fast to the pattern of sound words which you've heard from me in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. And that good thing which was committed to you, keep by the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

Pastor, I've seen tears in this house. I wish you knew how uncommon that is. So many places, you know Solomon's, I call it the Solomon's Syndrome.

If you read Ecclesiastes, he starts drinking wine and his whole theological focus becomes about me, me, me, me, me, me. You just follow it down. Me, I built vineyards.

I started choirs. I had cattle. It was me, me, me, me.

And he started using the giftings that God had placed in his life for himself. And the preoccupation with self and the desire to drink wine tells me that we're being revisited by another moment in history that has already happened in the past. But you have a touch of God on you.

Don't ever treat it lightly. You've been called. And there are giftings of God that have been given to this church, to you individually.

Collectively as a church, yes, and individually as believers in Christ. You've been given abilities to do things that only God can do. And the devil will oppose it.

No war is ever won without a fight. Paul says, I remember your tears, Timothy. I remember when you first understood that you're being called by God.

And I don't know the scene, but the apostle Paul comes in, and probably Timothy got on his knees, and Paul put his hands on his shoulders and began to pray. And the presence of God came on this young man's life. And he probably wept.

And Paul knew he was, at the core, he was a fearful young man. But it's not by our might, nor our power, that this walk is completed. It's by the presence of God's Holy Spirit within us.

It's by the giftings and strength of God. All the glory belongs to Him and not to us. And Paul's saying, Timothy, Timothy, don't be ashamed of the pathway that you see my life, that God's taken my life.

Don't let it triumph over you. Don't be afraid. As Paul could say, follow me as I've followed Christ.

And folks, let me tell you seriously that the gospel that we have was not handed to us by people in a hammock. They went into the Roman arenas. They were lit like human torches.

They were dragged out of their homes. They were tortured. They were fed to lions.

They went to jail. And all the way through history, you look at it, and so here we are today. The baton has been passed in our hands.

God help us that we, we will not fail of the great gift that's been given to us, but we will have this willingness as Paul is saying to Timothy, go all the way, Timothy. Don't stop, and don't let opposition stop you in your tracks, and don't be afraid of what the future is going to hold. God hasn't given you a spirit of fear, but a power and love and a sound mind.

So I want to finish with just an altar call, if I may, pastor, this morning. Restoration, did I get the right name? Restoration Church? Remember I got here, I came here last year, and I called this town Alphagetty. I forgot the name, but go all the way.

That's, it's that simple. I want to say something. This won't mean much to everybody, but it will to some.

Every speaker that we've invited here this week, we've just invited them for an event. I don't ask them to preach anything. I don't give them a report at all about our church.

Pastor Carter comes in one, and sometimes two days early, so that he can pray to hear from God, and he delivers. If I asked him to preach a sermon, he wouldn't do it, a specific sermon. Brothers and sisters, you have heard from God Himself through this vessel, and it's about consecration for two things.

One, the next generation, from Paul to Timothy. You'll need to listen to this sermon again to get the down low, and the second thing is, as you shared about John, that he will speak and turn the hearts of many to the Lord. This is a moment in our church, and I urge you to hear what God is saying.

Let's stand. This is an altar call today for people who want to make a difference. I don't want to be mediocre in my walk with God.

I don't want to go halfway in what God's called me to do. I want to go all the way with God. I want my lips to speak truth.

I want my heart to be filled with the love of God. I want the courage that only God could give. I don't want to rationalize that which falls short of what God has for my life.

You know, I'm 69 years old now. You can come. You can come over.

And, you know, I could sit back and just enjoy former successes, but that's not the way I want to finish. God help this church. God help the people, Lord, just to go all the way with you.

Just all the way. The old saints of old used to sing, of old, like in the 40s and 50s, even in this country, used to sing, where he leads me, I will follow. I'll go with him.

I'll go with him all the way. I made that choice in my heart. I made it again just a short time ago.

I want a new touch of the Holy Spirit. I want new tears in my life. I want a new calling.

I want new conviction. If I have strayed to the left or to the right in my understanding of the Scriptures, then, God, correct me and use whatever means is necessary to do it. Bring me back to center, O God.

I don't ever want to be bored with your work or bored in your house. I don't ever want to compromise or use your gifts and callings for myself. I don't want anything to affect my body and my mind that will take away the quality and the sense of your calling in my life.

I want my lips to speak truth. God, I want that truth to penetrate the hearts of people, men, women, children. My God, I want to be able to speak in prisons and turn prisoners to you, God.

I want to be able to go to foreign fields and see Islam bend its knee to the living Christ. God Almighty, I recognize that this kingdom is about your power and surrendered vessels. So, God, I just want to thank you today for a past...

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