

# That Thou Mightest Know the Thoughts of Thy Heart

by Carter Conlon

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*Carter Conlon's sermon explores the significance of understanding the thoughts of our hearts through the lens of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and God's ultimate sovereignty over human kingdoms.*

**Duration:** 51:45

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Luke 15:10, John 3:16, Acts 4:12, Romans 10:9

**Topics:** "Rebellion Of Man"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the image seen by Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel. The image represents different kingdoms throughout history, with the legs of iron symbolizing the kingdom of Rome. The speaker emphasizes that even though Rome was a powerful kingdom, it ultimately fell due to inward corruption. The sermon encourages listeners to recognize their own inward corruption and turn to God for a new heart, mind, and spirit. The speaker shares personal stories of successful businessmen who realized that their worldly success left them empty and troubled, leading them to seek a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

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## Transcript

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That thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. Daniel chapter 2, please, if you'll go there in your Bibles. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Lamentations, Daniel chapter 2. Now Father, I thank you for the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

God, I thank you for strength. I thank you for wisdom. I acknowledge today that everything that I have comes from you.

The ability to speak and to reason and to be able to unlock the treasures of your word and make them real to those that you have gathered to hear them. Lord, I yield to you, I bend my knee to you, and I ask you for an anointing to be able, oh God, to go into the deepest areas of darkness, confusion, and to bring light and to show those who are troubled the way out. God, I thank you for this with all my heart.

Lord, I yield this and my life into your hands, and I ask you, God, to be honored, and I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Daniel chapter 2, I'll read to you from verses 30 to 35.

But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living. But for their sakes that shall make known the interpretation to the king, and that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart. Thou, O king, sawest, and behold, a great image, and this great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible.

This image's head was of fine gold, his breast in his arms of silver, his belly and thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest still that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and break them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors, and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them.

And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. Now, this was a prophecy given of Daniel, or an interpretation of a dream that a king called Nebuchadnezzar had. Now, Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon, of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

Nebuchadnezzar was technically at the top of his game. He was at a place where many would say it's as good as it gets. Babylon had become a world power.

He was the king of Babylon. It was an incredibly influential city, and its armies controlled at least the known world of its time. Babylon had an immense geographical expanse.

It was each wall, it was built in the shape of a square. Each wall was ten miles long, so technically ten by ten, it's a hundred square miles. One of the old historical writers said the immensity of the city was absolutely breathtaking.

It was surrounded by moats that were fed from a nearby river. They had incredible technology to build bridges from the main city, as it were, to the mainland. There were two walls of protection.

Historians tell us that the outer one was twenty-five feet wide, and the inner one was twenty-three feet wide. There were watchtowers every sixty-five feet along these walls, and inside of the city were rows of houses, built at right angles, one to another, and three to four-story houses. So there was really quite an advance in building, the ability to build things that they thought would last.

There was an eight-story pyramid in Babylon. There was a temple, there was a palace to the king, and there were hanging gardens, which at that time, inarguably, were one of the great wonders, as people saw it, of the world. This man is at the top of his game.

But yet there's a deep troubling inside of him. It says in Daniel chapter 2 and verse 1, In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, he dreamed dreams wherewith his spirit was troubled, and his sleep break from him. Now, I know that I am speaking in the Spirit today to many whom God has gathered in the service today.

You say, there is a troubling inside of me, and I don't understand why this troubling is there. I'm looking out, and I seem to be in control of the things around me, and some of the things I'm doing appear to be prospering, and yet, it seems that my sleep is being taken away from me. I'm troubled inside, and I don't understand the reason for the troubling.

Now, in Nebuchadnezzar's case, he had a dream, but he couldn't remember what the dream was. But he did know the dream was troubling him. And so he went to the magicians, and the soothsayers, and the astrologers, and all of the wisdom of his kingdom, as it is, that had been gathered into his court.

Now, into his court were probably the wisest men of this magnificent empire over which he was now the ruler. And he gathered them together, and he said to them, I'm troubled, and I need you to tell me why I'm troubled. And then, of course, he said, I've been having a dream, and this dream has been bothering me, and I wake up, and I'm troubled in my heart, and I don't know why I'm troubled.

Now, you're wise. Tell me why I'm troubled. And so the magicians, and the soothsayers, and the astrologers stood before his throne, and they said, well, nobody's ever made a request like this before.

We can't tell you the interpretation of the dream if you don't tell us what the dream is. Now, you're telling us that you want us to tell you also the dream, as well as the interpretation. And he said, now, I know then that if you can't tell me what's troubling me, then you have prepared lying and corrupt words to speak before me.

That's what he says in verse 9. You see, folks, I want to tell you something. You can sit under a lot of voices, and even voices in any generation that claim to speak for God. They claim to be wise.

They claim to have knowledge. But if these voices cannot take away the troubling of your heart, they are not speaking for God. For when God speaks, there is a peace that comes.

There is a rest that comes. Prison doors open. Blinded eyes see.

Bruises of the past are healed. Captivity has to release its captives. When God speaks, there is a miraculous healing begins to take place in the inner man.

It is not something that can necessarily be reasoned. It's something that we lay hold of by faith. And when God speaks, we move towards it.

And things simply begin to happen. And we begin to know that this is the voice of God. This is a supernatural kingdom that I'm moving towards.

The wise people of Nebuchadnezzar's day couldn't answer. They said, we can't do this thing. Only the gods can do this.

And of course, in their perspective, gods don't dwell with flesh. And for this cause, the scripture says, the king was angry and very furious. And he commanded all the wise men of Babylon to be destroyed.

But Daniel found out about this. And he began to petition the captain of the army that was sent out to do this thing. And asked the king for some time.

He went and shared this dilemma with his friends and they began to pray. And through prayer, God gave the answer. And Daniel stood before King Nebuchadnezzar in the same manner that I'm standing before

many who are here today.

And he began to open something from heaven that showed this man not only his heart, but he showed him his future and showed him something about God that the natural man will never understand. Now, Daniel begins to speak in the spirit. And he gives Nebuchadnezzar an overview of five dominant kingdoms.

Now, that includes the kingdom that Nebuchadnezzar was the king of. But there are five dominant kingdoms of man, which will all rule in measure until the second coming of Jesus Christ. In a sense, God put before Nebuchadnezzar the image of man.

What man is, what man will become, how man will start as it is with a head of gold, and he will end up with feet that are partly iron and partly clay. If you follow the progression, you begin to see that the material that the man is built with becomes progressively of less value as time goes on until Christ comes and demolishes all of this false image. Each of these kingdoms is a literal kingdom.

But when we view them as a whole, the true image of man in his fallen condition begins to appear before us. We begin actually to see mankind as mankind really is. That's what God was trying to show Nebuchadnezzar.

That's why he was troubled, because the Holy Spirit was trying to show this man not only what he was, but what mankind in general without the life of God is. Where man is headed, what the end as it is of all of these kingdoms, including his own and the four subsequent kingdoms to follow him, where they would go, how they would degenerate, how none of them, in spite of their sense of being imperial, in spite of their massive accomplishments, none of them would be able to endure. Time and circumstance and corruption would overtake all of them.

And in the end, only one kingdom would stand, and that's the kingdom of God through His Son, Jesus Christ. Now, he says in verse 30 of Daniel chapter 2, these things I'm going to make known to you the interpretation that you might know the thoughts of your heart. In other words, this image has been set before you, so that you might know and consider something which you have not formerly clearly understood.

Now, before Nebuchadnezzar and before us today in the Scripture stands an image, as I said earlier, of mankind after the fall. In Genesis chapter 3, the Scripture tells us that man believed just as Satan did, that he could act independently from God's Word, that he could form enduring concepts of right and wrong from his own intellect, that he could thrive and survive by his own effort, apart from standing on the foundation of yielding to God. Satan believed this, he still believes it today.

He sowed that seed into Adam, and the human race now with the seed of Satan, which we call today a sin nature or a fallen nature, began to move on a path of thinking that we can endure apart from the life of God, apart from yielding to God and the plan of God. Genesis chapter 3 and verse 7 shows us that the first act that Adam and Eve did after disobeying God was to try to hide the true image of what they had really become. Isn't that amazing? The very first act of this brilliant step of acting outside of the instruction of God as it is, is to hide themselves, because the covering was gone.

They had a covering, and I do believe with all my heart it was the glory of God that covered them. And the moment God's covering was removed, the very first act they tried to do was hide themselves, because

they knew they were bankrupt. And they tried to create another image.

Imagine standing in front of God with fig leaves, trying to pretend like nothing is wrong. Very evident that something is wrong. And all through history, man has been trying to cover his image.

Oh folks, how many here today are doing that very thing? You're portraying something here today that you're not. Folks, how many are creating an image that's not based in reality, it's not based on truth, moving along at the top of their game as it is, thinking that everything is in order, but they're deeply troubled inside. If you weren't troubled, many of you would not even be in this house today.

Many are here, many even come to God in the first place because there's a deep troubling inside, and they don't know why it's there. And they're searching through the wisdom of this world, and the wisdom of this world can't answer those deep questions. And so they come to the house of God, and they say, God, if you're real, if you really are real, you can answer this question that's in my heart, and this troubling that I have been experiencing of late.

You see, humanity from the time of Adam, trying very blindly to be its own God. And now before Daniel, before Nebuchadnezzar, stands an image of a man. Mankind, this is the whole history, folks.

It's right in front of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel is unfolding it. And at the top is a head of gold.

Now, this is the Babylonian Empire. But it also is a type of Adam. Because in Babylon, he says, Now, O king, in verse 37, are the king of kings, for the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory.

And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the owls of the heaven, he has given into your hand, and he has made you ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. Now, Genesis tells us about Adam, that God gave him, in a sense, that same commission.

You are to rule over this world. And Nebuchadnezzar was a man in a position, very much, which was similar to the position that God had given to Adam. Now, Babylon was a kingdom given to astrology and the elevation of itself.

Babylonians loved to gaze into the heavens. And that's exactly what Satan did. He gazed into the heavens and he said, I will be just as God.

I will have the knowledge that God has. I will have the power to chart my own destiny. I will know what is right.

I will know what is wrong. I'll know what's evil. I'll know what is good.

He infused that into man. And men, ever since, have been gazing into the heavens, trying to be as God. Babylon, in Genesis chapter 10, is mentioned as a place where men decided to become as God, but they were going to do it through man-centered organization, through thought and unity.

Genesis 11-9 tells us they tried to build into the heavens, only to find their ability to communicate with each other confounded by God. They said, let's put our ingenuity together and let's build something, and let's build it right into the heavens. And what a name and a reputation we will get to ourselves in the earth when we begin to do this.

And God looked down and saw that man was bent on a path of deception and destruction, and the scripture says he confounded their languages. And all of a sudden the people were unable to communicate with one another. You see, the end result of man trying to be God is confusion.

It is absolute confusion. There's no ability to communicate. There's no ability to get along.

As a point of interest, in Acts chapter 2 and verse 6, it says when the 120 of the early church came out of that upper room, the multitude came together and were confounded because they heard every man speak in his own language. God set everything in right order. When people begin to seek him first and his kingdom, he begins to put everything back into its original order.

People were given the power to speak known languages and to communicate with men that they ordinarily in times past had no power to communicate with. In a sense, the day of Pentecost was the opposite of the confusion that came from the Tower of Babel, where men could no longer communicate with one another. Now, through Pentecost and the power of the Holy Ghost, you and I have the power to speak to all men of all nations and all languages.

There's a common language that God has given to us, the language of heaven, the understanding of the ways of God, this intricate knowledge of what goes on in the mind and heart of every man in spite of culture and geographic location and social standing. We are all from the same blood. We are all made the same way.

We all have the same inherent need of getting back to a creator. We can speak to every nation, every kindred, every tribe and every tongue. Glory be to God that when we come to Christ, everything comes back into its right order again.

Thanks be to God for clear thinking. Nebuchadnezzar was a little taken with the fact that he was the head of gold and he got carried away with it. And in Daniel chapter 3, the scripture tells us that he built an oversized image of himself and he demanded that all people around worship it.

Oh, what a type of our society today, where men build oversized images of themselves. This golden statue was about 60-something feet high and about 18 or 20 feet wide. And then he got a band around it and he made them tune their instruments and said, now boys, when you strike up the band, everybody around has to bow to my image of myself.

Doesn't it sound like a typical CEO in our generation today? Everybody, you know the saying in America, the boss laughs, everybody laughs. Everybody, the moment you hear the music, everybody bows and do appropriate homage. But there were three that refused.

There were three young men who knew God and they said, we will not bow to man's image of himself. In spite of what is told us and in spite of the warnings that if we don't bow, it's going to get very hot for us around here, we're not going to bow. If ever there was a generation, beloved, where we must not bow to man's image of himself, even man's image of himself in his own godliness as he sees it, it is in this generation.

These boys made a choice. They said, we're only going to bow to one God, the God of heaven. We know him.

We know how he thinks. We know who he is. We will not bow to the gods of this generation.

We're living in a generation now where the pressure in the very air itself is for the people of God to bow to man's image, his own stubborn image that he wants to create of his own godliness before God. He wants even God himself to bend his knee to it. But there were three that simply refused.

And they were thrown by this society into a fire. But it was here in the fire that the true image of God became visible. I'm going to warn many here today.

When you truly stand for Jesus Christ in this generation, things might get a little bit hot for you in the days to come. But if you will stand with God, God promises to stand with you. And through those who will not bow, they will not bend their knee to man's fallen image of himself in this generation.

Jesus says, I will come and I will walk with you. And my image will be made known to man through those who choose to walk with me through the furnace of affliction. That will come to those who make the choice to live for God in a very unpopular time.

Next, in Daniel chapter 2 and verse 32, this image that stood before them had a breast and arms of silver. It was the Medo-Persian empire that was going to eventually conquer Babylon. Now, this is a different empire.

It's an empire that had a foundational block of ethics, as they saw it, being generosity and religious tolerance. This was man believing that in himself he's very large hearted. It speaks of a silver heart and silver arms, open.

Yes, we believe in inclusiveness. You're okay. I'm okay.

We're all okay. So you worship the way you want. We'll worship the way we want.

And all roads, of course, lead to heaven. I had an imam ask me that one day, a Muslim imam. He says, do you believe that all roads lead to Jesus Christ? I looked him right in the eye and said, I absolutely believe that.

Some, one to mercy and all the rest to judgment. They all lead to Jesus Christ, every road. Large heartedness.

Many men believe that that makes them as God. Large heartedness. The Medo-Persian empire under Cyrus, remember, were the ones who said to the captivated Jews that had been in Babylon.

You can go home now. We'll even give you the provision to rebuild your temple. We'll write a decree and we'll say that anybody who tries to stop you will face the full weight.

And so here they are sending back as it is generous. And that's that's how man likes to see himself. That's how he likes to see himself as God.

God's generous. I'm generous. That's how the fallen nature begins to think that he can actually be as God is.

But the scripture declares in Isaiah 64, verse six, that our righteousness is our filthy rags and our glory is a fading one. And our iniquities, just like the wind, are carrying us away. Romans 3, 23 says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

That's the image of God, the docks of God. All have sinned. Everyone born into this world has sinned, has been born with this in nature.

And no matter how generous we are, no matter how at the top of our game we might be, we have fallen short of the glory of God because there's a sin nature within us. And until that issue is dealt with, we can never, ever be what God intended us to be, nor reflect his image in our generation. Again, this image that stood before Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel, the third part of it, the belly and thighs were made of brass.

And this was the Greek empire under Alexander the Great. And they believed in the philosophy of art and philosophy and wisdom. It was the belief that man has within himself the capacity of knowing all things.

Isn't that exactly what the temptation was in the Garden of Eden? You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. Now, Paul said the loins, that's the belly and thighs, are to be girded with truth. We are to have the truth of God in our inward parts.

But this empire believed that man himself has the power of creating things out of his own mind without any divine guidance that have eternal meaning and significance. He has the power. And so the philosophers were born as it is.

And these things, of course, are still in all of our society today. And art, he began to create things that he thought represented God. But it was all out of the human spirit.

It was brass. Paul says in 1 Corinthians, in chapter 1, that God has chosen the weak things of the world and the things that are not, to confound those things that are wise in their own strength. He says we preach Christ crucified.

To the Jews it's a stumbling block and to the Greeks it's foolishness. But Paul said this is the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is stronger than the wisdom of man.

God takes those things that are weak. He takes those of us that are nothing. He takes those who know they need a savior.

He takes those who are willing to admit that their kingdom falls far short of the glory of God. And he moves upon them with his Holy Spirit. And he changes them into another image.

The image of the risen Christ. They are changed from image to image and glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. And God begins to bring glory to his name.

And no flesh in the kingdom of God can take any of the glory. If you are a true, true child of God in this sanctuary today, you know that the changes coming into your life are supernatural. All you did is read it and you believed it.

And God by his Holy Spirit began to make it a living reality within you. You know you don't have to make anything happen. You know that God has done it all.

And when he rose from the dead on the third day, the power of sin and the captivity of the fallen nature of man was broken. Every prison door before you opened, every wound of the past was commanded by God to be healed. Every blinded thing before you was made straight.

Every crooked path all of a sudden you knew the way through. Every mountain was brought down so you could get by it. God gave you what you could never have of yourself.

God gave you strength. God gave you power. God gave you majesty.

God gave you might. And if you are a true child of God, there should be a shout of praise for the goodness of God inside of your heart. The fourth part of this image was legs of iron.

Now this represented the kingdom of Rome. The greatest perhaps in its time for sure rule of law and military might. A kingdom that believed that man could govern by his own strength and numbers and organization and his military will.

Yet it's a kingdom historically which could not hold to its resolve or maintain its strength because of inward corruption. It's amazing. Folks, we can determine to be different kinds of people than the people we are.

And many of us tried that for years. You can determine to say, I'm not going to be this kind of a person. I'm going to be that kind of a person.

And you can set out with legs of iron to make it happen. And you can even appear to have achieved the victory for a season. Rome could have conquered the world and could still be a world dominant force per se militarily.

Except for one thing. There was an inner corruption in Rome because there's an inner corruption in man. And because of that inner corruption, that kingdom could not stand.

Paul speaks about it in Romans 7. The inward corruption in all men. The things I want to do, I don't do. The things I don't want to do, I do.

I delight after the law of God in my mind. But another law seems to be at work in my members. Called the law of sin that is bringing me into the captivity of its own ways of doing things.

And then Paul cries out, who will deliver me from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Thanks be to God that I am not as a Christian person destined to have to go through life trying to make it happen in my own strength. I have been delivered from this.

And if you are a born again believer in Christ, you've been delivered from it as well. The last part of this image were feet that were part of iron and part of clay. And it speaks of the determination of fallen man to stand.

Even though he's standing on a brittle and a crumbling foundation. It started with a head of gold. It started in a sense with the position that Adam had before God.

And now we're coming to the last generation. Where men are standing with determination. We're not going to fall.

We're not going to be overcome. We're not going to experience wars. Nuclear war is not going to break out in our world.

We're going to find peace. We're going to find a resolve. We're going to do this.

We're going to do that. Standing with toes as it is of iron and part of iron and part of clay. Trying to stand but pieces are always breaking off the feet of this image.

And you can see this image beginning to wobble. You can see men's hearts beginning to fail for fear of the things that are coming on this earth. You can see the ambassadors of peace now beginning to weep.

They seem to have peace one month and then it just slides through their fingers like sand the next. And there's a hopelessness gripping all of this world today. As this image of man that he's tried to create of himself without God begins to falter.

As it begins to crumble as the worthlessness of this whole pursuit of trying to be like God without God now becomes evident. Oh what a stupidity this world has lived in. Trying to be like God without God is like trying to breathe without air.

It's like trying to see without eyes. It's like trying to touch without hands. How can you be like God without God when without God we're the exact opposite of His character? It's absolutely impossible.

So we create this image and this image of the ability to create with our own hands and through organization. The generosity of our own fallen natures and hearts. The ability that we think to create things that are lasting and eternal.

The iron legs to walk through this life in our own strength. And lastly wobbling on toes that are breaking. And that's where every human being without God goes.

Ending up at the end of their days on wobbly feet. Trying to hold on at 70 years old and 80 years old. Trying to hold on to this image of themselves.

As everything around them is crumbling. And their hearts are troubled. And Daniel stood before Nebuchadnezzar and said, This image has appeared before you to show you why your heart is troubled.

Because you're part of a kingdom as grand as it may seem to you. It is crumbling. It is destined to be defeated.

It is going down into nothing. It is not going to last. It is not going to survive.

There is only one kingdom that is going to rule and reign in this world forever. Daniel said, there is a stone carved out of a mountain without human effort. You see, all these kingdoms are maintained by human effort.

By human ingenuity. But Daniel said, no, there is another stone. And it has been carved out of a mountain with no human effort involved in it.

It is supernatural. It is sovereign. It has been created by the will of God.

And by the mind of God. It is the only lasting kingdom. And Daniel saw this great stone coming and smiting this image in the feet.

Not in the head, but in the feet. At the end of time. At the last of generations.

When Christ comes to rule and reign. And to finally overthrow all of these kingdoms of man. And some will only begin to realize the futility of what they have embraced when it's all over and it's too late.

There will be a cry, but the cry is too late. John the Baptist, talking of Jesus, he said in Luke 3.9, The axe is now laid to the root and every tree that does not bring forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. He said in chapter 3 and verse 17 of Christ, His fan is in His hand and He is blowing away that which is worthless and gathering that which is of value to God.

Christ is doing that in this generation. He's coming down and He blows away everything that is worthless. He blows away human effort.

He blows away human reasoning. He blows away human strength. He blows away human power.

He says, no, this is worthless. I don't need this. I don't want this.

None of it will last. I've only come to gather what is of value to eternity and to the kingdom of God. And then you might say in your heart, well, what is that then? What is the value of all of this other is worthless? He says, you are the only thing of any value to me.

It is you. It is you on bended knee. It is you acknowledging that you need a Savior.

It's you allowing and inviting and saying, oh, mountain of God, come and smash this image of myself that I have created. God Almighty, forgive me for this ignorance. I invite you, God, in Christ's name, to take down this image that I have built about myself and recreate me in the image of Almighty God through Jesus Christ.

Give me a new life. Take this thing away from me, oh God. The greatest thing that God can do for you today is smash that upon which you stand if it is leading you to destruction.

Every man, every woman in this room, you are building an image of something. You build it by the way you do your hair. You build it by the way you speak.

You build it by the clothes you wear. You build it by how you see yourself in your profession. You're building an image.

Constantly. And all of the pieces of this image that Daniel showed before Nebuchadnezzar are all part of this image that every man apart from God begins to build. Now, Nebuchadnezzar's image of himself was fairly intact.

Now, I know there are people here today that are at the bottom of their game. And at the bottom of your game, it's quite easy to say, Jesus, please, come smash this whole thing. It's not doing very good and it's falling over and I'm not interested in trying to maintain it any longer.

But Nebuchadnezzar was at the top of his game. And he yet didn't see that he was in just as difficult a position as the man at the bottom of his game because it was all of humanity as a whole was going to fail and fall without the knowledge of God. If you have an image that you're trying to maintain, would you let God touch it today? Would you be wise enough to let it be overthrown? That's why Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar, you're at the top of your game, but your heart is troubled.

I remember speaking to a group of very successful businessmen in 2001, about 100 or so people in the room. And I remember the tears starting to flow as people who are technically at the top of their game in the financial world. I began to share with them about a debt they owed that they could never pay.

I began to speak to them about the deep troubling in their hearts when the whole corporate day is over and they sit on the edge of their bed at night and begin to wonder. If I make it up the next two steps in the ladder and it's no better than it is now, is there really a reason for life? I said, there's some of you here in this room that are terrified of any further success because the success you've experienced to this point has left you so troubled and so empty. And I remember speaking these words and looking out and one CEO or executive, I don't know exactly what it was, I could see the tears just flowing right down the cheeks.

It's almost as if God, this man is reading my mail. I've got houses in three continents. I'm at the top of my game, but I'm so troubled.

I can't sleep. What is it that's missing? What is it that I can't seem to find? When they began to realize that what was missing was a living relationship with God through Jesus Christ. I heard testimonies and I didn't give an altar call or ask for any expression in that room.

But I heard testimonies later on of men going back to the hotel rooms and in some cases kneeling beside their bed. And saying, Jesus, I give the rest of my life to you. I invite you to come in and be my Lord and my Savior.

In that room that day, there were 16 men and women that were going to eternity shortly after because they were in the towers on September 11th. And 16 of the hundred died. And I remember saying to them, this is what you must do.

Take note of this. This is what you must do. And I felt a sense of urgency in my heart.

This is what you must do. Little did they know that within just a few months, they'd be standing. They were on the top floors.

And they'd be pressed against the glass. You might have seen some of the pictures in the paper. But those would be the men and women.

Some of them were in that room that would be pressed against the glass one hour away from eternity. One hour. What if that's all you have today? What if that's all we have? What if all we have is an hour? What if our end is in two months? You don't know for a fact that it isn't, and neither do I. But I do know that if you do come to Christ as Lord and Savior, the end of this side is only the beginning of an eternity with God.

I do know that it's no shame, as one writer said, to give up what you cannot keep to get what you can never lose. I do know that it's not a foolish thing to give up human effort and to give up this frail image of flesh that we're trying to maintain and somehow put a tag of godliness on it. That the wise man will say, Lord, take this thing down.

I invite you to stop me. That's why the mountain hits the feet. I invite you to stop me today right where I am.

Stop me in my journey. And God, bend my knee to you. Let me acknowledge that I'm a sinner and I need a Savior.

God, you call yourself Jesus, the Prince of Peace. And folks, the end of a man or woman who has been touched by God, the scripture says, is peace. The Lord brings peace into the heart.

I challenge you with everything that's in me today. If you're troubled, would you consider? Now, Nebuchadnezzar had a problem with this, but God did deal with him. He was still all caught up in himself, even after this revelation.

This revelation was brought to humble him, but he wasn't humbled until a later date. He began to worship. His worship was misguided, but God began to correct it.

Might I challenge you? Beloved, I'm not trying to be an alarmist, but I don't know how long we've got. And if you are a reasonable person, you don't know either. There's a foreboding in everybody now, all over the world.

You have absolute madmen that are going to have nuclear weaponry in their hands soon. You have nations around the world that are bent on causing destruction everywhere they go. Not nations, but radical elements in those nations.

You and I don't know how long this frail kingdom of man is going to last. But I do know, because Daniel said, this mountain that came, it hit this image in the feet, and the image crumbled and it was scattered to the wind, and the mountain filled the whole earth. God says, I need to be able to take down this image that you have of yourself before you can learn what it is to be part of a kingdom that will fill the whole earth, not just for time, but for all of eternity.

I invite you with everything in my heart to consider Jesus Christ. Folks, I've got to be honest, I feel like Noah this morning. I feel like the ark is ready, the door is open.

Scripture says that Noah was a preacher of righteousness. And I can envision him standing there, pleading with the crowds, who thought, well, hey, you know, we've still got another day to buy, we've still got another day to do this. And they didn't realize what was coming their way.

And Jesus said, as in the days of Noah, so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. There will be this attitude that things are just, men will block out reality and just say, well, all things are going to go on, as if they're God and able to pronounce peace the way they've always been. And they didn't know until the rain came.

I stood before a room of 100 executives and pleaded with them to consider giving their lives to Jesus Christ. A few months later, 16 stood pressed against the window. In that room, some may have been converted that night, some were converted.

Now I stand before you and I plead with you to consider giving your life to Jesus Christ. There is no life, there is no safety apart from Him. In Him is life, in Him is peace, in Him is healing.

In Him is an image that you've always longed for. When the news gets worse, your heart is going to be at rest. You're going to be able to go to bed at 10 o'clock at night and you're going to close your eyes and you're going to wake up at 6 o'clock in the morning.

You're going to be at peace. You're going to walk through the fire like the Hebrew boys did because you haven't bowed to the gods of this world. Christ is going to walk with you.

Your bosses, your co-workers, your neighbors will look and say, I don't know how they do it, but I see another image. I don't see the image of man here. I see another image and I see three walking in the fire and I see four actually now in the form of the fourth looks like the Son of God.

Oh folks, hear me on this. If you refuse now to bend your knee to this image that even your own mind wants to create of yourself and this desire to be like God and truly bend your knee to Christ, God will come and save you. He'll give you a new heart.

He says, I'll give you a new mind. I'll give you a new spirit. I'll give you new hope and you will enter into the power of a supernatural life.

I won't have to prove to you that Christ is real. A week from today you will know it. You will have gotten up and there will be a change in you.

People in your workplace will say, how come you're not nearly as ornery as you used to be? You'll be changing. Image to image and glory to glory. And you'll look back as you travel and you'll begin to realize the old things have been passing away and all things are beginning to be new, just as the Scripture says.

You will know who God is. You will know what God can do. You'll be taken where you can't go.

You'll be made into what you could never be. God will keep you. And when all of the earth and all the elements around are beginning to tremble and shake, you will have this incredible peace that is in your heart.

It's not an I don't care attitude. It's I know where I'm going. I know who God is.

I have no image to maintain. God Almighty has determined to maintain His own image in my life. I'm to read the book.

I'm to believe what God says. And He's the one who creates the image of His Son in me. It's not up to me to do this anymore.

Oh, the greatest gift you could give yourself today, men and women who have gathered here, is to stop walking this journey in your own strength. Stop trying to figure it out. Stop trying to stay at the top of your game.

Bend your knee to God. Acknowledge Him as your Lord and Savior. And let Him begin to take the reins and to govern your life.

Invite Him to say, Jesus Christ, sent by the hand of God, I invite you now. Come and smite me in the feet and stop the direction of my life. Cause it to just literally decay into the ground and let the wind of God blow it away.

And recreate me now in the image of the One who came and gave His life for me. Let me be a true believer in Jesus Christ. Let me be a Christian in this generation.

Let me stand when everyone is faltering by the grace and power of God alone. Not by human ingenuity. Not by natural goodness.

But by the grace of Almighty God. Let me stand in this generation. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

Thank you, Jesus. If I have an altar call that the Lord put on my heart, listen carefully to this, please. Number one, it's for people who are tired of pursuing your own dream.

You're tired of pursuing your own goals. You're tired of walking in your own strength. As this image has been put before you today, you say, God, that is me.

That preacher just preached about me. I saw myself in that statue. I saw exactly where I am and what I'm trying to do.

And I realized that this was an image of perishing man that was put before this king. And Lord, I'm asking you now, God, to get me out of this place. That I'm walking in natural strength and wisdom.

And bring me to the place where I'm walking by the strength and the power of Almighty God. And secondly, for those who have never bent their knee to God. Today, you begin to realize that you are a sinner and you need a savior.

It takes humility. Oh, but it takes wisdom. My goodness, could you imagine standing before the throne of God one day and you were in this service.

And you didn't bend your knee. And it's too late. And the eternity before you is not one that we'd even want to begin to describe.

Imagine today God opens the doorway to eternal life. Young people, older people hear the pleading of the Holy Spirit today. Ask God for the grace.

To respond. If the Lord is calling you today, as we stand in the annex, you can stand between the screens, please, if you will. And in the main sanctuary, I'm going to ask you just to, as we stand, just join me here at this altar.

We're going to worship for a moment together. Then we're going to pray together. Would you stand, please? In the balcony, you can go to either exit.

Main sanctuary, just slip out of where you are. And meet me at this altar, please. And we'll pray together.

Hallelujah. The Bible tells us that angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner who realizes his or her need of a Savior. And if that's been accomplished this morning, then there's been a great work done for the glory of God.

Heaven will rejoice, not in multitudes, but over you. Whatever your name is, wherever you've come from, there'll be a special rejoicing in heaven just because you've made the wisest choice that anyone ever created in the image of God can make. If you're here this morning and you say, Pastor, I am a sinner.

And I need a Savior. I need to be saved. I've never given the rights to my life over to Jesus Christ.

I've never acknowledged that he has the right to be Lord as well as Savior. And I'm tired of living in sin. I'm tired of maintaining this image.

I'm tired. I'm troubled. I'm tired.

And God Almighty, I'm asking you to come into my life today and save me from my sin. If that's you today, unashamedly lift your hand up. The balcony, main sanctuary, wherever you are.

Just go ahead, unashamedly. I'm coming to God. I don't care who says what.

It makes no difference to me. I don't care who's beside me. I'm coming to Christ.

Praise God. Pray with me, please. Lord Jesus, I'm a sinner.

Thank you for loving me. Thank you for being kind to me and coming to me when I wasn't even looking for you. And I was living in ignorance apart from you.

Today I open my heart. And I acknowledge that you died on a cross to pay the price for the wrong things I've done. And you did it because you love me.

Oh God, I open my heart today. I invite you to be my Lord and my Savior. I give you the rights to my life.

Lead me and guide me. And let the image of Jesus Christ be the only image that is formed in me and through me. God, thank you that you promised to give me peace because that's who you are.

You are the Prince of Peace. And you now have the right and you have the reins of my life. I love you, Jesus.

Thank you for loving me. Thank you for drawing me. And this day, thank you for saving me.

I believe with all my heart that when I die, I'm going to heaven to live with God for all of eternity. I believe it. I receive it.

And now I rejoice in it. I thank you, God. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, mighty God.

Thank you, Lord. God, thank you. God, thank you.

After the service today in the lower rotunda, there's some people there that can help you. If you have questions about the decision you've made or you're interested in becoming a Christian, they'll be downstairs. They're more than happy to help you with that.

For the rest, let's pray. Father, I pray that you give strength and grace. Lord, that we can all stop trying to create an image of ourselves.

Lord, you delivered us from this. You said, no, you give it up. I'll do the work in you.

I'll do it for you. I'll make you what heaven destines you to be. God, just thank you, Lord, for the rest, the rest of putting away all this effort to be something.

God, when you are everything in us already, now just be everything to us and be everything through us, O God. I thank you for it, Lord. I thank you, God, for men and women who have the courage to just say, Lord Jesus, stop me now in my tracks.

Stop this parade of human effort and reasoning and bring me into the rest that, God, you promise to those who are led of the Holy Spirit and governed by the promises of God. Father, we thank you for this. God, I

give you praise today.

Bless those that have come. Bless those that have bent their knee with the knowledge of Jesus Christ and all God's people. Shout it.

This is the conclusion of the message.

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