

# The American Church like Sampson

by Carter Conlon

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*This sermon draws parallels between the story of Samson and the Church of Jesus Christ, emphasizing the importance of maintaining separation unto God's purposes. It highlights how the church can lose its vision and strength when enticed by self-gratification, but through a return to God's calling, there can be a revival and a restoration of strength to bring down the works of the enemy. The message encourages believers to seek a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit, embrace weakness for God's strength, and anticipate a spiritual awakening in this generation.*

**Duration:** 9:00

**Scripture:** Judges 16:17, Matthew 16:24, 2 Corinthians 12:10, Acts 1:8, Ephesians 6:10, 2 Chronicles 7:14, Joel 2:28, John 8:36, Psalm 146:7

**Topics:** "Separation for God's Purposes", "Revival and Restoration"

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## Description

This sermon draws parallels between the story of Samson and the Church of Jesus Christ, emphasizing the importance of maintaining separation unto God's purposes. It highlights how the church can lose its vision and strength when enticed by self-gratification, but through a return to God's calling, there can be a revival and a restoration of strength to bring down the works of the enemy. The message encourages believers to seek a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit, embrace weakness for God's strength, and anticipate a spiritual awakening in this generation.

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## Transcript

I'm meeting a song called Freedom. But here's the thought that I have on my heart, and I'm going to make it very simple, because it was a devotional I did for my kitchen just a couple of weeks ago, and the thought came to me one day that, you know, that Samson was a young man called to bring victory and freedom and deliverance to his people and all the people around, and he had an anointing on his life, and the anointing was marked by his separation under God. And the separation under God, the physical sign of that separation was the fact that his hair had never been cut, and it marked him out from among the society around him.

And he was a Nazarite. He was dedicated to the things of God and to the service of God, just as you and I are when we're born again by the blood of Jesus Christ, when we receive the Spirit of God, we're left on this earth to bring others into victory and deliverance in the kingdom of God. But Samson got enticed by the desires and needs of his own life and his own heart, and the Bible called it seduction, and he fell asleep on the knees of seduction, and he, instead of living for his purpose, he started living for another

purpose, started living really to gratify his own desires and his own heart, and in that, in living that way, he lost his separation, his hair, he fell asleep and his hair was cut, his mark of his separation was taken away.

And I think in great measure, that happened to the Church of Jesus Christ in our generation. We were enticed by, instead of denying ourselves and living for the sake of others, we were enticed by, well, why not use the gospel for our own needs and to satisfy our own inner cravings or whatever it is. And we lost our separation.

We lost our purpose as the Church of Jesus Christ, to be ambassadors of the one who gave his life that we might be forgiven, and to go to them. That's why Jesus said, if any man does not take up his cross, he's not worthy to be my disciple. And so, the end result of that is that Samson ended up in captivity, and he was placed in a, put in a place where he just started going around in circles, and he was literally grinding in a millhouse, and he lost his vision.

And I think in great measure, the Church in America of our generation lost her vision and lost her strength. And you know, the devil is never satisfied with just taking away the vision and the strength of the servants of God. And ultimately, what he did is he built a podium, as it was, or like a portico, over the head of Samson, and brought 3,000 people in and started having this incredible party, just rejoicing over the fact that we've defeated this man who was separated to deliver his people from our authority and our power, and they began to celebrate.

But what they didn't notice is that while they were celebrating, the hair on Samson's head began to grow again. That means his separation started coming back. And in great measure, the Lord has put us in our homes at this time, and our separation to his purposes are now starting to come back.

Now hair doesn't grow overnight. It grows a little bit every day. And a little bit every day, we're starting to reconsider our relationship with God.

What is our purpose on the earth? We're starting to read the Word of God maybe with a deeper lens than we've ever read it before. And this is what the devil failed to notice, that while he was mocking this anointed man of God, this servant of God that was sent to deliver the nation, he'd failed to notice that his separation to God was starting to return. And I close the Kitchen Devotional by saying it this way, the devil may be trying to rejoice over the church, or maybe thinking he's got the church in his back pocket in this generation, but I serve notice on every devil and demon of hell, our hair is starting to grow again.

Just take a look at it right here, just in the back. I can't even hide it anymore. I'm going to need an elastic band, and I'm going to have to have a little ponytail at the back soon.

But I'm telling you, my hair is starting to grow. And many around, our hair is starting to grow. Our separation to God is coming back.

And in that last moment, his strength returned, and the Bible says he did more for the kingdom of God in that final moment in his life than he had done through all of a ministry that had always been somewhat compromised. In that final moment of saying, God, give me your spirit once again. Give me the power once again, and show me where this house of mockery, give me the pillars that it sits upon.

And he brought the whole thing down, and he did more in his death than he had done in his life. And when we've lost all of our plans, and we've lost all of our schemes, and we've lost all of our strength, and we've lost all of what we thought we were, the reality is we haven't lost anything. In our death, in our giving up, in

a sense, of our own plans and desires, the separation unto God is coming back to us, and the spirit of God is coming upon his people again.

By God's grace, by God's grace, we're going to see a spiritual awakening in our generation. We're going to see the house of hell brought down one more time, and God's people set free. Set free so that they can worship him, because the Bible tells us that we are the church of Jesus Christ, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against us.

That doesn't mean we're holding out. That means we're moving forward. And no matter how strong those pillars are, no matter how strong that house of mockery is that the devil has built over the church of Jesus Christ, it cannot prevail against the church of Jesus Christ.

This is an awesome hour to be alive. This is an awesome hour to be a believer in Jesus Christ. So here's my prayer for you, and here should be your prayer for yourself.

Almighty God, for the sake of Jesus Christ, and for the sake of the calling on my life, and for the sake of this generation, let your Holy Spirit come on me one more time. God, use me, not in my strength, but in my weakness, not in my victory, but in my failure. Use me, God, and make a great deliverance in the earth through us as your people in this last time.

I believe with all my heart that the church of Jesus Christ is going out with a shout of glory in this final generation. I believe the healing of God is going to flow again. I believe that prisons have to release their captives, sickened bodies will be healed, wounded hearts will be made bright.

The poor will have this treasure of God revealed to their heart, and those who can't see, as Samson once couldn't, will be given their sight, a spiritual sight that only God can give. Praise be to God. So you don't have to sit in your pain and the fear of your failure any longer, or the regret of your past.

God is willing to use you. God is willing to pick you up. God is willing to bring glory to his name, not in your strength, but in your weakness.

That's what Paul meant when he said, when I am weak, then I am strong. This is a great day. This is a great day.

Thank God we can't get our hair cut. Thank God we're stuck in our homes. Thank God we have to start thinking about our future and what our purpose is on the earth.

This is the doing of God, and is it marvelous in our eyes. God is doing this. God, not the coronavirus, God is doing this.

He's separating his people unto himself for one last great move of his Holy Spirit. So be encouraged tonight. Father, thank you for freedom.

Thank you, God, that you're lifting us out of the confines of our weakness, the confines of our self-loathing, the confines of our failure, the confines of our own need. And you're showing us again who we are as your people. And you're lifting us up.

And you're putting us in a place where we will be given the strength to bring down this house of mockery one more time. Lord, Jesus Christ, for the sake of our children, for the sake of our homes and our families, for the sake of your name, Lord, God, we ask you to do what only you can do. And thank you for bringing

us into this place of reckoning one more time, perhaps one last time.

Oh, Holy Spirit of the living God, come upon us again in this generation. Bring us back, Lord, to where we should have always been. And we thank you and praise you in Jesus' name.

Freedom. No more chains. No more bondage.

I'm free. Let that be the cry of your heart. Let it be the prayer of your heart tonight.

Get up in your room, your bedroom, your living room, your car, or if you're on the street corner with a cell phone, wherever you are, start singing with us tonight. No more shackles. No more chains.

No more bondage. I am free. Hallelujah.

See you again Sunday morning right here, 10 a.m.

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