

The Lame Take The Prey

by Carter Conlon

This sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering to God, acknowledging our weaknesses and inability to save ourselves. It highlights the victory and healing that comes from admitting our need for a Savior and accepting Jesus Christ as Lord. The message focuses on the eternal security and comfort found in God's promises, offering hope for today, tomorrow, and forever through faith in Christ.

Scripture: Isaiah 33:20, John 14:2, Matthew 9:12, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 10:9, John 7:37, John 16:13, Revelation 21:4

Topics: "Surrender to God", "Hope in Christ"

Description

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Transcript

Thank you, worship team, God bless you. God bless you, everybody here. We're coming to you tonight from the Summit Campus Church here at our Bible School in Grantville, Pennsylvania.

And we have a pre-service prayer time. If you're in the area or you're visiting or passing through, we'd love to have you come and pray with us here at the campus church every Tuesday night at 7 p.m. Eastern time. And we meet about 6.30, a little early, and we have a little bit of time of just reading the word of God together, singing, just help getting the burdens of the day lifted off of us so that we can focus on you and focus on people that are out there who need prayer and let God instill a new sense of faith in each one of our hearts.

We're gonna go to communion tonight at the end of the sharing that I have for you. And when we do, if you'd have an opportunity, please go to your kitchen to get some bread and some juice or crackers and juice so you can partake of the celebration of the victory of Christ tonight with us. For those that are out there online with us tonight and in the future, we have folks that are joining us from all over the country, all over the world, actually.

Even just since this prayer meeting started tonight online, we've had prayer requests come in from 86 different locations in the United States, from Finland, from South Korea, from Canada, and from Italy. So

God bless all of you that are out there online and everyone else that has sent your prayer request in. You might be with us live, but you sent your request in before we began at seven o'clock.

God bless you. Here's what we'd like you to do. We'd like you to send us a testimony video, just maybe a three-minute video of your group, wherever you are.

Maybe it's a video of you receiving communion with us, whether it's in India or Central or South America or Europe or Canada, the U.S., wherever you are. Just your group having communion with us or maybe a video of you staying after the meeting is over for a prayer for the infilling of the Holy Spirit. Maybe it's a testimony of something that has happened.

An answer to prayer that has come into somebody's life has been part of the prayer meeting. So in order to do this, here's what we're gonna ask you to do. Email us at testimony at tsc.nyc, testimony at tsc.nyc. Email us and somebody will contact you and give you instructions as to how you can video record that, how you can download it, how you can actually get that file to us so that we can actually show that file to people who are with us on Tuesday night.

We may not be able to do them all at once, but we will do the ones that we can. And what an encouragement it will be to all of us when we recognize and see that there are people with us on Tuesday nights praying with us from all over the world, celebrating communion and God is giving victory. For example, last week I got a text after one of the prayer, our prayer meeting, just telling us that there was a lady with a longstanding chronic pain condition.

And when Pastor Pavel prayed for those that needed healing, she was instantly healed in her living, all by herself in her living room. That's been our prayer request that God would stretch out his hand through the internet and begin to do the things that only he can do. In another place in Massachusetts, a young man who has been in a program and was invited in to be part of a 13 person, I believe it is, prayer group, in the middle of the message just stood up and shouted, I'm going with God, I'm going with God, and opened his heart to receive Christ in a new way.

So we thank God for that. We thank God for all these reports. And we would love to hear from you.

We'd love to hear your report of victory. So that's testimony at tsc.nyc. Send in what your testimony is all about. Somebody will get back to you immediately and let you know exactly how you can do that.

We're also encouraging you after this prayer meeting every Tuesday night to stay with the group of people that you have in your home. Invite people into this prayer meeting from your community that are struggling, that are needing a touch of God, that are just needing hope and encouragement for the future. Invite them in.

And when this prayer meeting is finished, stay for an extra 15, 20, 25 minutes, whatever, and just pray for the infilling of God's Holy Spirit. Lay hands on one another, do whatever. Just pray.

Say, God, give us your Holy Spirit. This is the need of the hour. This is what the Church of Jesus Christ needs, the third person of the Trinity.

We need the power of God to live the Christian life and to be a viable witness in our generation. So there's so much going on. And remember, if you wanna join us for a pre-service prayer, you're always welcome.

You don't have to join the church to come and be part of pre-service prayer on Tuesday night. Just come on in, pray with us, join us at 6.30, or come for the 7 p.m. prayer meeting. We'd love to have you here to pray with us and to believe God for victory for people from all over the world.

Tonight, I'm gonna be speaking to you about victory that comes to those who have no other help, and no other hope, and no other helper. For example, in New York City, I've lost my love for the things of God and ministry. I open my Bible and it feels forced, so I end up stopping.

From New Jersey, please pray that the Lord will restore my walk, that my eyes and heart would once again be on Him and not on others. People fail, but God does not fail. Thank you, Times Square Church.

From Zagreb, Croatia, dear Lord, I need you. Give me the strength and your wisdom and spirit to help me to see what is from you. I want to see your will for my life.

From Fort Worth, Texas, please pray for my salvation and for a renewed mind so I can hear the voice of Jesus. Pray for a desire to be healed and made whole. From Brooklyn, I have a birthday in a few days.

I've wasted my time, my youth, and my talents. My life has amounted to nothing. Pray that God would give me purpose and direction.

And from New York, please pray for God to speak to me. I'm feeling discouraged. Nothing in my life seems normal.

I'm in a constant fight or flight for the last four years. I feel beaten. And that's exactly how so many people are feeling today.

And I want to share with you a message from my heart that I feel the Lord impressed on it this week called the lame take to pray, Isaiah chapter 33. If you have your Bible or any similar device that you can follow along, I'll be reading from the new King James version of the Bible so you can get that quite easily on your cell phone or whatever you have. Isaiah chapter 33, I'm gonna begin at verse 20.

And so Father, I thank you, God Almighty, for the anointing of your Holy Spirit. I thank you, Lord, for the people who are with us online this evening. And I pray, my God, with all my heart for the ability, Lord, to go into people's living rooms or sit beside them on a park bench or to join them in the passenger seat of their car.

Wherever people are listening tonight, I pray, God, that you would send your word right into that situation, into that room, into that whatever place your people are or those who desire to be your people are. Lord Jesus Christ, you promised that your word would set free the oppressed, would give sight to the blind, would heal those whose hearts have been wounded beyond repair, that would set the captive free. So, Lord, we just simply stand on your promise.

We stand on the reality of the revelation of what you said the ministry that your Father had given to you was. Thank you, Lord, tonight that the poor, those who have no resource, will have the treasure of the victory of Christ opened up to them. God, may people's lives never be the same again.

This is an end-time moment, and you are raising up an end-time army. Would you give us the ears to hear and give us the hearts to believe? Oh, God, as we sang tonight, cause these bones to live, cause them to live. And we ask it together tonight in Jesus' name, amen.

Isaiah chapter 33, beginning at verse 20. Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts. Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home, a tabernacle that will not be taken down.

Not one of its stakes will ever be removed, nor will any of its cords be broken. But there the majestic Lord will be for us, a place of broad rivers and streams, in which no galley with oars will sail. No majestic ships pass by, for the Lord is our judge.

The Lord is our lawgiver. The Lord is our king. He will save us.

Your tackle is loosed. They could not strengthen their mast. They could not spread the sail.

Then the prey of a great plunder is divided. The lame take the prey, and the inhabitant will not say, I am sick. The people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity.

Now, we look at this passage of Scripture, and we wonder, just looking at it, God, is this about Israel alone? Or is there a possibility that there's something deeper in this that maybe we don't see with just a casual reading? And when you look at this, when you look at people who have studied this, or look at some of the comments on it, they generally agree with the comment that I'm gonna read to you from the Full Life Study Bible. And here's what the commentator says. This is probably a prophecy concerning God's future kingdom on earth.

Therefore, the reigning king will be the Messiah, Jesus Christ. And so how does this apply now to the time in which it was written? The nation of Israel were in grave danger of being attacked and overwhelmed by an enemy army. When we look at the passage of Scripture, we see three things in it.

Number one, the word of God gives present comfort for today's battles. And I thank God for that with all my heart. I thank God that every passage of Scripture, everything written down in this book, is to me, it's into my heart, and God promises to give me comfort from my present battle of today.

But when you look at it, you also see a comfort for tomorrow, too, as well. And a third comfort for forever. Isaiah chapter 33 and verse 20, he says, "Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feast.

"Your eyes will see Jerusalem, a quiet home." In other words, look upon the promises of God. And as you begin to meditate in the word of God and look upon his promises, you'll not only see just the lines before you, but you will begin to see something that is eternal. You will find, in the word of God, a secure place, a tabernacle that will not be taken down.

Not one of its stakes will ever be removed, nor will any of its cords be broken. Jesus Christ himself said in the New Testament, in the Gospel of John chapter 14, "In my Father's house are many mansions. "And if it were not so, I would have told you.

"I go to prepare a place for you. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, "I will come again and receive you to myself, "that where I am there, ye may be also." When you look in the word of God, God says, I am going to bring you to a place of stability. I'm going to bring you to a place that cannot be moved.

I'm going to make you part of a kingdom that cannot be triumphed over. To the apostle Peter, even before Peter had had his grave situation where he denied even knowing Jesus Christ. He told him, he said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, "and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." In other words, you have recognized me, Peter, to be the Christ, the Messiah, the promised one, that

which is going to be permanent for all of eternity.

And even though hell will come against you, hell will not triumph over you. And so when we look into the word of God, we seek comfort for today's battle. And who is not in a battle today? We fight mental battles.

We fight battles in our family. We fight battles in our lives. We fight battles as one pericles said, I don't see a meaning to my life.

I don't see any purpose to my future. We fight on every conceivable level. And God says, no, I'm going to be with you today.

I want you to look beyond your battle because your life is eternal now. You've come to me, you've trusted me for your salvation, so now your life is eternal. And I am preparing an eternal place for you that cannot be triumphed over.

And the security I'm gonna give you today will carry you through the struggles that you will face tomorrow, struggles that you're not even aware of. You haven't even seen them yet, but they're coming your way. And ultimately, you will dwell with me where I am forever.

As Jesus said, I have gone to prepare a place for you. In my father's house are many mansions. Have you ever stopped to just even think about that? If you think you've got nothing on this earth, maybe you don't like your apartment, maybe you're not too crazy about your house or whatever it is, whatever place, or you're living in your car, whatever your situation is, the wonderful news tonight is that if you give your heart to Jesus Christ, he has prepared a mansion for you.

And the way I see it, there's nothing on earth that can compare. The Taj Mahal can't compare to what God has prepared for you. There have been some beautiful, magnificent buildings built in the kingdoms of this world, but nothing, absolutely nothing, can compare with what awaits you in your eternal home in heaven with God.

Now, a place of permanence, it's a place of joy, it's a place of eternal provision and security. In verse 23 now, an incredible statement is made because we might ask the question, who dwells there? Who's gonna get to go into such a place? To whom is given this incredible security of God? Who's given the assurance in their heart that God's promises will keep me today and will keep me tomorrow and will keep me forever? Well, the prophet Isaiah actually answers the question in Isaiah chapter 33, in verse 23, right at the end, he says, the lame take the prey. Now, isn't that amazing? The lame, the people who are the nobodies and the nothings, the people who know that they can't get into heaven based on their own merit, the people who know that my life is not gonna amount to anything that would ever, in my own sight, at least be pleasing to God, listen to what Jesus said.

He said, those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick, I didn't come to call the righteous, but I came to call sinners to repentance. The lame, and as I read the gospels, I just love it. All of the theologians are standing there and they're kind of scratching their scritchey beards, you know, saying, how's it possible a prophet could come from Nazareth? And while they're doing this, while everybody is debating theologically with the son of God, it's the leper that's pressing through the crowd, it's the blind man calling out on the side of the road, it's the woman that needs healing in her body that's pressing through the people.

As he sits at the table of a Pharisee and all they want to do is catch him in his words and then trap him in his speech, this other lady comes in and just washes his feet with her tears and dries them with her hair, and you can see it's the lame that are pressing through and they're winning this incredible victory that is being offered them through the son of God. In Isaiah 33 beginning at verse 21 after verse 20 talks about this kingdom, this eternal kingdom, this place that can't be moved, this place that is more sure than anything we think or feel or understand, this promise of God that's been given to us of this coming kingdom that no power of hell can take away from you or me if we've trusted in Christ. In this particular kingdom, verse 21 it says, there the majestic Lord will be for us.

He'll be a place of broad rivers and streams. In other words, you remember on the last day of the feast, Jesus stood up and cried, said, if any man thirsts, let him come unto me and drink, and he believes in me. Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

Everything you've ever longed for, everything you've ever wanted, every desire of the heart, it will all be there, it will be there in abundance. There'll be an ability to drink, there'll be an ability to understand things that our minds can't even begin to comprehend now. And the scripture says, in which no galley with oars will sail.

In other words, when you see a galley with oars, all you can think of is human effort passing by. In other words, Isaiah is saying, in this place, you don't get there by human effort. There will be no human effort there.

Everything is given to us by God, and as we heard earlier this evening, it's not by might, it's not by power, but it's by the spirit of Almighty God. Nor, in verse 21, majestic ships shall pass by. In this kingdom, there'll be nobody that goes by with their flags flying and their sails up and saying, look what I've done that allowed me to be in the kingdom of God.

No, there'll be no human effort, there'll be nobody there that says, I got in by the sweat of my brow, I got in by doing more than the other guy before me. And there'll be nobody there filled with pride passing by this kingdom, because there'll be no majestic ships there. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, he will save us.

Verse 23 says, your tackle is loose. They could not strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail. Then the prey of a great plunder is divided.

Your tackle is loose. The people who will be there are people who have given up the reins of their lives to Christ. They stopped trying to navigate this life in their own strength, stopped trying to figure everything out.

They stopped trying to be righteous in their own strength or live a right way in their own strength. And they let it all go. And they came to a decision one day and says, God, I am, I'm not capable of entering your kingdom on my own strength.

I'm not capable of living the Christian life by my own power. I'm lame. And they finally recognize it.

And the scripture says, then the prey of a great plunder is divided and the lame take the prey. Oh, thank God for that. The man, the woman that finally says, God, I can't do this on my own strength.

I can't save myself. I can't be virtuous. I can't speak the truth.

I can't define a purpose for my life. I can't get off of drugs. I can't bring my family home to you with any amount of pleading or pushing.

I can't do anything that will glorify you. It's the type of a man who cries out on the side of the road, Lord, I want to receive my sight. It's the type of somebody who presses through the crowd and says, God, if I can just touch you, I'll be made whole.

It's the type of a person that says, Lord, only you can bring healing into my life. Only you can give me meaning. And only you can give me purpose.

And verse 24 says, the inhabitant in this place of God will no longer say I am sick. The people who dwell in it will be forgiven their iniquity. There will be healing.

There will be wholeness. There will be victory. There will be deliverance.

Everything that you've ever longed for, you will find for today and for tomorrow and for forever through Jesus Christ, our Lord and our Savior. When he died on the cross and rose again from the dead, the kingdom of hell was plundered. The great power of evil that has a right to destroy everyone's life outside of a relationship with the living God was destroyed.

The scripture tells us that when Christ rose from the dead, he took captivity captive and he gave gifts unto men. He took your captivity captive and gave you and gave me the ability to be people that we would have no hope of being apart from the presence of the living God inside each one of our lives. And he gave us comfort for our present battle.

Yes, in this world, we have and we shall have tribulation. But Jesus Christ said, be of good cheer for I have overcome the world. I will save you today.

I will keep you tomorrow. And I make a promise to you that you will one day dwell in an eternal place, in a tabernacle, in a dwelling place that cannot be taken down. None of its stakes will ever be removed and nor will any of its cords ever be broken.

The proud will not be there. The self-willed will not be there. It will be people who have come to the end of themselves like so many on this prayer tablet are tonight.

They've come to the absolute end of themselves. And they say, God, I can't go on. I can't do this.

I can't get free. I can't define a purpose for my own life. I can't leave my family.

I can't change this characteristic in my life that's been part of my character since the day I was born or maybe the day I was young. I can't break the chains that bind me to the past, past associations, past experiences, the past that's lineage of my own home and my own family. I can't, words that were spoken over my life, I can't break the chains.

They inhabit my mind. But oh God, I'm coming through to you now and I'm appealing to your mercy through your son, Jesus Christ. And Jesus himself said, I will not cast away anyone who comes to me.

I won't turn you away. I won't look you in the eye and say no when you turn and say, Lord, save me. Lord, help me.

Lord, keep me. Help me with my present struggle. Help me, God, with the things I'm gonna have to go through tomorrow.

And help me, God, to have a perspective on life that takes my mind out of time and into eternity. God, give me an eternal perspective so I won't be swallowed by the troubles and trials of this particular season that I'm living in or may have to live through tomorrow. And when you do that, God says, I will open your eyes.

I will give you an anointing. I will show you the future. I will show you.

Matter of fact, Jesus himself said, when the Holy Spirit comes, he will testify of me. He will take the victory that I won for you and he will show you things to come so that your whole life is not defined by what happened yesterday or what happens today or what happens tomorrow. The moment you open your heart to Jesus Christ, your life is now defined by what God says your life will be.

And your life is now eternal. And your destiny is an eternal home in heaven, not made with hands but made by the hand of God himself. A place that is so far beyond our understanding that there are no words in any language known to humanity that can describe it.

A place that is indescribable and filled with glory. A place that cannot be removed. Though heaven and earth and everything under the earth may try to move against it, it cannot be removed for God has said it cannot be removed and neither can any of its cords be broken.

In that place will be life. Jesus Christ himself said, for us today, I've come to give you life and I've come to give it to you more abundantly. I came to give you eternal life if you will choose to trust in me.

That means at the end of your days, heaven will be your home. You don't have to work hard to get there. You don't have to prove anything to me because you can't prove anything to a holy God.

We are so distant from a holy God, there's nothing we can do that can ever give us access to the throne of God. So you say to me then, well, what does it take? Admit that you're lame. It's the lame who take the prayer.

Admit that you can't walk. Admit that you can't see. Admit that you can't change.

Admit that you can't work your way into heaven. You can't save yourself. Admit that there's nothing you could do in the natural that would ever please God, that as you sail by in your nice fancy boat before the throne of God, that God would suddenly say, oh, isn't that nice? I never thought of that.

No, the lame take the prayer. Don't you just love it? Don't you just love it? Everyone then is equal in the sight of God. There's no big people, there's no little people.

There's no strong people, there's no weak people. We're all just people who are sinners and need a savior. And when the Holy Spirit comes and indwells our physical body, we all have equal strength in God.

The ground is now level. And we become what God says we will be. We go where God says we will go, and we live for eternity where God says we will live.

It's finally all settled. We're given that sight to blinded eyes that Jesus said, I came to give sight to people whose eyes are blind. And we now begin to see from an eternal perspective and not just through the perspective of our present and future struggles.

How would you like to be able to see tonight? How would you like to be able to know that this place that the Word of God describes can be yours for eternity? This place where you have eternal life in heaven with God, this place where you no longer, your testimony there is not I am sick anymore because everyone there is healed. Everyone there is of sound mind. Everyone there, as a matter of fact, the Scripture says we will know then as we are known.

We will be given an explosive mind by God. Mysteries will be unlocked to us. We will understand things that are not humanly possible today to understand.

We will know mysteries. There's going to be an explosion of knowledge when we come and stand in this place in the presence of God. Nobody will be sick there anymore.

And nobody will have to work for forgiveness for we have been forgiven already on this side of eternity through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. All you have to do is admit that you're lame. Admit that you are a sinner.

Admit that you can't change yourself. Admit that you need a Savior. Admit that you can't get into heaven through virtue or pride or human effort.

It's not possible to get into this place. And believe that God so loved you that he sent his Son to a cross to die for you to pay the price for your sin so that you can know that heaven is going to be your home. And you can be given this promise of God where he says I will never leave you or forsake you.

You become, according to the Word of God, a new creation on this side of eternity. The old things that governed your life all lose their power source. They pass away and all things now become new.

You are born again by the Spirit of God. The moment you open your heart to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, God in his Holy Spirit comes and indwells your physical body. And just as the Spirit of God raised Christ from the dead, the Bible says that the Holy Spirit of God raises us from the power of death into newness of life.

Your thinking clears up. Your future now becomes more clear. Your eternity becomes secure in Christ.

And your testimony is no longer I am sick. Your testimony is now I am healed. I came to the cross.

I took part, I became a partaker of this incredible victory that was won for my soul at the cross 2,000 years ago. I was forgiven, and now I'm a child of God. And the Bible says that whatever a person believes in their heart, they will confess with their mouth.

So if you have admitted your condition, invited Jesus Christ into your life to be Lord and Savior, it is only natural that you will start confessing him with your mouth. You will start declaring that he is your God. You will tell people around you what you have done.

And you will confess, of course, first to him. Say, Lord, you are my Savior, you are my Lord, and you are my God. I'm going to ask you to pray with me tonight and give you an opportunity to receive Christ as your Savior before we go to the communion table this evening.

I'm going to ask everyone who's in the sanctuary to repeat this prayer with me. I'm going to ask you who are online to pray like the young man did last week. In that group that joined us online and prayed, received Christ and said, I'm going with God.

This is what I'd like you to pray this evening. Lord Jesus Christ, I thank you for dying for me, for loving me, for longing for me to come home to you. You came to get me 2,000 years ago.

You hung on a cross, you were beaten, bruised, rejected, despised, hated, and you took all that on yourself to pay the price for the wrong I have done. Tonight, I admit my condition, I'm lame. I can't even walk without you.

I can't see, and I have no future. So I open my heart and I invite you into my life to be my Lord and to be my Savior. Thank you for loving me, for receiving me, and calling me your own.

Give me your Holy Spirit, the fullness of your power to be everything that you have called me to be. And I thank you that tonight I became part of the group of people that this scripture describes. This is now me, I will be there in this kingdom.

I'll be healed and forgiven because it starts today. Jesus Christ, you are my Lord and I am your servant. From this day forward, I belong to you and you belong to me.

Thank you for saving me, amen. We're gonna come to the communion table very, very shortly just to celebrate the victory of Christ and what you've done tonight. And if you'll go and get the bread and juice that you have prepared, we're gonna have communion together in just a moment.

■ Jesus Christ, you are my Lord and I am your servant. ■

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