

# The Pigs in the Parking Lot

by Carter Conlon

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of active faith, yielding to God's plan, and trusting in His provision, warning against the dangers of self-consumption and drawing back from Christ.*

**Duration:** 53:42

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Luke 8:22, Hebrews 10:32, Hebrews 10:38-39, Revelation 20:3

**Topics:** "Surrender"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of how we hear the word of God, stating that our future is determined by it. He urges the audience to remember the past when they first received their sight in Christ and endured afflictions. The speaker reflects on the brevity of life and the need to focus on eternity with Jesus. He warns against drawing back from Christ and the cost of following Him, highlighting the danger of false reasoning and the current state of the church.

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## Transcript

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You are welcome to make additional cassettes of this message for free distribution to friends. However, for all other forms of reproduction or electronic transmission, existing copyright laws apply. Now, beloved, I don't feel that it's an understatement to say that the future of some who are gathered here today is going to be determined by how you hear the words you're about to hear today.

And this is something the Holy Spirit has sown very deep into my heart, and that's why I'm going to labor to speak very carefully, methodically, so that you'll understand, because this is something that I know the Holy Spirit is speaking to us, especially those who are yearning for Christ in this last moment of time. Hebrews chapter 10, the writer in verse 32, he says, call to remembrance the former days. Now, he's saying think about something that happened in the past, in which after you were illuminated, or in other words, you received your sight in Christ, you endured a great fight of afflictions.

The writer is saying think about this. When you first came to Christ, you remember how deeply the devil came against you. And he came against you for a reason, because there's incredible potential in every soul that comes to God, especially those who want to walk with Christ in truth.

Partly, he says in verse 33, whilst you were made a gazing stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly, while you became companions of them that were so used. In other words, the people that used to like you all of a sudden started to say very nasty things about you. They looked at you and said, are you one of those now? They began to reproach you.

They began to lie about you in the workplace. People that, many here today, you know exactly what I'm speaking about. And you found no fellowship now among the unsaved anymore.

And you became a companion. You started coming to Times Square Church or whatever church you attend, and you became a companion of people who are moving with God and were used to these afflictions and difficulties. And you found a new fellowship that is not found anywhere outside of Christ.

For you had compassion of me and my bonds. Verse 34, and the writer says, you took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that you have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. You had plans, in other words, you had ambitions.

You had things you wanted to accomplish. You thought for sure that promotion in the workplace was going to meet your need. That new house was going to make you satisfied.

All of these other things. But coming to Christ now, a new value system began to get a hold of your heart. And you took joyfully the spoiling of these things.

If somebody before you was passed, you were passed by for somebody else, you went home and had the ability, by God's grace, to begin to rejoice over these things. You said, I'm now a companion of Christ and of those who followed him. You took joyfully the laying down, the putting away of old plans and ambitions, and things that you and I both thought would make us happy and fulfilled.

But by God's grace, do you remember those days, those that walked with God for any amount of time, when no sacrifice was too great, no trip was too far, no compassion was too costly? You just cried out, God lead me and I will follow you, I will trust you. Lord, you will meet my need as I walk with you. Then he goes on to say in verse 35, Cast not away, therefore, your confidence.

You had tremendous confidence in God. You knew he would provide your every need. You knew that heaven was more to be desired than the beggarly things that had once gripped your heart and mind of this world, which has great recompense of reward.

For you have need of patience, that after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come and will not tarry. It's only a little while, beloved, until Christ comes for his church.

It's only a vapor. I can remember, I'm 50 years of age now, and I can remember like yesterday when I was just a child and going out the back door to play football or some other sport with the other kids in my neighborhood. Seems like yesterday.

It's an amazing thing and all of a sudden you're 50 and another moment of time, by God's grace, I'll be 70. If the Lord is really good to me, I might make it to 75. For those that feel like you're a mover and shaker in the house today, you might be, but soon you'll just be a shaker.

You won't be doing much moving anymore. Yet a little while, and he will come. A little while.

We sing that song, it'll be worth it all when we see Jesus. Life's trials will seem so small when we see him. Our life, James said, is only a vapor.

It's only here for a moment, then it passes away. And all that we can take with us, beloved, is our family. All we can take with us are the things that we obey God in.

The Bible says clearly there'll be a reward given for those who, even in a few things, chose to be faithful in what God had called them to do. And we can take with us every soul that has ever bowed their knee and confessed with their tongue that Jesus Christ is Lord. Everything else stays here.

Everything else stays. None of it comes. It's all going to pass away.

It's all part of a world system and a world that is going to be, the Bible says, dissolved. It's going to be completely melted away. There'll be nothing left.

Nothing. No plans, no ambitions, there'll be no Manhattan, it'll be gone. All the buildings on Wall Street will be dissolved.

Nothing that we see today will be one day, and perhaps that day will not be too far from us into the future. A little while, and he will come. So important to remember that when you're going through difficulty and hard times, when the devil's coming against you with the fullness of his fury, it's only for a little while.

Weeping might endure for a night, but joy is coming again in the morning. Not a temporary joy, but an everlasting joy. A joy that's going to last from eternity to eternity.

After a million years of standing before the throne of God and walking with Him in the fullness of everything that entails, you will not even have scratched the surface of what your life is going to be like in Christ for all of time and all of eternity. Now he says, the just shall live by faith, in verse 38. The just, those who have been justified by Christ, have a deep inner confidence that the ways of God are better than my ways.

The provision of God will always be there as I walk with Him and obey Him. He will never forsake me, He will never fail me. He will always be there, and even in the things I don't understand, I can have a deep inner confidence that there is a purpose of God in even those things that are unpleasant and difficult for my natural mind to comprehend.

All things now work together for good, because I love God and I'm called according to His purpose. All things. If it were not so, then the word of God would not be true.

All things. That means everything that you're going through, if you're a child of God and you love God today, everything that you're going through has a purpose. There's a divine purpose in it right now.

But if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back into perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. If any man draw back... Now, go with me to Luke chapter 8, if you will.

Luke chapter 8, beginning at verse 22. I'll read it to you while you're turning to it. Now, it came to pass on a certain day that he went into a ship with his disciples.

And he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth. Now, beloved, you and I can remember that at one time we were on the other side of the lake.

We were on the other side. We were in a place where there was no hope. You know the story.

He found on the other side a people that were living without the power of God. Evidenced by a man who was demon-possessed and wandering through places of death, codding and afflicting himself, finding himself without any hope. And we were on the other side.

Paul says in Ephesians 2.12 At one time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. That's where I was and that's where you were. But verses 23 to 25 tell us about a journey that Christ began to undertake and those who were with him went with him to the other side.

They had to endure storms. They had to endure their own inner struggles and fears. But ultimately triumphed on this journey because Christ was with them, challenging them to have faith, challenging them to believe through every difficulty they would ever have to face that because they were obeying him and going on a journey with him that he would protect them, he would keep them.

He had told them earlier, not a hair of your head is even going to perish. It's through much personal jeopardy that the gospel came to us as it did to those who were on the other side of the lake. It's come to us through those throughout history who have trusted God for their provision as they journeyed with him to us.

We have this Bible in our hands because people took a journey. They undertook it with Christ and they paid a great price for this journey. I think of James who was killed with the sword.

I think of John who was exiled to a barren, cold place of imprisonment for his testimony of Jesus Christ. I think of others who were sawn in two and slain with the sword and paid an incredible price. The Bible says that the church of Jesus Christ is built on the foundation of Christ and the apostles and prophets and nobody else can build but by truth on this foundation.

The gospel that we have in our hands came to us at a terrible price for many. The apostle Paul was imprisoned, whipped, stoned, shipwrecked, betrayed, went through all types of peril and difficulty and out of it all came a great portion of the New Testament that comforts our hearts today. Much personal jeopardy.

Luke 8, again, verse 26 says, They arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee. And he went forth to land and there met him out of the city a certain man which had devils a long time and wore no clothes and neither abode in any house but in the tombs. And when he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High? I beseech thee, torment me not.

Actually, in the gospel of Matthew it says, Do not torment us before the time. Amazing. The devils that had found a dwelling place with this man, this man, this demon-possessed man, knew that their time was limited on the earth.

Knew and believed that a time of torment was appointed to them. Amazing when you begin to see this. And they trembled before Christ.

They trembled before a man who was born of God, led by the power of the Holy Ghost, and they knew before such a man they had no power. And, beloved, I want to challenge you today. When you and I are absolutely born again of the Spirit of God, we are led by the power of God, there is a trembling in hell.

There's a trembling in the powers of darkness because they know that when a man or woman of God is yielded to God, they have no authority, they have no power. They know clearly the words of Jesus, who said, I give you power to step upon serpents and scorpions over all the power of the enemy. Nothing shall by any means hurt you.

They're very well aware of it. So the devil will do everything in his power to divert the Christian and the church of Jesus Christ. James, the apostle, tells us that true faith in God must go far beyond an inactive belief.

An inactive belief is not sufficient faith. James says it this way in chapter 2, verse 19 to 24. You may want to turn there and follow with me.

Keep a mark in Luke chapter 8. James chapter 2 and verse 19. He says, Thou believest that there is one God. Thou doest well.

The devils also believe and tremble. In other words, a true faith in God must go beyond an inactive belief system. The devils have a belief system, but the belief system never moves them into the life of God, obviously.

But they do believe. And James uses their belief as a type of a faith system that has no part in the kingdom of God. He says, But will you know, verse 20, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? And was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which said, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God.

You see then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only. And likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works when she had received the messengers and sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. Now here's the type that James used.

He says, Abraham, his faith, the fact that it was true faith in God was evidenced by the fact that he gave to God in the form of his son Isaac his future and all of his plans and dreams. He yielded it all up to God. It was everything that he had ever lived for, he had ever hoped for was bound in this son Isaac.

But Isaac wanting to prove, or God rather, that the faith in Abraham was genuine asked him to offer up his plans and offer up his dreams. I wonder in my heart were Jesus Christ to come to much of the professing church today throughout the world and say, I want to prove whether or not you have an active faith. I want you now to lay down all your plans.

I want you to lay down all your ambitions and all of your dreams. I want you now to begin to journey with me, trusting that if I choose to, I can even raise the things that are dear to your heart from the dead. But still first you've got to give it to me.

You've got to lay it out. You've got to put it on an altar. James goes on to use the illustration of Rahab, a prostitute.

The fact that this woman received the message and protected it and entrusted herself and her home to the promises that came to her. Here you have a man who's the type of the father of faith and at the other end of the spectrum as it is, you've got a prostitute and both had an active faith in God. Both had a righteous faith.

Both had, at least in the sight of James, had a commendable faith. Rahab received the message that came her way through the messengers that were sent. She protected that message and she entrusted herself and her home to the promises of God that had come to her through the messengers.

Now again back in Luke chapter 8 in verse 31. Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. Verse 29 says, He was kept bound with chains and in fetters and he broke the bands and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.

And Jesus asked him saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion, because many devils were entered into him. And they besought him that he would command them to go out into the... that they would not command him rather to go out into the pit and the deep. And that means the deathless pit.

You'll find that in Revelation chapter 20 in verse 3. It's amazing that they knew the scriptures. They knew their end. They knew one day they're going to be placed in a bottomless pit and never allowed out of it again.

And they besought him. They said, Oh Jesus, please don't send us there yet. Don't torment us before the time.

And there was a herd, verse 32, of many swine, that's pigs, feeding on the mountain. And they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them or allow... They said, Jesus, let us go into the pigs instead of going into the bottomless pit. And Christ said, All right, and allowed them to go.

Now, we ask ourselves the question, Why pigs? Now, first of all, pigs were considered an unclean animal. And secondly, when you think of a pig, it's the type of a self-consumed animal. An animal that will consume anything.

When you have garbage in the food, for example, any farmer or any former farmer this year, you'll know, you take whatever is inedible, you take it to the hog trough. Remember, that's where the prodigal son finally ended up. When he had taken his inheritance and wasted it, he finally ended up at the hog trough and it's there that he came to his senses.

And the pig is a type of an animal that is so self-consumed that will eat anything. Whether or not it has an odor to it or is spoiled, or it will not be touched either by human or other animal, put it in the hog trough and the pig will eat it. It is a type of a self-consumption.

And the devils possibly assumed that they would be granted their request. For in their own thinking, they possibly felt that their compatibility with such a creature was justified. Why would Jesus deny us? We're self-consumed, that's what got us into this mess in the first place.

And here's an animal that's self-consumed, so we're compatible. We're unclean, they're unclean, so let us go into the pigs. And Jesus said, all right, go.

Now, he was not being cruel to animals. The story progresses that the herd of swine, the devils went out of the man and entered into the herd of swine and they ran violently down a steep place into the lake. And in that lake they were choked or they drowned.

Now, Christ was not being indifferent to the plight of this particular animal. But I see in this verse of scripture an incredible object lesson. He was trying to show these people on the other side of the lake something that they were very loath to hear.

And there is no scriptural evidence that they were ever able really to hear him. He was showing them their own futures. He was showing the society that had gathered around this area of the Gadarenes.

He was showing them what was going to happen to them when they drew back from him. He was showing them what their future was going to be. You see, if you and I draw back from Christ, if we shrink back from his call, if we walk away from trusting him or yielding ourselves to his work, if we walk away from taking the gospel at whatever personal cost to those who need hope around us and around the world, then the enemy of our souls will have access to lead us into a sea of false reasoning.

And you see, that's what's happening to the church of Jesus Christ today in much of the world. Many, many people gathering in the house of God, but in their hearts they have drawn back from the call of Christ. In their hearts they're saying, Lord, it's too costly, there's too much, and so tell us now, put before us preachers that will tell us something about you that doesn't require anything of us.

Put before us preachers. And you see, when that attitude gets into the heart, the man or woman that says, Lord, you can't touch my pet project. You can't touch these things that I've longed for, that I want.

I've wanted this all my life and I'm not willing to yield it. I'm not willing to give it up for the gospel's sake. I'm not willing to entrust my life to your plan for me or your provision for me or your protection for me.

You see, Lord, I've got a long life ahead of me. It's all mapped out. I have dreams and ambitions that I've had since I was a child.

And Lord, I'm just simply not willing to forsake these ambitions and these dreams. But oh God, I still want to come to your house. I still want messages about you.

I still want to know what you do and what your power is like and how you've touched people over the years gone by. But the moment this issue gets into our heart, we are now exposed to a sea of false reasoning. And false reasoning is gripping the minds of hundreds and thousands of God's people now in the Western world.

A false gospel, false pursuits, false concepts of God, a calf called Jesus fashioned by the hands and minds of men. 1 Timothy 6, let me just read it to you. 1 Timothy 6 and verse 9, Paul says this way, They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.

For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. They've erred from the faith, beloved, not from an

unsaved condition. The unsaved lust for money.

The unsaved have their hand in the bag and are looking for gold at every turnable opportunity. The unsaved will do everything they can to make sure all their swine and all their herds are intact. But then you come to Christ, and the call of Christ is not to lust after gold.

The call of Christ is to long for God and the plan of God for your life. The call of Christ has never changed. If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

That is the call of Christ. Not that we willfully walk into any forms of personal deprivation or suffering. He says simply you find what your life is to be.

You find it in the word of God and you find it by the leading of the Holy Spirit. There is no other plan. There is no other way to go.

But I hear and see today gospels being raised up throughout much of the western world and tragically are touching some of the poorest areas of the world. Gospels that tell the people that it's God's desire for you to be rich. The Bible says this gospel drowns men in destruction and perdition.

It drowns you. Better not to have known the way of righteousness than to have known it and to turn back to those things that we once left behind. Jesus says again in Luke chapter 8 and verse 14.

He talks about the seed being the word of God that is planted in the hearts of men and women throughout the world. And he says in verse 14. And that which fell among thorns are they which when they have heard go forth and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life and bring no fruit to perfection.

The context of this verse means God says I put a seed of my life into their life. And that seed was to produce something of me in them. That seed was to guide them.

That seed was to become a great tree. And all who are in need were to find lodging because of the seed I had planted within them. But they went forth and while they were going they brought something with them.

They brought with them cares, riches and pleasures of this life. There was an unwillingness to lay it down and it chokes the life that is in them. Just like the swine who ran off the hill and into a sea of destruction.

So those who are unwilling to lay these things down find the life of God eventually choked out of them. It is so tragic and I've seen it in this church. I've been here almost 10 years now.

And I've seen even in this church people who heard the gospel of Jesus Christ and they began to move with it. And they initially counted it no great sacrifice to take holidays or even leave of absence from their workplace and to go to places throughout the world where the love of God could be channeled through them to a dying, hurting people everywhere. And there was such life.

But today I see them drawing back. I see now fellowships formed around convenience. I see things happening and it's such a grief in my heart because it's a grief in the heart of God.

How tragic to see people literally draw back. And now the conversation is no longer about Christ. It's now about the workplace.

It's now about cares and dreams and ambitions. It's no longer God. What would you have me do? Where would you have me go? What would you do through my life? And Jesus said, If any man draw back, my soul will have no pleasure in him.

Back in Luke 8, verse 34. It says, When that fed them saw what was done, they fled and went and told it in the city and in the country. And then they went out to see what was done and they came to Jesus and found the man out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid.

They also would sought, told them by what means he was possessed and the devils was healed. They told them the story. Jesus commanded the man to be free and all these pigs ran off a cliff and into the water.

And then the whole multitude of the country, the gatherings roundabout besought him to depart from them, for they were taken with great fear. And he went back into the ship and he turned back again. The spiritual type breaks my heart of a people who knew the power of God, but something in the heart said, Jesus, we're not willing to suffer loss to follow you.

We're not willing to let go of the things that we hold dear. When the scripture says they were afraid, they were taken with great fear. They were not taken with great fear because the demon-possessed man was set free.

That should have caused their hearts to rejoice. The Bible says clearly they had tried to bind him, but he could not be bound. His was a fearful condition before he was set free.

No, they were not afraid because the demon-possessed man was set free. They were afraid because their pigs had gone into the ocean. They were afraid because in the heart of every man standing there, oh, I see what God can do, but I see also it could cost me my herd.

It could cost me my pigs. It could cost me my sheep and my goats. I see what God does, but I also see the cost.

They saw it clearly. And having made the choice of seeing demon-possessed people set free or losing our pigs into the sea, they said, Jesus, we'd rather keep our pigs if you don't mind. Would you please go somewhere else? Would you please take your power and your compassion and get in the boat and go to another shore? Oh, folks, there are countries throughout the world where they've forsaken God for their pigs.

They've forsaken God for that which is unclean. And still gather, still meet. The demon-possessed man came to Jesus, and he said, can I come with you? Can I go with you? And Jesus said, no.

Go back to your own house and show the great things that God has done for you. And the Bible says he went his way and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him. And so we see the people gripped with fear because of their potential loss.

We watch Jesus leaving in the boat. And now this man throughout the whole city. I see gatherings.

I see great testimony meetings of the past, but with no present working of God. I see people gathering around stories, talking about Martin Luther. I see them talking about Evan Roberts.

They're talking about Hudson Taylor. They're talking about those who had great personal price, Paul, James, John. They're talking about these apostles.

They delight to open the book and talk about Paul and the words of Paul and the bravado of Paul who said, what do you mean to break my heart? I'm willing not only to go to Jerusalem, but to die there for the gospel of Jesus Christ. And they stand and they give testimonies, and yet there's no present working of God. It's all in the past.

Brother Smith, stand up. Tell us what God did 15 years ago in your life. Sister Jones, tell us, back in 1935, how God so miraculously delivered you.

And everybody gathers now to hear these testimonies of the past. Everybody, though. Can you picture these people? This man is standing there.

And he's a testimony against them. And they don't even know it. And he's standing and he's saying, here's what was happening.

I was cutting myself. And oh, I was so full of despair and desiring to die. But this man came and set me free.

And the people clapped their hands. And it's such an exciting story. As they gingerly just look by him.

They glance around him or over his shoulder just to make sure all their pigs are still in the parking lot intact. You see, now we got the testimony we got our pigs to. And so everything is okay.

But does it ever dawn on them there's no power anymore? Does it ever occur to them that God is not working the way He should be according to the Word of God? The blind are not seeing. The deaf are not hearing. The captives are not set free.

It's not an ongoing everyday work. It's something all in the past. Then people start coming to church.

And as long as their pigs are secure, they come in and, oh, just tell us again about Jesus. Tell us what He does. Open the book to us.

Tell us some new truth about God. They leave all their pigs in the parking lot and come into the house of God. Oh, then it's time to put on the holiness, the holy act.

Oh, where He leads me, I will follow. Consecrate me now to Thy service, Lord, by the power of grace divine. While looking out the window of the church is to make sure all the pigs are properly lined up.

All my dreams and ambitions are still intact. Oh, I want God, yes, but I will not give these things up. I will not forsake them.

I will not let them go. And so Jesus leaves. He leaves.

And the evidence of His leaving is there's no power. There's no everyday working of His power. You see, that's why the charismatic church has been running all over the world looking for God for 15 years now, because there's no real power in their midst anymore.

You see, if you're a man or woman who's knowing that everyday working or freedom of God, you don't have to run somewhere looking for God. You know where He is. On the other side, verse 40, it said, it

came to pass when Jesus was returned, the people gladly received Him.

On the other side of the lake, you see there's a stream of divine life going right through the middle of this world. And whether you like it or not, you find yourself as I do on one side of that stream or the other. One side says, hey, we like the testimonies.

We don't want to pay the price. Personally, thank you very much, Jesus. Do you mind going somewhere else? Oh, they never say it in those words, but it's deeply embedded in the heart.

And on the other side are a people who gladly received Him. Oh, Jesus, there's a people in this church, I thank God for it, who come here Sunday morning and say, God, speak to me. God, speak to me, guide me, lead me.

Touch my life, oh Lord. And whatever displeases You, take it out of my heart. My God, I want to live for You.

My God, I want to serve You. I want Your power in my life. I want You, Jesus, to be honored through me.

I want to walk through this life leaving not with a trail of pigs behind me. I want a savior of Jesus Christ to follow me. I want to be otherworldly by the power of God.

I want my confused mind set in order by the Spirit of God. My divided heart rent and restored by God's grace. I want my powerless life filled with the power of God.

I want the power, the compassion, the ability to go anywhere throughout the world preaching and teaching and publishing and defending the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is my desire. And I know in my heart that there are many who come to this church that's your heart's cry, that's what you're like.

If you're visiting today and you're in a church that has no compassionate outreach, no missionaries going off to the mission field, no testimonies of the glory of God, you are in the wrong place. You're in a dangerous place. Better to find a Bible study group of five people that have a heart for the poor and begin to fellowship there.

People who want to live for God, not try to cram God into man's ambitions. The gospel that is preached in much of America and Canada is a tragic gospel in our generation. Powerless, robbing the people, drowning those who would come to God with a love for money.

Luke 8, verse 40, it says, the people gladly received Him. Verse 41, you see the evidence of that. This man comes right away named Jairus, and he says, Oh, come to my house, there's problems in my house.

Jesus, You're the only one that can solve them. Come to my house. That's the evidence.

That's the evidence of a heart that longs for God. I don't want you just in church, I want you in my house. I want you in my home.

There's death in my home. There's sickness in my home. I want you in my home.

God, come and be God in my home. I yield everything I have to You, Jesus. Everything I ever will be belongs to You.

My God touched my sons and my daughters. Raise them up and use them for Your glory. Come to my house, O God.

Come to my house. You have it all. It all belongs to You.

I withhold nothing from You. The Bible says also in verse 42, the people thronged Him. That speaks to me of an issue of the heart.

There was something in these people. They're not sitting and making a differentiation or choosing between Christ and their pigs. But there's a thronging.

Oh, God, we know who You are. You're the Son of God. You've come to set people free.

And they began to throng Him. They gathered around Him. And that's the evidence of people who genuinely want Christ.

They thronged Him. He becomes more important than all the other issues of life. In the midst of it, a woman who had an issue of blood pressed through the crowd and touched Him.

You see, miracles begin to happen as people just touch Him. The preacher doesn't even have to be preaching. You can be here in the service just worshipping God, and a miracle of God touches your life.

There's virtue in Jesus Christ. There's life in Him. And all you're doing is raising your hands and you're giving your situation to God, your past, your present, your future.

And a miracle happens. It can be in a son or daughter. It can be in a family member.

It can be an issue of your own mind or heart or life. And as you raise your hands, Christ touches you. It's an evidence.

It's an ongoing, every moment, every day. It produces an expectancy in the genuine Christian. If you're a genuine Christian, you should be living in a place of constant expectancy.

Oh, God! I don't know what You're going to do in an hour from now. I just know it's going to be miraculous if You're in it. I just know it's going to deepen and further my resolve to follow You.

And there's going to be a living, evident testimony of Your presence in my life. Then after this, somebody came to Jesus and said, don't bother going to this man's house. His daughter is dead.

And Jesus said something really incredible. He walked to the house, verse 52, and He said, everyone was weeping, and they were all bewailing her. But He said, don't weep.

She's not dead. She's only sleeping. You see, the devil always wants to bring a report to you that it's too late.

You had a chance to walk with God, but you blew it. You had a ministry calling, but you forsook it. It's too late.

It's been five years now, or ten years, and you've done nothing with this call of God on your life. You had a sense in your heart in the early years that God wanted to use you for a specific purpose, but you've allowed the cares of this world to choke it out. Now it's too late.

See, that's always the devil's lie, that it's too late. Jesus said, no, it's not too late. It isn't dead.

It's only sleeping. It's only sleeping. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Yes, what God began, and you might be sleeping, but if you can hear His voice, if you know He's come to you, if in your heart you say, oh, Jesus, draw nigh to me, and I'll draw nigh to you, I tell you, He'll raise you beyond any life you've ever known before, and your life will become a living testimony of His calling and His keeping power. He will touch you. In a moment of time, He'll say, arise.

Arise. And you're brought back not to where you were before, better than where you were before. Amazing.

The amazing grace of God. It's never too late. You could be 90 years old in this sanctuary today, and you have forsaken the call of God on your life.

You may have two years left to live, but it's never too late. All it requires is the cry of heart that says, Jesus, I want You. God, I want You with all of my heart.

I want to leave this house today with Your presence in my life. I want to leave knowing that You're not only my Savior, You're my Lord. I want to walk away from this house knowing that the gift and calling You've planted within me is alive.

God, I want to know it. And I'm going to leave every other pursuit in the parking lot, every other dream, every other ambition. Let it all be damned, and let me be alive to Jesus Christ and His will for my life.

Back in chapter 39, he said to the man who was healed in the garden, he said, go to your house and tell everybody. Publish it throughout the whole city. But to this girl's parents, verse 56, you see, verse 55 says, her spirit came into her when Christ spoke, and she arose, and He said, give her meat.

You see, if you could hear this Word today, then you're ready for meat. You're ready for the Word of God that will give you life. You're going to need meat.

You're going to need something beyond just the milk of God's Word to be able to obey God. But her parents were astonished in verse 56, and He charged them that they should tell nobody. Don't tell anybody.

To the man in the garden, He says, tell everybody. And when the genuine miracle happens where people are hungry from, He says, don't tell anyone. In other words, I don't want any second-hand testimonies.

Everyone is going to see it for themselves. Let everybody experience it for themselves because I am here, I'm working among the people, and the power that you have seen and experienced is available for everyone. It's not just for one man in the garden sometime in the past.

It's now for everybody. No need to say anything to anybody. They're going to see in your life every moment, every day, that you are kept and led by the compassion and the power of God.

There will be no words necessary. There will be an evidence of divine life in you. An absolute evidence of God's life.

An evidence of God's power. And as you walk through this world, there's a savor of Christ that follows you. People's heads will turn.

They will watch you walk by not because you look good. There's something of God in your life. They will look upon you and see in you divine life.

They will hear it in your voice. They will see it in your eyes. It will be evident in your song.

There will be something about you that the world, every man, has to stop and take notice that the power of God has come into your life. No words are necessary. The question that we have to ask ourselves is an age-old one.

You remember when Moses was on the mountain and he came down and the people had built a calf and were all dancing around it. It's the tendency of fallen men. It's always been that way.

Moses drew a line as it is and he said, Who is on the Lord's side? And the issue that we have to ask ourselves today is which side of the lake are you on? Which side of the stream of God? Which side of divine life that's in this sanctuary today? This word has been opened and a river of life, the Bible tells us in Revelation, is flowing to anyone who wants to hear from the throne of God. But the question we have to ask is which side are we on? Are we on the side of the empty testimony meeting? The ones who say, Tell me about God but don't tell me what God requires of me. Don't bring anything to me that costs me.

I don't want this knowledge of God. Just tell me what God has done in somebody else's life. Tell me what He's doing on the other side of the lake but don't let it come close to me.

Which side are you on? Which side of the water, that stream of divine life and mercy? The Scripture says on the opposite side to the garden of the Gadarenes, the people received Him gladly. They received Him as Savior, Lord, Provider, Healer and the Giver of life. They received Him as the one who has a better way, who knows what we need.

I didn't plan it this way but it's interesting that the Holy Spirit gave me this message the week before we go into a missions conference. Because there's going to be choices to be made. Do we want to gather here at Times Square Churches to hear about those who are sacrificing their lives for the cause of Christ and applaud them and give them \$20 and walk out and take all our pigs and pack them up and head home? See, the issue is which side of the water are we going to live on? Jesus, help us.

Help us as a church. Help us as individual Christians to hear you. This is so important today.

Because I do believe with all my heart that it will determine your future and mine. How we respond to the simple call of God. And I know today there are people hearing my voice who can say, Jesus, I want to be on the side that received you.

I want you to be my Savior and my Lord. I want to trust you for provision, for health, for life. I want to trust that everything that you call me to be, you will enable me to be.

And everywhere you ask me to go, you will give me the power to go there. The heart, the compassion, everything I need will come from you. Jesus, I do yield my life to you.

I ask for the grace to put away things that I am embracing that are causing me to be open to another gospel. That are causing my heart. You see, if you can't discern the prosperity gospel, there's something

wrong in your heart.

There's a division in your heart. If you can't discern that these men are not just off track, they're sent by the devil. If you don't know it, if you don't realize the gospel they're preaching is leading those who are hearing it into destruction.

It sounds so good, so appeals to the flesh, but it's a gospel for the self-consumed. It's a devil's gospel. And if you can't hear it, this is a very strong indication that something is wrong in your heart.

That you're caught between two decisions. I love this man Jesus, but I just love my herds and flocks as well. All my plans and schemes and everything that I've looked to for comfort and am looking to for my future.

And I'm not willing to let it go because the cost is too great. Better to say it outright than to live in religious deception. Better just to say I'm not willing to pay the price.

So I'm going to follow those that tell me that it's God's will that I be always happy and healthy and rich. I'm making the choice to follow another gospel. It's virtually better to say it honestly.

I know today that the Holy Spirit is speaking very strongly to some hearts. I know He's spoken to mine through this word. And there are some things that we need to lay down to make Jesus Lord.

Some plans, dreams, some things that we've been doing everything in our power to cram these things into the kingdom of God but there's such a troubling with it. It never works. You can't bring these things in.

We come just with our hearts. We don't bring any plans to God and ask for His blessing. We come to get His plan.

His ways are not our ways. His thoughts are not our thoughts. We acknowledge it.

We come to Him and say, God, lead me. Use me for Your glory. Make me a follower, a true follower.

Build my life on the true foundation of God. May I not be one who reads these stories but chooses an easy path. If you give me an easy path, then that's wonderful.

But then let it be God's choice. Let it not be ours. Let it be His.

If the Holy Spirit today is speaking to you, and I know He is, and you can say, Pastor, from this day forward, I want Jesus to be my Lord. My Lord. The One who governs my life.

And there's a few pigs in the parking lot I'm going to have to put away. There's a few dreams and plans. Just a few things that need to go.

And by God's grace, they're going to go. Because I've decided to follow Jesus. If that's in your heart today, and you know the Lord has been wooing us and speaking to us this whole service, you know it.

You know it deep in your heart. I'm going to ask you to unashamedly, as we stand, slip out of your seat and make your way to this altar, and we're going to pray together. For those that have come to this altar, you know, the Holy Spirit really gave me a word for you today.

The gift and calling that's in your life is not dead. It's only sleeping. But you've heard the Word of God today, and you're responding in your heart.

I'm assuming that you're here because you're saying, Jesus, I want you to be the Lord of my life from this day forward. Guide me. Lead me.

This is not a program. We don't call you to an altar and then just give you a program and say, now here's what you have to do. The issue is obeying Him.

The issue is hearing His voice now, getting into the Word of God and say, Lord, give me meat. Give me not just that which soothes me, but that which challenges me, calls me into the depths of your life and your power. This will be a pivotal moment for many because you'll be able to mark on your calendar the day your life began to change in God.

And some of you will end up in places that only the Holy Spirit could take you to. When Jesus returned, the people gladly received Him, for they were waiting for Him. Gladly.

That's the issue of heart. Christ must never be viewed as an imposition on our freedom. But He is life.

And the key is when our hearts open, say, God, this is good that you're calling me away from these things. This is good that you're calling me to live for you and to serve you. This is good.

I gladly receive you. I gladly open my heart to you. I want you to come to my house.

I want you to go home with me. I want, Lord, only you. I don't want to share the house with you and any other ambition.

I want you in my house today. And, Lord, I'm going to throng you for the rest of my life. Wherever you are, whenever I open this book, I'm going to press in.

God, you better be prepared because I'm coming. I'm coming. I'm going to press through the crowd.

Whatever issues in my life, I'm going to touch you. And I'm going to believe you for freedom and healing and wholeness. God, I believe now that you're going to work into my life something so powerful that I'll not even need words to preach the gospel anymore.

People are going to see it. I don't have to tell anybody about it. They're going to see it.

Your life is going to be in there. Pray with me. Lord Jesus, I gladly receive you.

I ask you to come into my heart and come into my house. I ask you to guide me, lead me, use my life for your glory. I ask you for the power to press in and know your heart and know your plan.

I ask you for the courage to yield to what you call me to be and to do. I ask, O God, and I believe that you will meet every need that I have in my life, in the ministry, as I follow you. I will want for nothing.

You will be my provision. I don't have to make provision. You will show me how.

You will lead me. You will guide me. I believe that you're calling me today and the ministry that you planted in me is not dead.

It's very much alive because I can hear your voice. Thank you, Jesus. Very, very, very much alive.

Alive. Alive in God. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. I don't have to leave here today telling anybody anything that God has done. Let them ask when they see it.

Let them ask. They're going to see it because I have a visible Christ in my life. A visible Savior.

Hallelujah. This is the conclusion of the message.

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