

The Written Judgment of God

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the written judgment of God and the transformative power of Christ in overcoming personal struggles and spiritual afflictions.

Duration: 34:19

Scripture: Psalm 149, Mark 5:1-20, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Judgment Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the power of God to set people free and give them a sound mind. He encourages the audience to trust in God and surrender their lives to Him. The preacher highlights the importance of praising God and using the Word of God as a two-edged sword. He references Psalm 149, which speaks of praising God and executing His judgment, and Mark 5, where Jesus encounters a man with an unclean spirit. The sermon concludes with a call to praise the Lord and trust in His judgment.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church Pulpit Series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, P.O. Box 260, Lindell, Texas, 75771, or calling 903-963-8626.

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. If you turn with me quickly in the Old Testament to Psalm 149, I'm going to speak for a moment this morning on the written judgment of God.

The written judgment of God, Psalm 149. The psalmist begins by saying, Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise in the congregation of saints.

Let Israel rejoice in Him that made Him, and let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise His name in the dance. Let them sing praises unto Him with the timbrel and harp.

For the Lord takes pleasure in His people. He will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory.

Let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth and a two-edged sword in their hand to execute vengeance upon the heathen and punishments upon the people, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written. This honor have all His saints.

Praise ye the Lord. In the New Testament in the Gospel of Mark chapter 5, now Jesus encountered a man whom the Scripture describes as having an unclean spirit. The word in the Greek New Testament calls this uncleanness an unnatural pollution.

It is a work of the powers of darkness in Him that causes Him to fall short of what God intended Him to be. There are people here today, I believe, that you have on one hand a desire for God because we see later on in the story that this man came and knelt and worshipped at the feet of Jesus, as many are doing here today. But in Him there was, and in some even here today, there is this unnatural pollution.

In other words, your life has a certain desire for God, but there is a dominating influence inside of you that dishonors the work of God, that dishonors the life of God that He intended for you to have. And, of course, some are here today without Christ. And you know exactly what I'm speaking about.

You have a form of religion, but there is no power in you to be anything other than what you are. The Gospel of Mark says it always. In verse 5, night and day He was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying and cutting Himself with stones.

You see, this man had a deep inner affliction which tormented Him and caused Him incredible anguish. You see, this inner affliction can touch sometimes even the righteous, those who know God, as well as the unrighteous, those who are outside of His kingdom. Listen to the psalmist, Psalm 88, verses 3 to 5. Here's a man who undoubtedly is in touch with God, but his testimony at this part or portion of his life, he says, My soul is full of troubles, and my life draws nigh to the grave.

I'm counted with them to go down into the pit. I'm as a man that has no strength. Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more, and they're cut off from Thy hand.

Here's this man who's saying, God, I have so many troubles that seem to be dominating my life and mind that the very life that I want and that I believe that You want for me is draining out of me. I'm free, but yet I dwell among the dead. I know You, but I'm seemingly as powerless as those who have no life.

I suppose it's safe to say that the psalmist, perhaps at this point in his life, felt even forsaken by God. The Bible says that this man in this garden that Jesus encountered in Mark chapter 5 was day and night crying and cutting himself with stones. Even David, the beloved psalmist, the king of Israel, went through seasons and times in his life where he was in such distress.

In Psalm 55, verses 4 to 6, David says these words, My heart is sore pain within me, and the terrors of death have fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me. Now, this doesn't sound like a marvelous testimony of victory.

Now, here is a man who is actually walking in victory, but for this season, for whatever reason, at this particular time in his life, it seems like death is all around him. Instead of a testimony of victory after victory, there's a fearfulness, a trembling, and some form of horror, although the Scripture doesn't clearly describe it. And this psalm has come upon David that he feels he's being virtually overwhelmed.

Maybe it's an attack just simply of the devil at that moment. You know, if you're a righteous person, the devil will attack you. You're not exempt from attack because you come to Times Square Church and have the testimony of Christ.

As a matter of fact, in many instances, you don't really know there's a devil until you come to God. You find out that this is not a church picnic. This is an absolute war for the souls and minds of men.

David says, oh, that I had wings like a dove. Then I would fly away and be at rest. If there was some way to get relief, David is saying, I would take it.

If I had wings, I would leave. And some of you are in situations like that right now. You're fighting overwhelming battles, even in your own home.

Overwhelming battles in your own mind, in your own life. And your testimony is the same. God, if there was some way, if I could sprout wings, I would be out of here.

I'd be gone. In Mark chapter 5, I see a man who's dwelling without hope. And perhaps the tombs, the scripture says he's dwelling among the tombs.

And it represents to us perhaps faded dreams or names or places and times. And even in God's house, there are people that live in these places. They're still dwelling in the past.

They're still in anguish over faded dreams. The if only's and why's of life are still dominating their mind and their thoughts. If only I had done it this way.

If only I hadn't behaved so foolishly. Then perhaps this wouldn't have happened to my family. Perhaps I would still have this relationship in my life.

Perhaps I wouldn't have spent years behind bars. Perhaps I wouldn't have become addicted to whatever it is that seems to be dominating my life today. Or has dominated it in the past.

And many of God's people, even though we are prescribed to an incredible victory through Christ, still as this man dwell in these places of death. Faded dreams. Old names of the past.

Places and times that offer nothing but pain and this abiding regret that never seems to get out of the heart. The scripture says this man picked up stones and he began to cut himself with these stones. And perhaps to us these stones represent the if's and only's and the why's of life.

And the cutting is the self-loathing for the wrong choices and the wrong actions that he has committed in his life that perhaps have brought him to this place where he is today. And I think if we could see what's spiritualized today, there are many even in this house. You've sung the songs of Zion.

You have a testimony of Christ. But deep inside you go home and you are cutting yourself. You're looking for ways to punish yourself for the wrong things that you've done.

And the consequences of those actions. Now I know what I'm speaking about because I've gone through this even as a Christian. I remember this season in my life in particular when I came to the knowledge of the covenant.

And how our power and the ability to live the Christian life is all of Christ and none of us. But in the earlier years of ministry I had preached it very hard in a very legalistic gospel. Filling altars not only in my own church but in places I traveled.

Filling altars with weeping people but unable to give them the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The hope that they should have. I could say trust Jesus but I could not give them the legal basis as to why they could trust him for the power and provision they needed for their lives.

And every time I hear a story of one of the children in the school that I've founded who's not doing well. Perhaps is out on drugs or not living for God. There's something inside that wants to pick up a stone and cut myself for the reality of not fully and truly representing Christ to them.

But over the years I had to deal with this issue in my own heart. Not just in ministry but even in my own home where I misrepresented God in front of my own children. And made it very difficult for them to lay hold of the mercy of God because I presented to them a very legalistic Christ.

You have to understand I was a policeman when I got saved and my college background is in law. So I saw the law. I saw it very clearly.

I had a 99% view of the law in the Bible and a 1% understanding of grace. And this is the Christ that I brought even into my own home. And my wife says I'm too hard on myself.

But nevertheless I look at the struggle even in my own children's lives. Now God is faithful. He's bringing them through.

You see this is the hope of the gospel. Even though we've made mistakes in the past. He restores everything that the moth in the canker room have taken.

Everything. Everything. You look at any of the saints of old.

You look at Abraham. You look at Moses. There's nobody in this Bible without fault.

There's nobody that didn't make mistakes. You don't think that Abraham at one point in his life would have wanted to take up a stone and cut himself for the betrayals that he had brought into even his own family regarding his own wife. The lies that he had spoken.

The mistrust of God along the way. I don't think there's anybody that's ever served God that at one time or another wouldn't want to pick up a stone and perhaps beat themselves for the wrong things that they've done. But there was a day when God got a hold of me.

I remember going up into my office and I would get on my knees and I would weep over the past. And I felt this was holy. I felt this was something I needed to do.

It's probably a carryover from the religious background of my childhood. But I remember going into my office and getting on my knees and beginning to weep again to only receive a very stern rebuke from the Holy Ghost. God spoke to me just like he spoke to Joshua when he was defeated at Ai.

And he said, get up off the ground. Get up off your knees. And I stood up and I was startled because this is not what I expected.

And I got up off my knees and the Holy Spirit said to me, don't you ever accuse me of being unfaithful to you again. Every time you get on your knees, you are saying to me that I'm not capable. I'm not capable of casting your sins and casting your failures into a sea called forget.

Every time you get on your knees and cut yourself with stones from the past, you're saying to me that I am not faithful to restore everything to you that the moth and canker worm have eaten. And God said to me, I am going to now show you the future of your children. And from this day forward, you're not to weep anymore.

From this day forward, you are to rejoice when you come into my presence. You are to clap your hands. You are to dance.

You are to shout aloud upon your bed. You are to give thanks and glory to the God that will not fail you. And he began to speak to me about my own children's future.

And to this day, I have watched God unfolding progressively. Everything that he's ever spoken to my heart, he has been unfolding to me. He is a God who cannot fail.

He will never fail his children. He will never fail his people. Hallelujah! You can trust him.

You can put your life into his hands. You can entrust your family to him. You can entrust your future to him.

You can give your failures to him. You can give it all to him. And he gives you a victory.

He gives you power. He gives you a new mind. He gives you a clean heart.

He gives you bounce in your step. He puts a song in your heart. He changes you from image to image and glory to glory.

Even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Mark chapter 5 says that this man, verses 3 and 4, he had his dwelling among the tombs. No man could bind him.

He had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder, and the fetters broken in pieces, and nobody could tame him. And that speaks to me about the counsel of man. You see, the counsel of man can tie you up momentarily and make it seem like everything is okay.

The counsel of man can stop you from cutting yourself momentarily. You can go to a psychiatrist's office and pay 200 bucks an hour and walk out and feel pretty good about yourself because you just decided it's all your grandfather's fault that you are the way you are. And it can tie you up for a little while and stop you from cutting yourself.

But you see, that's not the problem. There's an inherent problem. This man had an unclean spirit in him.

And no matter how many people tried to tie him up, and no matter which way they tried to do it, eventually his hands would break free again and he would start cutting himself. There's no counsel of man, beloved, that can ever bring you to a permanent rest. Oh yes, it can give you temporary relief, but you will not be brought to a permanent rest because your problem is not physical, it's not psychological, your problem is spiritual.

You have an uncleanness inside of you that only the Spirit of God can come and touch and take out of your heart and give you the new life that you've always longed for and desired. Now in Mark 5, verses 6-10, we see the incredible power of Christ, not just to deliver us for a moment, but to send all of our enemies somewhere. It says, When he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped Him, and cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of the Most High God? If you can hear it, the torment in you is crying out for mercy right now.

The torment in you is crying out, saying, Okay, just take it easy now. Don't get overexcited about what the pastor is preaching. I promise I'll make it easier on you.

It's just a temporary thing. It's going to go away. They're crying out for mercy because they know exactly what's going to happen before this hour is out.

And he cried with a loud voice, What have I to do with Thee, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure Thee by God that Thou torment me not. For He had said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit. And he asked him and said, What is thy name? And he answered and said, My name is Legion, for we are many.

There are many memories here. There are many oppressions here. There are many things that have gotten into this man's life that are causing him this torment.

Yes, there are demonic powers, but there are reasons why those demonic powers eventually begin to dominate the mind of this man and the life of this man. Verse 10 says, And he besought him. Now, I want you to see this.

He besought him that he would not send him away out of the country. Now, that's an amazing thing. James says, The devils believe and tremble.

They weren't just concerned about being cast out of the man. They were being concerned about being cast out of the country. You see, they know the power of God.

Have you come to torment us? Have you come to send us into the place that God has written we're going to go to? The devils know. Have you come to torment us before the time? Another scripture says, Have you come to torment us before the time? Devils know their time is limited. Devils know they have no power in the presence of Jesus Christ.

And they said, Please, don't cast us out of the country. Now, I don't know really what that all involves, but I have a feeling it's just, the country in a sense is this world, this earth as we know it. Don't cast us now into the place of torment.

But give us another chance to torment somebody else in a sense. You see that? Just send us not too far away. And that's exactly what the devil wants to do.

You see, God wants to cast him away from you. But the enemy wants to always make a bargain with you. Like, I won't go too far away.

I'll be around if you ever need me. You'll be free of drugs today. But, you know, you don't have to go very far to get some more.

If you find that you need my comfort. And, of course, it's torment one more time. The psalmist in Psalm 103, verses 12-13 says, As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him. God says, I've removed your transgressions. If you've come to me for forgiveness from your sin, I've taken your sin, and I've removed it as far away from you as the east is from the west.

Now tell me, where does east and west stop? There is really no stopping to it. I've taken it away from you. It's gone.

It's forgotten. Ephesians 4-8 in the New Testament says, When he ascended up on high, that's Jesus Christ. He led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men.

When he ascended up on high, after he had paid the price on Calvary for your sin, after he had defeated the power of the devil, he was laid in the grave, and God the Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit, raised him up again from the dead and brought him to the right hand of all authority and power. And he says, when he was raised from the dead, he took captivity captive. Everything that would captivate you as a person or as a child of God, Jesus took it captive when he rose from the dead.

He took it with him. He dominated it. He put his foot on the head of the serpent.

The enemy has no right to your life anymore. Do you understand this in this house today? The devil has no right to your life. He has no right to your mind.

Yes, he can try to oppress you, but he has no right. He has no legal access anymore. Christ has triumphed over him.

You're a child of God today. You're free. You're free.

You're free from the power of sin. You're free from the dominion of darkness. You're free from the memories of the past.

You are born again to live a new life in God, empowered by the Spirit of God to go forward in this life, giving God glory by letting him change you into the very image of your Savior. Not only, he says, did he leave captivity captive, but he gave gifts unto men. He took captivity captive, and then he gave supernatural, God-given and empowered abilities to you and I. He came into us in the power of the Holy Spirit when we trusted in him.

And he came to cleanse the temple just like he did in the New Testament in the beginning of his ministry when Christ came into my life. I thought it was just going to be this woozy, wonderful feeling, and in measure it is. But I found he came in with a whip in his hand and started overturning tables and throwing out money changers and kicked out all of the religious dove-sellers out of my heart.

I found this war going on inside of me because the conquering Christ had come into my life. He's not sharing the temple with anything unclean. He's not sharing with anything unholy.

In the true man and woman of God, he comes to cleanse the temple just like in the beginning of his ministry in the New Testament. Furthermore, Jesus himself pronounced a judicial sentence on the devil. He sentenced him.

And when he said it is finished, it was like a judge who put his gavel or hammer down on the bench with that resounding sound that echoes through the whole courtroom. I've been through this as a police officer. I know the finality of when that hammer finally hits the round wooden base on the desk.

And he says, guilty. And then begins to pronounce the sentence. You see, when Jesus said on the cross, it is finished, there was such a volume, as it says, that came from him when he gave up the ghost that even the Roman centurion, hardened by the sight of death, said, surely this was the Son of God.

The Scripture says he cried with a loud voice. He executed, as it is, a judicial sentence on the devil. It is finished.

Your power to torment, your power to ensnare, oppress, enslave, torment, captivate, crush, control, defile, defeat, deceive, remind of past sins, lie, cheat, steal, the forgiveness of God, the assurance of salvation, God's plan of victory for my life, it is finished. It's finished. I am a new creation in Christ Jesus.

I have great promises from God. And by these promises, the Scripture says, I shall be made a partaker of the divine nature of Jesus Christ. I have promises for my body.

I have promises for my mind. Promises for my family. Hallelujah.

And furthermore, he is banished forever from my life. His right to control my life, to ruin my marriage, to steal my children, to touch my grandchildren, has been canceled at Calvary. Satan's destiny is a lake of fire, to be tormented forever.

My destiny is the right hand of God, wherein Christ I will rule and reign forever. That's why the psalmist says, Oh, sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise in the congregation of the saints. Let Israel rejoice in Him that made Him.

Let the children of Zion be joyful in their king. Let them praise His name in the dance. Let them sing praises unto Him with the timbrel and harp.

For the Lord takes pleasure in His people, and He will beautify the meek with salvation. Those who know they need God, He said, I will beautify you. Actually, the word for salvation in the Hebrew is help, deliverance, victory, and free from distress.

He says, if you know you need me, yes, you may be in the deepest struggle of your life, but I will beautify you with my salvation. You see, my life, my presence, my victory that I won for you on Calvary, the presence and power of the Holy Spirit that will come into your life today, if you will trust me, will give you help and deliverance and victory and free you from distress. I will set you free and give you a sound mind.

When the people come, when the enemies and powers of darkness who once delighted to torment your life come, they'll see you sitting and clothed and in your right mind. They'll see you not tormented and cutting yourself with stones anymore, but a powerful evangelist sent back to your friends, sent back to your family, back to your neighborhoods with the glory of God in your life to tell them what Jesus Christ has done for you and to tell them what Jesus Christ can do for them. That's what the gospel is all about.

Oh, we try to make it so complicated sometimes and it's so simple. Verse 6, he says, let the high praises of God be in their mouth and a two-edged sword in their hand. You see, the two-edged sword is the Word of God.

Remember that Hebrews tells us the Word of God is quick and sharper than any two-edged sword. The high praises are those songs that we sing to God, saying, I will not be moved. Hallelujah.

Jesus is my Savior. I shall not be moved. These are the high praises.

The only evidence, the only reason that I shall not be moved in my walk with God is I have promises from God and by these promises I shall be kept, by these promises I shall grow, by these promises I shall walk, by these promises I shall see God's glory and victory in my home and in my family. I have a promise to execute vengeance upon the heathen and punishment upon the people, to bind their kings with chains and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgment written. In this honor have all his saints praised ye the Lord.

You see, I have a promise. I have a promise that in Christ I can bind powers and principalities of darkness. I have a promise that in Christ everything that once brought me into captivity by his presence and power in my life has to come into submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

I have a promise that I can execute upon those kings that rule the lives and hearts of those who are without Christ, that I can execute upon them the judicial verdict of God that has been issued against them when Christ rose from the dead. I have a promise. I can lay on my bed and say, Satan, you're not touching my family.

I can raise my voice. I execute upon you the judgment written over you when Christ rose from the dead. And you just begin quoting the Scriptures.

And you might be in the midst of the biggest battle in your life, but you can come into the house of God and you can begin to praise Him with a dance. You can praise Him with your songs. You can praise Him with a timbrel.

You can shout out His name. You can sing a new song in the house of God, because as you walk with Him, you begin to understand that God is faithful. God is faithful.

He will never fail you. He will never forsake you. He redeemed a people to Himself for His own namesake.

He didn't do it because we even desired Him. He did it because He desired us. And He keeps us and empowers us and changes us for His namesake.

Hallelujah. He leads me, David says, in paths of righteousness for His namesake. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. The exhortation that the Holy Spirit has given me for you today is simple.

Get up. By faith take captivity captive. And go home today with a new song.

It's very, very simple because the gospel is very simple. You don't need a new revelation. There's nothing else that needs to be said.

You know, if you could just lay hold of this, this could be the victory for the rest of your life. You don't have to come back in the house always thinking that maybe one day there will be a new corner on revelation that will set me free. No.

The gospel is the gospel, beloved. You cannot change it. You cannot add to it.

You don't have to add to it. Jesus will never lie to you. He will set you free.

And today He will take your captivity captive. For those who want to be free, now I'm speaking specifically to people who are sitting here today saying, Pastor, you have just preached my life. Who told you about me? But you just preached my life.

You preached right where I'm living. I'm cutting myself every day. I'm haunted by memories of the past.

I have this drivingness in me that wants me to always punish myself. I live in this constant defeat. I come to church, I sing the songs, I fall at the feet of Jesus, but I have an uncleanness at work in me.

It captivates me. And today I want to be free. For those who do want to be free, I want to ask you to make your way very shortly to this altar.

I'm just simply going to pray a prayer of deliverance for you. And we're going to take captivity captive by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. You don't require anything more than that.

Faith. Christ triumphed. Christ took captivity captive.

I am in Christ. Christ is in me. Therefore, the victory that He won on Calvary is also mine.

I don't have to live with this uncleanness dominating my life anymore or my mind. If that is you, as we stand. Balcony.

Let's all stand together. Balcony, make your way down here. You can go to either exit.

Main Sanctuary, please just slip out where you are in the annex. Just stand, please, between the screens. Just make your way here.

Those that are struggling with this uncleanness, this issue in your life that you know is not God, and it's been hurting your testimony, it's been hurting your walk with God. Now, if that's the true cry of your heart today, Jesus said, if a son asks for bread, will his father give him a stone? If he asks for a fish, will he give him a scorpion or a serpent? If you know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more, he said, will your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him? He died to set you free. You don't have to bargain with God for this freedom.

You don't have to come and make some excuse or some promise, because he died to give it to you as a gift. In your heart, you want to be free. You don't want to compromise with these uncleannesses, these sins in your life, the tormenting powers.

You don't want to compromise with it anymore. You want to be free. He came to give you that freedom.

And the freedom comes as simply as your salvation did, by hearing his word and responding and saying, God, I want this. It's not some emotional experience that won't set you free. The freedom comes by agreeing with God and saying, Jesus, you died for me.

You were raised by the power of God as living evidence that my trust in you is not in vain. And as Christ was raised from the dead, so the Bible says, I too will be quickened and brought out of death, brought out of places of death, and I will be given this life that Jesus Christ died and rose again to give me. This is my inheritance as a child of God.

Now, you have to be a child of God. You have to have confessed your sin. You have to have decided to forsake it and to let Jesus Christ be the Lord and Savior of your life.

I'm going to pray a simple prayer for you now. Actually, I'm going to get you to pray along with me. If you prayed with a heart of faith, I tell you on the authority of Jesus Christ that you will be set free.

You'll be free. You'll be free. Let's pray together.

Lord Jesus, I'm sorry for my sin. I'm sorry for compromising for any area in my life where I have given the devil access to my mind, my heart, my spirit. I want no part of darkness.

I want darkness to have no part of me. Jesus, I believe that when you died for me, you broke the power of the devil. You broke the power of sin.

You executed judgment against the devil. You wrote it down in your book that his power, his dominion over my life is broken. It's over.

It's finished. You said that your saints have the delight, we have the honor of executing this judgment upon the devil and all of his powers that would bind my heart, my life, my home, every power of evil. I now stand against you in the name of Jesus Christ.

And in the power of his name, I execute upon you the judgment of God. And I command you in Jesus' name, not just to leave my life, but leave the country. Be gone as far as the east from the west.

Be gone from my life from this day and forever. Now I believe on the basis of my faith in the complete work of Jesus Christ, that from this day forward, I am free. I am free.

Say it again. I am free. This is the conclusion of the message.

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