

What Can the Righteous Do?

by Carter Conlon

The righteous must prepare for this hour by seeking God's guidance and committing themselves to prayer, and then trust Him to work through them to bring about change.

Duration: 42:42

Scripture: Psalm 11:3

Topics: "Moral Courage", "Spiritual Revival"

Description

The sermon titled 'What Can the Righteous Do?' addresses the challenges faced by the righteous in a generation filled with difficulty and moral decline. Drawing from Jeremiah chapter 13, the message emphasizes the need for courage, prayer, and boldness to make a difference in society. It calls for a return to God, standing as lights in a darkened world, and being willing to pay the price to bring hope and salvation to those in need.

Transcript

My message this morning is simply called, what can the righteous do? What can the righteous do when we're living in a generation where difficulty seems to be abounding on all sides? And for those that have the eyes to see it, we appear to be witnessing the collapse of a nation. We appear to be living at a time when, just as Jesus foretold, when culture is rising against culture, confusion is starting to abound. Wickedness is on the increase.

The love of many is growing cold. Wars and rumors of wars seem to be on the news constantly. Acts of violence are becoming commonplace.

What can we do? Now, I'm not going to start there, but I'm going to finish there in this message today. And we're going to go to Jeremiah chapter 13, please, if you can, Jeremiah chapter 13. And then I'm going to pray as you're just looking for that chapter.

Now, Father, I pray God with all my heart, Lord, prepare us now. Prepare us as your people for this hour in which we are now living. It's not an hour that's coming, it's here.

Prepare us now. Prepare us to be able to make a difference in this generation. Give us everything we need, Lord, to stand as lights in a darkened place, as signposts in a confused world, as doorways of hope when hopelessness is abounding in so many people's lives.

God help us. God help me this morning, Lord. Jesus, I ask you, Father, that you would bless your church this morning.

And even if I don't touch on any of these areas, I ask you to strengthen marriages as I speak that are in trouble. Because, Lord, you can go way beyond the words that you've given me to speak. Deliver the oppressed.

God Almighty, heal the wounded. Give sight, Lord, to those who don't see a way out of their circumstance. Comfort those that are weary and feeble.

Encourage, Lord God, those that struggle to even get here and to bring their children here. Encourage them. Oh, God, let the courage never be taken from the hearts of those who call this their church home.

Give me words, Lord, that are deeper than anything I've prepared. And, Lord, I ask you to take this and multiply it 1,000 ways and speak to us, Lord. We are your people.

And you tell us that we're not children of darkness, that this day in which we're living should overtake us as a thief. You told us that we'd have oil in our lamps. No matter how difficult the days come, we could say, behold, the bridegroom.

Come out to meet him. So let that be our testimony now. Let that be our strength.

Let that be our song, our hope, and our guide for the days in which we live. And we thank you for it in Jesus' name. Jeremiah chapter 13, beginning at verse 11.

For as the sash clings to the waist of a man, so I've caused the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah to cling to me, says the Lord, that they may become my people for renown, for praise, and for glory. But they would not hear. Therefore, you shall speak to them this word.

Thus says the Lord God of Israel. Every bottle shall be filled with wine. And they will say to you, do we not certainly know that every bottle will be filled with wine? Then you shall say to them, thus saith the Lord, behold, I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings who sit on David's throne, the priests, the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with drunkenness.

I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, says the Lord. I will not pity, nor spare, nor have mercy, but will destroy them. Hear and give ear.

Do not be proud, for the Lord has spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God before he causes darkness and before your feet stumble on the dark mountains. And while you're looking for light, he turns it into the shadow of death and makes it dense darkness.

But if you will not hear, my soul will weep in secret for your pride. My eyes will weep bitterly and run down with tears because the Lord's flock has been taken captive. Say to the king and to the queen mother, humble yourselves.

Sit down, for your rule shall collapse, the crown of your glory. The cities of the south shall be shut up, and no one shall open them. Judah shall be carried away captive, all of it.

It shall be wholly carried away captive. Lift up your eyes and see those who come from the north. Where's the flock that was given you, your beautiful sheep? What will you say when he punishes you? For you've

taught them to be chieftains, to be head over you.

Will not Pang seize you like a woman in labor? And if you say in your heart, why have these things come upon me? For the greatness of your iniquity, your skirts have been uncovered, your heels made bare. Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Then may you also do good who are accustomed to do evil. Therefore, I will scatter them like stubble that passes away by the wind of the wilderness.

This is your lot, the portion of your measures from me, says the Lord, because you've forgotten me and trusted in falsehood. Therefore, I will uncover your skirts over your face that your shame may appear. I have seen your adulteries and your lustful names, the lewdness of your harlotry, your abominations on the hills and in the fields.

Woe unto you, oh Jerusalem. Will you still not be made clean? And I don't suppose that there's a lonelier calling than the calling given to those who are God appointed to see the final moments of peoples and nations who were once given divine favor. Yet they chose darkness over light and death over life.

And Jeremiah was this kind of a person. He could see what was coming. He knew how God had in the past and continues to dwell with peoples who are set apart for a divine purpose.

Israel had been set apart in that moment of history for a divine purpose. He said, I caused you to cling to me. Not that they're clinging to God was perfect, obviously.

Every nation has its flaws and its faults, just like this one has had throughout its history. But he said, I did it so that you might become my people for renown, for praise, for glory. In other words, there was a reputation of God that would be known through the earth because of you.

There would be praise given to God because of perhaps the emissaries that you would send and the message that you would bring to people who sit in darkness. And there would be something of divine glory because your testimony would be only God could have done this. Only God could have brought this people from all these places together and brought us into a place of his promise and put his spirit upon us and made us much more than we could ever hope to be in our own strength and by our own power.

And Israel at one point in her history had become the envy of the nations of the world at that time. Even the Queen of Sheba traveled with an entourage all the way from a foreign place because she heard the reputation of God's presence. And when she came into Solomon's temple, she said, I'd heard it, but not the half of it was told me of what I've seen.

She saw divine order. She saw God blessing. She saw God giving strength and directions.

She literally just saw the hand of God on the people enabling them to do what cannot be done in any amount of human wisdom or human natural strength. And for a season Israel knew just as America once knew this touch of God. Now we didn't know the touch of God in the measure of course that Israel did, but every nation that God has touched has always been touched for a specific reason and a purpose and it stays the same, to bring glory to his name.

The people that he could bless, multiply and strengthen and give abilities that other nations have not known that his name might be lifted up. We even had songs in this country, America, America, God shed his grace on thee. Jeremiah was called into a secret place.

Verse 17, it says, if you will not hear, my soul will weep in secret. That's God speaking now through him. For your pride, my eyes will weep bitterly and run down with tears because the Lord's flock has been taken captive.

He was called into a place where he felt the heartbreak of God because the land where God should have been glorified had been taken captive. If you feel a weeping in your soul for this season in which we're living, it doesn't mean you're abnormal. Some people can't handle it.

Some people ignore it. But others are called into that place, that place where we are keenly aware of the moment in history in which we are living. Though everyone in Jeremiah's day tried to push it away, they tried to get him to keep quiet, they would turn to a myriad of hundreds of other voices to shut his voice away.

But in reality, he was the only one who really cared about the future of the nation. Others were prophesying for their own gain and to solidify their own positions, to keep their favor among the people. It was only Jeremiah that saw something coming.

And he was drawn into the secret place of weeping. The people didn't know that their indulgence with their former blessings had blinded them to their intended purpose on the earth. In verse 12, he says, you will speak to them.

Thus said the Lord God of Israel, every bottle will be filled with wine. Now, that was a verse that they understood to mean that God will bless us. God will fill us with the fruit of the vine.

God will give us joy in our life and in our existence. But he said to Jeremiah, they'll say to you, do you not know? We know that every bottle will be filled with wine, but then you shall say to them, thus said the Lord, I'll fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings who sit on David's throne, the priests, the prophets, the inhabitants of Jerusalem with drunkenness. In other words, the intoxication of this world would turn the people's hearts.

And he says in verse 14, I will dash them one against another, the fathers and the sons together, says the Lord, and I will not pity or spare or have mercy. Their sons will turn against their forefathers. The family will collapse.

Social order will break down. That unit that makes a nation strong will be destroyed. The family will be destroyed.

You cannot have a nation without family as God ordained it to be. You cannot have a nation that continues when the family suddenly is being dashed one against another. God told Jeremiah in verse 18, he says, tell the king and queen, humble yourselves, sit down for your rule will collapse.

The crown of your glory. In other words, your government is going to collapse. Your ability to navigate your way through these darkened seas is going to be gone.

The cities of the South shall be shut up and no one shall open them. And Judah shall be carried away captive. The places of refuge, there's going to be no place of refuge in the nation.

That's what God told Jeremiah to tell the people because some people thought that because of their particular dwelling place that they were going to be safe. Jeremiah told the people there'd be no safety

anywhere from what is coming. Verse 20, he says, lift up your eyes and see.

Those who come from the North. In other words, there was an invading army coming towards God's people at that time from the North. And he asked them this question.

He says, where was the flock that was given to you, your beautiful sheep? Where are the 53 million children that were given to this nation at one time that were entrusted to us? Those children who should be our defense. They should know when they should be manifesting the power and the glory of God before our enemies. Where are they? God says, where's your beautiful flock that was given you? Now I don't want anybody to be condemned who's had an abortion here.

There's forgiveness in Christ. And so you could put away the voice of the condemner. If you've done this, you've come to Christ, you've asked for forgiveness.

There is forgiveness. And what God says, what God has cleansed, you have no right. Nobody can call it unclean or common any longer.

But the Lord says, where are those beautiful sheep that were given to you? Where are those beautiful children that should be singing in your streets? They should be raised up to be adults. They should become your defense and your strength. Where's the flock that was given to you, your beautiful sheep? And what will you say when he punishes you for you've taught them to be chieftains, to be head over you? Those that have survived the terror of the womb in our generation, he asked the question, he says, why are you terrified at their behavior? Didn't you teach them to be what they've become? Didn't you tell them there is no God? Didn't you mock and ridicule everything holy? Didn't you drive the 10 commandments out of your colleges and out of your schools? So why are you terrified that they're behaving the way you taught them to behave? You sat them down in front of vile music, you sat them in front of vile videos and that became their babysitters.

You told them there was no God and now they're losing heart. Now they're losing hope. You sat them in front of violent video games where they spend all day killing people, killing various things and now you're perplexed because they're acting it out.

It's so strange, in our day everybody asks all the questions except for the questions they should be asking. What have we taught our children to be and what have we taught them to do? We've taught them that there's no value to life. We've taught them that children are expendable in the womb and even those that are born through botched abortions can be still killed, though their hearts beat and though they cry, they can still be killed on the table of abortion.

We taught them there's no value to life. So why are we suddenly perplexed when they're acting out what we've taught them to be? In verse 22, he says, you say in your heart, why have these things come upon me? And I hear it in the news now. Why is this happening in our nation? Why are all these things coming upon us? Why is our society, and everybody asks the question but nobody will ever go towards the answer because we have forsaken the living God.

That's the reason. And you say in your heart, why have these things come upon me? For the greatness of your iniquity, your skirts have been uncovered and your heels made bare. Before God brings the final judgment on the nation, he will show the nation.

He always has throughout history. Study it yourself. Open your Bible, study it.

He will always show the nation why. Even did it with his own people. He will pull away the veil.

He will expose the false righteousness. He will show the greed. It says in verse 22, I've exposed you to yourself so that everyone can see what you've become and why your judgment draws near.

I'll show you what you are. I'll show you the greed in your society. I'll show you the immorality.

I'll show you the love of lawlessness. I'll show you the broken families. I'll show you, I'll show you what you've become so that it's very clear.

When your judgment comes, you'll know why it has come. For example, in this country on September the 22nd, Senator John McCain expressed his sorrow over the Senate's failure to pass the Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act. He asked those who opposed the bill to consider what permitting late term abortion says about our nation's commitment to fighting for life and standing up for human rights when our conscience calls us to.

What kind of a nation have we become when our focus is saving some partridge in the desert or some smelt in a river, but we will sacrifice our children? What kind of a nation are we? What kind of a foolish people have we become as a society? And it's particularly disturbing in the light of some of the abortion practices that have recently become known and have been made public. You see, the Lord's pulling back the veil. He's showing us what we are as a people, what we are as a nation.

There's no argument anymore. So that when our economy collapses, so that when our military is made weaker, when we seem to have no clear direction, we know why it's all coming upon us and why it's happening. When violence touches our schools, our streets, when our young people are roaming in gangs looking for a just society and they don't even know what it is.

They have no idea what that looks like. It's just a word, it's just a phrase. They don't know what they're protesting about and what they're looking for.

We've become a nation without a conscience. The Lord says, therefore, in verse 26, I'll uncover your skirts over your face that your shame may appear. In other words, I'm gonna totally expose you to the world as the number one exporter of pornography, as people have lost their way.

People are powerless. The greed, all of these things that have come to the fore just in the last several years, tells me that we're on the threshold of something that we had hoped would never come as a nation. It brings us to the question that David once asked in Psalm 11, let me read it to you.

He says, in the Lord, I put my trust. How can you say to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain? For look, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow on the string that they may shoot secretly at the upright in heart. Well, the wicked are not shooting secretly anymore at the upright in heart, it's in the open.

Then David asked the question, if the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do? What can I do? What kind of a difference can I make? And that ought to be the cry of every heart. Doesn't matter how much influence and authority you have or whether you're a mover or shaker, whether you have a long history of successful spiritual walking with God, the question must be in your heart and in mine, what can I do? And the Lord keeps leading me back again to Acts chapter 27, where people on the ship just refused to hear the word of God. They were bent on their own destruction and charting their own course, even though there was a man on board called Paul and he gave them a word and said, don't go this way.

Don't do this thing. You're bringing the justice of God upon your own head in this foolish course. And then suddenly they found themselves in a storm, unable to navigate a clear course, they struck sail and committed themselves to the wind.

And that seems to be where we are as a nation today. We've just struck sail and we're committing ourselves to the wind where we don't know where we're gonna be carried and we don't know what we're gonna do once we get there. They started throwing their tackling overboard, the things that had proven themselves for hundreds of years to be necessary for a successful journey.

They started throwing them overboard. We threw overboard the traditional concept of marriage. We threw overboard the value of children.

We've thrown so much overboard in this country. It's just absolutely amazing. And when all hope was taken away, there was a man in the belly of that ship who committed himself to pray.

And that's where we start. We pray now, we pray. Prayer is not a program.

Prayer is just not an add on to the church. Prayer is not just an hour on Tuesday night. My brother, my sister, I'm telling you from the bottom of my heart, whether you're a single mother bringing your kids here this Sunday, you're a businessman, you're unemployed, you're married, you're single, it doesn't matter.

Every one of us have to pray. You must pray now. You must go to the throne of God.

And you pray in whatever way you know how. Just talk to God. Don't make it a formula, just talk to God.

Just the way I'm talking to you, you don't have to raise your voice, you don't have to lower it, you don't have to speak biblical English. You just simply get into that closet and say, God, I'm scared. I don't know what tomorrow's bringing, but I know you're calling me to make a difference.

For the purpose of your people in the earth is for renown, for praise, and for glory. So God, the nation might be throwing you overboard, but I'm not throwing you overboard. And I'm asking you to do through my life, I'm asking you to do through my life what only you can do.

And if the nation rejects you, God, let me stand now as a light upon a hill. Let me be that source of hope and a guide for those that are fearful in this hour and will be more fearful in the days just ahead of us. Give me a word from God.

That's what Paul had. When he prayed in the belly of that ship, the Lord suddenly opened to him his future. It was not gonna be an easy future for him.

He was gonna have to stand before Caesar, an absolute insane leader who thought he was God. And Paul was gonna be brought there and changed. But knowing that God had given him a word and God gave him the people that were in the immediate vicinity of his journey, you and I need a word from God now.

We need to know where we're going. If confusion is in the society around us, we're not called to be confused. Don't get your direction from the news.

Get your direction from God. Get your direction. And call the people to Christ in a clear and determined manner.

Hear and give ear. Verse 15, do not be proud for the Lord has spoken. Give glory to the Lord your God before he causes darkness and before your feet stumble on the darkened mountains.

Call them to Christ. Call them clearly. Call them solidly.

If the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, how do the people prepare themselves for the battle ahead? Call your neighbors. Call your friends. Call your family.

Call them clearly. Call them solidly. And call them to bend their knee to God.

Tell them there is no other way to eternal life but through Jesus Christ. I am the way, the truth, and the life, Jesus said, and no one comes to the Father except through me. Tell them there's no other way forward but to trust in him as Lord and Savior and to put your hope in the victory that Christ won on that cross 2,000 years ago.

And lead them to confess Jesus as Lord and to surrender their lives fully to him and for his purpose. There is a purpose for every life that's here today, a divine purpose. And sometimes we have to learn to preach the gospel when it's not in season.

Sometimes we have to learn to stand when insane kings like Nebuchadnezzar erect golden statues of themselves and command that everybody bow. Or face the music. Sometimes we have to choose to go into a lion's den when people command that we shouldn't pray and shouldn't trust in our God.

Sometimes we gotta fast and go into the king knowing it could cost us our lives as Esther once did. Sometimes. But I'll tell you one thing I know for sure.

If nobody does nothing, nothing will happen. But if there are some here who make the choice to say God Almighty, come what may, I am going to glorify you in this last moment of time. I don't know how much time we have left, but in the time that we have left and in the time that I have as a man or woman of God in this world, I am making the choice, Lord, I'm gonna get a word from you and I'm gonna stand and I'm not gonna be a coward and I'm not gonna rub the people's faces in their sin.

When Paul stood on the deck of that ship, he only said once, you should have listened. And then he moves right from there and to be a good chair, I have a word from God. And if you would listen to the word that I give you, nobody is going to perish on this journey.

Folks, it's all about people now. It's all about saving people now. You gotta get that real deep and real down.

It's all about people. I personally believe the ship is gonna fall apart. It's all about people.

It's about the people in your community, your apartment building, your workplace. It's all about people. Go to prayer now and say, God, give me a word for them.

Give me boldness to lead them, to pray for them, to challenge them, to tell them. Give me courage, Almighty God. As David the King once said, he said, I put my trust in you, Lord.

How can you say to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain? In other words, his voice is going after this man of God saying, run for your life, flee. He said, but look, the wicked bend their bow and they make ready their arrow upon the string that they may shoot secretly at the upright in heart. If the foundations be

destroyed, what can the righteous do? Then he goes on, he says, the Lord is in his holy temple.

The Lord's throne is in heaven. His eyes behold, his eyelids test the sons of men. The Lord is righteous and loves righteousness and his countenance beholds the upright.

David said, as you and I have to say, I'm going to the throne of God and I'm gonna get my strength and my direction from him. And I'm not gonna listen to these voices and I'm not gonna be afraid of their arrows. But I know that somehow in some way through my life, the Lord is going to be glorified.

And this is what the righteous can do. This is the choice that you and I can make. We can choose to bow our heads in a restaurant when we have our meal and pray.

We can choose to be a public demonstration of the joy and the carrying power that God is willing to give to all of those of us who have chosen to trust in him. That's what the righteous can do. I want to give an altar call this morning and Lord put one thing on my heart.

Tell the people to ask for courage. You and I are going to need courage. If we're gonna make a difference, we're going to need courage, all of us.

We're going to have to have the power that only God can give to stand. It's not an easy moment, folks. I wouldn't be a shepherd if I just stood here and just brought out something and make you all happy and clap your hands.

I wouldn't be a shepherd if I don't prepare you for what you're going to have to face. You don't have to be afraid. I'm not afraid.

Don't have to be afraid because perfect love casts out fear. In my heart, I say, I know that I'm loved of God. And I am in the hand of God as you are.

And Jesus said, no one can take you out of my father's hand. I am secure. I am safe in the hand of God.

And I am headed into an eternity with him, forever. Forever, a million years from now, this brief moment in life will look so small. And I'm asking him, God, give me a love for people that casts the fear of their reprisals out of my heart.

That I'm not fighting against this society. I'm fighting for people who are headed into an eternity that is so terrifying that our minds can't lay hold of it. I'm fighting that they might be saved.

I'm fighting that they might find Christ as Lord and Savior. I'm fighting for them. And people know the difference.

They know when you're just trying to prove a point as opposed to fighting for their eternal soul. So I challenge you with all my heart, ask God for courage. It's going to take courage for all of us, folks.

For all of us. Esther was not strong in herself, but she trusted God for the courage to go in at the thought of losing her life. Daniel was old, and I know exactly what he's thinking.

Like, look, I've done my time, God. I prophesied to different kings and I've, you know, Lord, you've used my life for your glory. And in my 80s, do I have to go into a lion's den now? He needed courage.

The Hebrew boys needed courage to not bow before the gods of the age that had been set up before them. And the threats, that if you don't bow, you're going to burn. You're going to suffer.

They needed courage. All through scriptural history, those who do make a difference are people who came in their frailty. They came in their weakness.

They came with an understanding. God, I can't do this. Moses knew he couldn't do it.

David, at certain points in his life, he knew he couldn't do it in the natural. But all of these people turned to God when society, in many cases, was at the worst possible season. In Egypt, they were throwing their children into the river and killing them.

It was then that God called this 80-year-old man to come in and make a difference. It was at a season when a decree was gone out from the king to destroy the people of God. It was then that this young girl called Esther fasted and went into the king at the peril of her life.

It was when King Darius was getting all caught up in himself, starting to think that he was a god and that nobody should pray to anybody but him, that Daniel made the choice to go into the lion's den. And because of it, the laws were changed. And God was one more time glorified on the earth.

The one thing I do know is that without the courageous, nothing will ever happen. And I do know that the courageous are generally not the people who are the most physically strong. It's not the people we would think would fight.

It's people that are here today that you don't have any sense of yourself at all. You say, God, I have nothing. You have a lot more than you realize.

God can use you for his glory if you'll just let him. If you know you're weak, you're way ahead of those who think they're strong. Because the battle is his now.

And we're fighting for souls. We're fighting for the lost. We're fighting.

I am prepared to keep this church open day and night as long as it takes when people start flooding in here looking for Christ as savior. I don't know honestly where I'm gonna find the strength. But I know that if it's the hand of God doing this, he will give me the strength that I need, just as he will give you the strength.

And so I wanna challenge you this morning as your pastor, ask God for courage. Ask him for courage. It's got nothing to do with you.

It has everything to do with him. Courage to pray. Courage to speak.

Courage to act. Courage to follow where he leads. Courage to stand up even if you have to do it alone.

Courage to not bend when the music plays. Courage. It might lead us into a day that we never dreamed was possible.

God only knows himself what could happen when the people of God rise up again. Father, I thank you, Lord, for this word this morning. I thank you, God.

As best as I know, I have conveyed your heart. There's nothing more I can say or add or do. I hear the passion of your heart for this day, this generation.

It's not your will that any should perish. But how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they know unless they are sent? As it is written, how beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things. And so God, give us the courage to be missionaries in our own neighborhood.

Give us the courage to speak to young people on the street corner who've been raised without fathers. Give us the courage, Lord God, to tell the people we associate with every day that there is a heaven, a hell, and a savior. Give us compassion to lay our hands on their shoulders and pray for them when there's sorrow in their homes and in their families, and to believe for the miraculous again.

I ask you, Father, with all my heart today to raise us up again as your people. Deliver us, Lord, from all the forms of tradition, the games, all the powerless things that we've made peace with. Bring us back again to what we ought to be as your people, for a praise and for glory and for a renown to your name.

We hear you, Lord. We hear you. We hear you.

But we can't be any of these things to you without you choosing to be them through us, to bring your own name to glory. And so God, give me courage to say what I need to say. Give all of us courage to go where we need to go and to be what you're calling us to be.

We ask you that this city and this nation not perish without a witness of Christ in it, a powerful witness of your church, your people, coast to coast, rising up, praying again, and standing as a light on a hill one more time. Father, we thank you for this in Jesus' name. We're gonna stand in just a moment.

When we do, if you need courage, you wanna pray for courage today, I'm gonna ask you to slip out of your seat in the balcony of the main sanctuary. Just come and meet me here, and we're gonna pray together after a couple of minutes of worship. Those who want courage and need courage, let's stand together, please.

And you might consider yourself the least likely candidate. You're the person that needs to be here. God, give me courage.

Young and old, rich and poor, educated, uneducated, it doesn't matter, it never has to God. You come. In the annex step between the screens and same at North Jersey and those at home, just stand up in your living room, wherever it is that you are right now, just stand up and pledge your life to make a difference in your community.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, God. You know, I had a thought while we were worshiping that, you know, it's not gonna be easy for many here at this altar.

It's gonna be hard. And I'd be a liar if I didn't tell you there's a price to the decision you're making. You know, when soldiers go to war, they sometimes pay the ultimate price.

But there's a thought in their heart. What happens to the people in captivity if I don't? What happens if I don't go? What happens if I just stand by and let evil take over the world? What if nobody had stood up in World War II and paid the price with their blood for the freedom that we have today? What would the world look like? And I often think when I get tired about what it means for somebody else if I choose not to fight,

if I choose to draw back and focus on myself, what happens to somebody else? And that's the thought that can give you strength. The whole purpose of Christ coming to this world and dying is to redeem the lost.

And the whole purpose of leaving his church on the earth is to bear witness to that, greatest of all truths and moments in history. That's why we live. The devil will do everything in his power to cower you, get you to be quiet.

While we're singing, I had just a picture come into my mind of a lady about my age walking up to a group of boys on a street corner in a neighborhood where maybe there are not many fathers, starting to talk to them about Christ and then saying, get on your knees, all of you get on your knees right now. We're gonna pray that God come into your heart. I'm talking about that kind of boldness.

That kind of boldness can bring an awakening into a city. It's the boldness that David Wilkerson had that brought Teen Challenge into all the known world and countless millions of people heard the gospel and we're here today because of that boldness. He was the commanding general of this army.

He's in heaven now. So why don't we just follow in his footsteps? Pray God, give us boldness to stand in front of somebody like Nikki Cruz and say, cut me in a thousand pieces and every piece will still say, Jesus loves you. To lead that man to Christ.

And Nikki has preached to an estimated what 10 million people by now. And even today, he's still filling arenas and stadiums. Today, as I speak, he's still filling stadiums, telling them about Christ.

God help us now. Father, I just lift up my brothers and sisters before you and my own heart, Lord. I just ask you for courage, nothing else, Lord.

It's what you told me to ask for. So I ask for courage from my own heart, Lord. And from my brothers and sisters that are here that we would not be content to let people die in their sin.

We would not seek to spare ourselves at their expense, their eternal expense. Give us wisdom, love, boldness, courage. Speak to us in the prayer closet and tell us what to do and how to do it.

You gave Paul very specific directions. So give us directions for our lives so we will know what to do in the days ahead. And we ask you to bring in a huge harvest into your kingdom through all of us combined.

As your body on the earth, as your testimony here in New York City and those that are with us online, God almighty, God almighty help us. We thank you for it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/27/SID27216.mp3>

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/7IMqcD8sHcU.mp4>

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