

When Death Hears the Voice of God

by Carter Conlon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in the power of God's voice to bring life, healing, and transformation to our lives.

Duration: 1:00:24

Scripture: Exodus 4:10

Topics: "Voice Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being deeply moved by the presence of Christ and the word of God. He encourages the audience to regain their passion and excitement for God's house if they have become bored or disinterested. The preacher shares a personal story of a former hockey coach who was amazed by the transformation in his life after encountering Christ. He also highlights the story of Lazarus, emphasizing that Jesus has the power to bring people out of the grave of sin and offers salvation to all who believe. The preacher concludes by reminding the audience that they don't need to bring anything to the table, but simply need to move towards the sound of Christ's voice to receive divine life.

Transcript

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When we come to Him believing that He is the I Am, He was angry, the Bible tells us, with Moses, because He sent Moses to do something and Moses, confronted with the power of God, an eternal God who has always been in existence, chooses rather to look at his own frailty and says, I'm of slow speech and etc., etc. And the Scripture says the Lord was angry with him. When we are confronted by the presence of the Lord, we are always confronted by our own frailty.

But the Bible, the good news of the Gospel is that you and I must look away from our frailty and ask the Holy Spirit to give us hearts to trust in the One who created the universe by His Word. It's an incredible thing when we realize it. There is a point, beloved, where the truth has got to go beyond our ears and into our hearts.

We've got to somehow trust God to embrace the truth that we've been hearing and to say, Lord, You spoke the universe into existence by a Word. And how little a thing it is for You to change my life. How little a thing it is for You to change me and empower me and to make me into a living testimony of the fact that You are God.

And that You sit at the right hand of all power and that You rule the entire universe. This has always been the call of God for His church. There's never been any other call.

We live in an age when the church is greatly diverted from that call. The whole focus of Christianity has shifted far, far away from the actual mandate of God given to the church in the Bible. Much of the western world now has come out of, or perhaps I'm trusting and hoping that the pendulum has swung so far to one side that people are finally tired of all the hype of self-seeking, the emptiness that's there.

There is no power there. There is no life there. There is no abundance there.

It's a life that is yielded to God, to the purposes of God that says, Lord, take me and make me and send me and use me for Your glory. There is no real abundance apart from that. Everything else is simply a diversion.

I'm going to speak a message today that I am trusting the Lord because perhaps there are some here today that you'll be able to say at the end of the service that this is nothing new to me. I've heard this. And you're going to see some people who really did say that in the Scripture.

But I'm trusting the Holy Spirit to make the Word, to quicken the Word and to make it real. And that even if you've heard it before, you're going to hear it in a way you've never heard it before. I have to trust the Holy Spirit for this just as you do.

Now, let's pray together. Father, I thank You, God, with all my heart. I thank You for Your presence.

I thank You for Your power. I thank You for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Thank You, God, that You have a purpose for this day, this gathering.

Lord, every time we meet together, Your kingdom is advancing with power. You are doing something, saying something. You are never stationary.

You are never still. You are always moving. God, we cry out from our hearts today and say, let Your kingdom come.

Let it come. Let it come with power. Let it come and demolish, Lord, all of the weapons of darkness and everything, God, that would captivate us and hold us back from being all that You've called us to be.

We ask, Lord, that we may have the privilege of hearing Your voice. God, deliver us from the desire of being entertained in Your house. Lord, there's a call so far beyond that.

Help us to hear it. Help us to walk in it. God, we cry out to You as a church today and we say, Holy Spirit, You've got to quicken us.

You've got to quicken our hearts or we're not going to be able to hear this. You've got to quicken us so that it can become a reality in each of our lives. I personally, Lord, thank You for the anointing.

I thank You, God, that when I'm the weakest, then Your strength can be made manifest. I thank You for Your strength. I thank You for Your wisdom.

I thank You for Your might. God, I'm asking that You give all in this house the power to look away from any human vessels and to understand that it's You, Lord Jesus, that gives strength. You give might to the weary.

You rise up those that are faint. You cause those that are nothing to be as if they are something. It's all You, Jesus.

And we want to stop and just give You the glory before the word is even preached, before the altar call is given. We want to give You the glory, God, for it's all in You, Jesus. It's all about You, Lord.

There's no other name. There's no other vessel. It's not about anything but You.

God, in eternity only one name will matter. Help us, God, to embrace it now. Help us, Jesus.

Lord, that Your name would be the closest thing to our heart this day. Father, we thank You in Jesus' mighty name. If you go to John in the New Testament, chapter 11, and just leave your Bible open, I'm going to speak a message today that's called, When Death Hears the Voice of God.

When Death Hears the Voice of God. John, chapter 11. Now, the Bible tells us all that one day, that those who have died and have trusted in Christ will be raised from the dead just as Jesus was.

Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 4.16, The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first. There is a day coming. It's a doctrine that we espouse in the church of Jesus Christ called the rapture of the church.

When Christ is coming back and He is going to come with a shout, the Bible says. An incredible thing. A shout, the voice of an archangel and the trumpet of God, all at the same time.

A shout so loud that the dead who have died in Christ are going to be raised out of the grave. A shout so loud and so powerful that even if, for example, those who were Christians who may have died in fires and there's no longer any trace of their physical body. You see, it's a physical law that matter cannot be created nor destroyed.

And even if your body were drowned in the bottom of the ocean, consumed by fish and eaten by birds and scattered all over the world, even so, God knows where every atom of that physical body is. Your ashes could be scattered in every continent in the face of the world, but when Christ shouts, it's all going to come back together again. Amazing.

Amazing, that day. First, the dead in Christ are going to rise. Those that have died and have trusted in Him for their salvation.

The Bible speaks of, and it is generally agreed, that that is when the fullness as it is of our redemption comes in. We are saved by faith in Jesus Christ. But these physical bodies still live in such a way that they fight against the work of the Spirit of God.

Paul says it this way, 1 Corinthians 15, he says, So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption. In other words, our natural body is still corrupt when it is buried, but it will be raised in incorruption.

It is sown in dishonor. It is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness.

It is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, but it is raised a spiritual body. Incredible.

That means the day that we are called, if we die before Christ comes the day that we are called out of the grave, where our spirit is once again reunited with our body, it's not going to be the body that you have now. It's going to be a resurrected body like the body of Christ. The very same type of a body that he has now at the right hand of the throne of God is also going to be ours.

When we see him, Paul says, we're going to be like he is. Incredible when you think of it. Now, that's a body that can never know sickness again.

That body can't sigh. That body can't know despair. That body will never fear.

All of these things that came because of the result of sin that is so embedded in the human race will finally once and for all be vanquished. Hallelujah. What a day that is going to be.

Now, Martha believed this. Now, you know John chapter 11 is about Lazarus. Lazarus was a friend of Christ's and Lazarus died.

And Jesus said when he found out Lazarus was sick, he knew he was going to die. And he said, well, let's just hold on a couple of days. And he knew that Lazarus was going to die because he wanted to show something once and for all that was a lesson for those of that generation and obviously for us too as well.

Now, we can believe these truths. We do believe that one day the Lord is going to come. The dead in Christ are going to rise.

We do believe that we're going to be sown in corruption but raised in incorruption. Do you believe that? I believe that with all my heart. I believe it.

I believe that I'm going to be placed into the ground, a natural body, if that's the way I'm buried, and I'm going to be raised a spiritual body. I believe that I'm going to rule and reign with Christ for all of eternity. I don't know what that entails, but it's going to be a whole lot better than everything is down here.

I can be sure of that. Now, Martha believed this. Christ finally comes but only four days after Lazarus is dead.

And Martha believed these truths just like we do. And in John 11, 24, as Jesus comes to her and he says, Your brother will rise again, Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. And Christ responds to that.

Now, here's Martha quoting the Scripture. Your brother will rise again. Yeah, I know, I know.

In the last day, he's going to rise and he's going to be a brand new creation, etc., etc. But then Jesus says to her, I am the resurrection and the life. In other words, Martha, I am the one who will give life to the dead.

I am the one who will call them out of the grave. I am that one. And he said, He that believes in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

And the word in the Greek text for live is *zeo*, which means he will be caused to live. He'll be quickened. He will live under the constant guidance and influence of God.

And those that have believed in me, even though they've died, yet shall they live. They will be caused to be quickened. And then he takes it a step further and he said, And whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

That's an incredible thing. Now, Martha was acquainted with Christ, as many are acquainted with him today. But Martha was the victim of a deferred hope.

It's an incredible thing when you begin to see it. Jesus is saying, Martha, those that trust in me and have died are going to live. But also, those who live are never going to be subjected to the power of death.

Martha, do you believe this? Do you believe that eternal life begins now? Do you believe that the abundance, the change starts now? Do you believe that I am able to quicken both the living and the dead? Do you believe it? Really, this was the issue. This is what he was trying to... It was really not so much about Lazarus. It was about the living.

And Christ was saying, Do you believe this? Do you actually believe, Martha, that... You know scriptures that talk about a coming day. A coming day when you're going to be free. A coming day when there's no more sorrow, no more sighing.

A coming day when all this wonderfulness is going to happen. But Jesus is saying, Martha, yes, it's for the dead, but it's for the living too. It's not something you have to just put off till tomorrow.

And say, well, there's coming a day. In the by and by, I'll have it. When Christ is saying, I'm the resurrection and the life now.

Now I am. I'm able to call you out of death, Martha. I'm able to speak to you and every area of death in your life has to surrender to my word.

Everything that came into you as the result of the fall in the Garden of Eden. Everything that encumbers you. Remember Jesus said, You are encumbered about much, Martha.

Everything that binds you. Everything that restricts you. Everything that would put you in as much of a grave as your brother Lazarus is in.

I have authority over it, Martha. If you can hear me, I can give you life. I can quicken you.

You can live under the constant guidance and influence of God. Martha, do you believe it? Proverbs 13, 12 says, A hope deferred makes the heart sick. Hope deferred.

In other words, oh, she says, you know her answer to him. He says, Do you believe this? Verse 27, she says, Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. And

that's the way so many people are today.

Just rattling off scripture. He's trying to speak to her, but she's not hearing him. He's trying to tell her that what you're about to see in your brother can be yours, Martha.

It's not just for those that are gone into the grave and someday they're going to live again. You see, a heart that is sickened by deferred hope. In John 11, 20, like Mary, sits still at the arriving of Jesus.

John 11, 20 says that Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him. But Mary sat still in the house. I wonder how many people this morning, Even here at Times Square Church are sitting still in the house.

The word of God is coming now. We worship Christ. It is indisputable that the spirit of God is here in our midst.

You know that you have experienced his presence. Not that we live by experiential religion, but still you have experienced his presence. You know he's here, but you're sitting still in the house.

Now, sitting still in the house doesn't mean that you're not waving your hands or singing the songs of Zion that we've sung this morning. But it's an issue of the heart. Jesus comes, but there's no longer any leaping of the heart in expectancy.

I see the report coming that Jesus is now on the way and Mary, her hope is deferred now to another day. And her heart is sick. And she just sits still in the house.

And many, many people are like that in the house of God today. Christ comes, Christ speaks, Christ moves, his manifested glory comes into the middle of the church. And so many just sit still in their heart.

There's no expectancy anymore. Oh, beloved, if you're going to pray for anything in your life in this hour, Pray that as the men on the road to a mass, that there be a burning in your heart again. When the word of God is preached, even if you've got to cry out for it and say, Jesus, something's wrong with me.

The word of God is preached and I'm just sitting still in the house. There's no longer any expectancy in my heart. I no longer live as it is on the edge of my spiritual chair.

Believe in God that every word that's coming from your mouth is for me. It's not just for somebody else in some other time. It's not just for a deferred hour.

Sometime in the future that these things may be mine, but they are mine now. Christ, you bought them for me on Calvary. You made an open display of the powers of darkness.

You told me you're the resurrection and the life. There should be an expectancy in my heart. I should wake up with it in the morning.

I should go to bed with it at night. There should be an expectancy that morning by morning I'm going to see and experience new mercies of God. I'm going to be changed from image to image and glory to glory.

Even as by the power of God there's going to be a change. Lord Jesus, you're going to be glorified in me. You're going to take my life and you're going to use it even in the weakest areas.

Those places where the devil has considered me dead and I consider myself dead and a stone has rolled over the door. My God, you're going to come. You're going to call me up and you're going to make me strong in the weakest areas of my life.

You contrast this to the song of Solomon where the bride says, I sleep but my heart wakes. The word sleep in the Hebrew is yashin which means it's used figuratively of sleep or of growing old or stale or dead. That's an incredible thing when you think of it.

It's also a word that is used of death in the Hebrew language. I sleep. In other words, I'm dying.

There's an area of death in my life. But my heart wakes. Incredible.

My heart wakes. That's what should happen every time the word of God is preached. My heart wakes.

Oh, God, I've lived in death and I'm dying in this area of my life. And in some cases, there's people here today that you've virtually given up hope. But the bride says, but my heart wakes.

And the word for heart means my total inner being. It is the voice of my beloved that knocks and say, open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled. You see, Christ sees you as undefiled.

Even though you may know that you have an area of death in your life, Christ comes today and he looks. He says, open to me. I'm knocking at the door of your heart.

I brought a word that's speaking specifically to your struggle. My heart wakes. My inner being comes alive.

I remember when I was a young Christian sitting in church, hearing impossibilities, really. Hearing that God could use me. Hearing that he could take me and make something out of my life.

Hearing that I could stand and honor his name. Hearing that I could be a different person than what I was. Hearing that the struggles in my life could be overcome by the grace of God and overpowered by his spirit.

Hearing that I could have a new life. And I remember sitting and looking in the mirror. It was an impossibility.

But my heart opened. My heart opened to the knock that was on the door. My whole inner being started to come alive.

I remember there were services. I remember one in particular years ago, many, many years ago, when I couldn't wait for the preacher to stop so I could go to the altar. I was so stirred by the spirit of God.

I don't know what he said. It might have been just a line. But I was so stirred by the fact that God could use me and wanted to use me.

I just wanted him to be quiet so I could go to the altar. And then when I got to the altar, I wanted people to get away from me. It was one of these churches where everybody runs and says, what's the problem? And half of them are cast out devils and everyone else wants to know your name.

And I just felt like saying, get away from me. I'm just trying to get through to God. I've heard something in my spirit.

I don't need your help. I've heard something. And I'm pressing through to the one that's knocking on the door of my heart.

And he's speaking in possibilities to me. He says, open to me. I now count you as undefiled.

Incredible. Incredible when you begin to realize it. When we've come to Christ, there's nothing that separates us anymore.

Nothing that separates us from the power of the one who created the universe by a spoken word. He now has come to live within us. Verse 4, the bride, I'm going to paraphrase it, but the bride says, He put his hand by the door and I was deeply moved for him.

Incredible. There's got to be that deep moving in our hearts every time Christ comes and speaks to us. A deep inner moving.

If you're losing it, get it back. If you become bored with the house of God, get it back. Do whatever you have to do to get it back.

Cry out to God. Say, God, I'm getting bored in your house. The Bible is opened and it's like, oh, I've heard that before.

Well, I've heard that before. And here it is, Jesus himself knocking at the door of your heart. A heart that is sickened by a deferred hope.

Like Martha in John 11, again, 21. Her only testimony of Christ is about what could have happened sometime in the past. When there was still a bit of fighting strength left.

This is what she says. She said, Lord, if you'd been here, my brother wouldn't have died. That's her testimony.

She's got all this scripture, all these promises, but that's the only testimony she's got. If you had been here. There was a time in the past, Lord, when I had a bit of fighting strength left.

There was a time when you and I could have done this thing together. There was a time when I was willing, in a sense, to get well in this area, but you didn't show. But now death has been reigning here for too long, and I'll just have to endure this till the last day.

I'll be free one day. It'll be the last day. I deferred my hope to the end.

And really, that's what the Holy Spirit has been speaking to my heart to share with you today. It's for those that have deferred the hope of God in some area of your life until the end. You deferred it.

You put it away, and your heart is sick because of it. You say, I'll never be free. I was born this way.

I'll always be this way. When I first came to God, I was zealous to be rid of this. I had a measure of strength, and I called out to you, but you didn't come.

Can you hear it? Lazarus on his deathbed. Is Jesus here yet? No. He hasn't arrived yet.

And day two, is Jesus come yet? Because Lazarus knows there's no hope for him apart from Christ. No, he's not here yet. And then finally Lazarus dies, and everyone puts him away in the grave.

And he says, he's dead now. He's been dead for four days. There's no hope.

There's no more life in him. And that's the way many, many people feel, even in the house of God. I've fought so long in this area of my life.

There was a time when you and I, Jesus, could have done it together, but you didn't show. And now I'm dead. It's hopeless.

I've tried. I've failed. There's no way I can get out of this situation.

I know I'll be free one day. I'm just going to have to learn to live with this thing the rest of my life. But it makes for a sick heart.

Then you come into the house of God, and it doesn't matter what is preached. It doesn't matter if Christ himself comes and walks the aisles. All it is now is Scripture.

Scripture. Oh, I know one day you're going to come, and everybody's going to be resurrected. I know you're the son of God who's come in.

And there's nothing more tragic, in a sense, as per the testimony of Christ in a Christian who finds himself in that place. There's no yearning for God. There's no burning in the heart.

There's no sense of the imminency that Christ is here and can change my life. He can use me. There is no limit to what God can do.

God can take me and speak to the world if he wants to. There's no limit. That was the greatest sin of Israel.

The greatest sin of Israel was not building that calf and all the other things they did. As grievous as they were, the greatest sin of Israel was limiting God. They limited the Scripture, says the Holy One of Israel.

They said, can God furnish a table in this wilderness? In this dry place of death, can God provide what I need? And that was the sin that left them in the wilderness all of their days until they died. Jesus said, no, Martha, I'm the one who raises the dead. Neither those who have died trusting me nor those who are yet alive are captivated by the power of death.

Do you believe this? And this is an incredible question that we have to ask ourselves today. Do you believe this? Neither those who are dead and will be raised nor those who are still living are captivated by the power of death any longer. That's an incredible thing.

Now, death in our sense is that reigning of sin, the power, the dominion of sin, which is death. The wages of sin is death. And he says, no, as much as physical death can't keep someone in the grave, neither can death that comes as a result of sin keep you captivated any longer who are in Christ.

Do you believe this? Incredible when you think, do you believe it? I want to speak to those that are struggling with moral issues. Do you believe it? Those that are struggling with despair, do you believe this? Those that are encompassed with fear of the future, do you believe this? Do you believe it? Who do you say that I am, Jesus said? Who do you say that I am? Because that's really the question that determines whether or not you're going to get through. It doesn't matter what Pastor Carter says or any of the other leaders.

It's really, who do you believe that Jesus is? That's what's going to make the difference ultimately. Folks, you can come to church and laugh and be entertained. You can weep and mourn and run the aisles and do all of these things.

But if you don't believe that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, you're not going to change. Ultimately, it boils down to a personal issue. It's not something I can, I can't procure it for you.

I can't do it for you. It's a decision you have to come to in your own heart. Where you get to the point of saying, I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God.

And you rise up out of whatever your struggle is. And say, God, I'm going to take you. It's your word.

I have no more strength. I'm as good as dead. There's no power in me to fight this anymore.

I'll never get the victory on my own. But God, I am going to trust you. John 11, 39, Jesus comes to the brow of the hill.

And he said, take away the stone. Now go with me to Ezekiel again. Not again, but go to Ezekiel chapter 36.

I've preached on this scripture so many times and yet it becomes more fresh every time I look at it. Take away the stone. Take it away.

This is the very first thing that has to happen before an area of death in your life can hear the voice of God. The stone's got to be taken away. Ezekiel 36, 24.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel. I will take you from among the heathen and gather you out of all countries and bring you into your own land. Now this is the word of God to his people.

It applies equally to you and I as it did to physical Israel in that generation. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you. You shall be clean from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you.

In other words, God says, I'm going to draw you out of where you've been living and I'm going to give you my word. Thank God for the pure word. Thank God for preaching that not only soothes but challenges.

Thank God for a word that comes as a light and examines our heart. And then he said in verse 26, a new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh. In other words, Christ says, I will give you, if you will let my word come to you, I'll take away the stone.

I'll take away that stony heart of unbelief that keeps you in the captivity of death, that keeps you bound. God said, if you will trust me, I will even take that away. It's really got nothing to do with you.

All I ask of you is to trust me and I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you should keep my judgments and do them. You should dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers and you should be my people and I will be your God. And I will save you from all your uncleannesses and I will call for the corn and increase it and lay no famine upon you.

In other words, you will flourish. There will be an evidence of strength within you. You'll not be walking around bowed down and half starved spiritually in the house of God.

There will be an increase in you. In verse 30 he says, I'll multiply the fruit of the tree. And when I was reading that this morning again, I was thinking about Calvary.

I'll multiply the fruit of the tree. I'll multiply everything that was bought for you by the blood of Christ 2,000 years ago. And the increase in the field and you shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen.

No more reproach. The heathen will no longer look at you and laugh. Everyone around you will see my glory.

Everyone around will see a strength and a sustenance that can't come from anywhere else but the hand of God. They will see it. They will see it.

The psalmist David says, God has put a new song in my heart. And many will see it and fear and trust in the Lord. Not just something with my mouth but an evidence in my body.

There will be an evidence of the quickening power of the Holy Ghost. Because God has strengthened me where I've been the weakest. Take away the stone.

Verse 33 says, Thus saith the Lord God, in the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities, I will also cause you to dwell in the cities and the waste shall be builded. In other words, God says, I'm going to bring you back. And I'm going to cause you to dwell in places that you had no power to live in before.

And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that pass by. The word in the Hebrew for desolate is something which brought astonishment and horror. And God says, areas of your life where there was astonishment and horror, whether it was in your own sight or the sight of those that passed by you.

God said, I'm going to till it. I'm going to plant fruit in it. And everyone that passes by is going to see it.

There's going to be a change. It's going to be an undeniable change. And they shall say, this land that was desolate is become like the Garden of Eden.

And the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced and are inhabited. The word for desolate means, not desolate, but is become. They'll say, this land that was desolate is become.

And it's amazing, really, when you look it up. It's heya, in the Hebrew, it means caused to breathe. Incredible.

In other words, be brought back to life. This land that was a horror shall be brought back to life. Caused to breathe by the breath of God.

Incredible. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I, the Lord, build the ruined places. And I plant that that was desolate.

And I, the Lord, have spoken it and I will do it. Thus said the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them. God said, I'm waiting now.

Because there's a people that are going to arise that are going to inquire of me to do this. They're going to come. And they're going to say, oh God, I am dead.

Come, Holy Spirit, and breathe on me. And let the breath of God bring life into this area of death in me. And raise me up and fence me in with the glory of God.

And plant me that everyone who walked by in astonishment and horror at these areas of my life, every demon of hell that laughed at me, will have to stand up and take notice that I have been planted by the hand of God. Do you believe this? The word hea means more than just to breathe. It means to be done.

It means to be made to happen. Thank you. It means to be finished.

He said, I will do a work and it will be a finished work. I will cause you to breathe. I will take you out of darkness.

I'll bring you into a land of incredible promise. I will plant you deep in the soil. You will prosper.

The grace of God will be all over you. I'll give you a new mind, he said, and a new spirit and a new heart. I'll transform you.

I'll make you into a new person. I'll give you the power to stand on a hill and to declare my glory to whoever can hear your voice. And I'll be glorified by taking you in the weakest areas of your life and making you there the strongest.

And you will know that it's not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. You will know that I'm the only one who can take a pile of rubble and build a wall out of it. And build a glorious city where my glory and my dominion can rest.

I'm the only one that can do it. All through the Old Testament, time and again, we're seeing the same principle of God. Where God says, I am just looking for a people who have been brought to ruin by sin.

Or willing just to simply hear my voice and obey. And head back. And irrespective of how the devils laugh at them.

And say, look it, how are they going to build a wall out of this rubble? And if even a fox walks on it, it's going to fall over. But irrespective of what every devil of hell says. There's a voice that's stronger than all these other voices.

And say, I'm not coming just to the church. And I'm not coming just to sing songs. I'm coming to the God who created me.

I'm coming to the king of this universe. I'm coming to the one who by the spoken words has left to be light. And light is.

That's who I'm coming to. I'm coming to the one who has the power to call me out of death. I'm coming to the one who broke the power of Satan.

Sin and hell forever. And made an open display of the powers of darkness. I'm coming to him.

And he is going to touch my life. And raise me out of the obscurity and horror. Of every area where sin and the devil has captivated me.

And he's going to set me free and raise me up. And I will glorify him for the rest of my life. Hallelujah.

Matthew chapter 27. Let me just read it to you. It says, Jesus when he had cried with a loud voice.

Yielded up the ghost. Now he was on the cross at this time. I think it's Mark or Luke that says the loud voice.

He cried out with a loud voice. Father into thy hands I commit my spirit. I give you God all that I am.

Even in death I give it to you. Christ was saying, Father I give you the death that I'm about to undergo. Trusting that you're going to raise me from the dead.

And this is going to be an evidence to my church forever. That death can't hold anyone who trusts in me. John 19 chapter 19 verse 30 says Christ cried with a loud voice.

It is finished. It is finished. It's amazing because that's what Ezekiel said.

He said I'm going to cause you to breathe. To be made to happen. I'm going to say it is finished.

Amazing. You see Christ all the way through the Old Testament. It is finished.

The reign of death is finished. And look at the evidence. I guess you better go there.

Matthew chapter 27. I want you to see this. It's finished.

If you can hear the voice of the Lord at all in any of the word that you're hearing today. Those three words are being spoken over the area of death in your life. It's finished.

It's finished. Oh the devil so fears the weakest saint of God that finally catches that. Hey enough of this.

Enough of this. This is over. This is history.

I'm not living here anymore. I'm not staying here anymore. Roll away this stone.

Matthew 27. He said Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up the ghost. Now here's what happened.

He said it's finished. It's over. I want you to think now from the time of Eden.

The fall of Adam. The power of death had reigned. Sin had dominion.

And behold the veil of the temple was rent in two or twain from the top to the bottom. The earth did quake and the rocks rent. Now the commentaries say this was at the time of the evening sacrifice.

The temple would have been filled. Priests would have been ministering at the altar. Would have been worshipers everywhere.

And the hand of God came and took that veil from the top to the bottom and ripped it open. There was no longer a separation. Now the power of God was available to all who wanted Him.

Everything He had promised was now a reality. Verse 52. Here's an evidence.

And the graves were open. And the bodies of the saints and many bodies of the saints which slept arose. Hallelujah.

I want you to think this through. These are all testimonies of everything that Christ had been speaking. The veil was ripped from top to bottom.

The earth shook. And rocks were split in two by the power of God. I've always seen in this the longing of God's heart for communion once again with His creation.

God says get everything out of the way. Shake everything that can be shaken and any mountain in the way. Get out of my way.

I'm coming through to those that are mine. And let me show you what I can do. Get up.

Get up. Get up. Get up.

Get up. It's like He couldn't wait for that day. It's the same thing Christ was speaking.

It's not just some other day. It's now. It's now.

And many saints, many graves were open. And many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of the graves after His resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared unto many. The holy city in the Hebrew means that which is set apart, sanctified, consecrated and separated for God.

They appeared as living testimonies of the power of God. Incredible. They rose from the dead and appeared as living testimonies.

I've never physically died but I've been dead in sin. I've been captivated by fear. I've known what it is to live in a grave in a sense.

Not a physical but a spiritual grave. I've known what it's like to live there. I've known what it's like to look at changes in possibility.

And I heard the voice of God and He rolled the stone away. He rolled the stone because you can't even do that. I can't create a heart of belief in myself.

Even the Holy Spirit has to do that. But He rolled the stone away and I heard His voice. That's the only reason I'm here, beloved.

It's the only reason I preach the gospel. I heard Him. And He called me out.

Not because of any strength but because I was dead. I was weak and I heard a voice. The voice of God speaking into my heart saying, If you'll come to me, I'll set you free.

If you'll come to me, I'll use your life for my glory. If you'll come to me, no power or sin has any dominion over you any longer. I knew there's nothing I could add to the formula.

It's like God waited until I was dead. There's nothing I could add to it. I had no strength.

Try as you may. Could you imagine going to a funeral parlor and taking a corpse out of the casket and just dressing it in different clothes? Put a policeman's uniform on it and say, This was a policeman or is a policeman. Is it? It's a body.

You can dress it any way you want and nothing changes. It's dead. And that's what I used to do years ago.

Change my clothes saying, Okay, well, this is what I'm going to be now. And try to be something else. But there was a power of death at work in me.

And no matter how I dressed myself or tried to change my conversation, the same old death still was at the very core of who I was. Couldn't change it by outward dress. It's only when I heard that voice.

And I can't. It wasn't a particular message. It's something deeper.

It's something that God alone does in the heart. It's got very little to do with church or church services. It has everything to do with something the Holy Spirit is speaking.

He's drawing. And my heart was moved for Him. I felt His hand on the door of my heart in my life.

And my inner being was moved towards Him. And I said, God, I want this. I want it with all my heart.

I want everything you have. Paul, let me just read it to you. In 2 Corinthians 1, verses 8 to 10, Paul said, We would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia.

We were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life. Paul said we had such difficulty that we were despairing of even living. And he doesn't tell us what that difficulty necessarily was in its totality.

But in verse 9 he says, But we had the sense of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves but in God which raises the dead. So Paul said we got to the place of saying, Lord, there is no hope if you don't raise us out of this. There's no progressing if you're not the one that's doing the giving.

Who delivered us from so great a death and does deliver in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us. So Paul says He delivered us from this power of death. And He does deliver us.

And we trust He will yet deliver us. Because He is the deliverer. He is the one who calls us out of death and gives us life.

Back in John 11, Jesus now finally calls. And we are thus spoken, the scripture says, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. Now Lazarus could not speak.

The Bible says that when he came forth he was bound hand and foot with grave clothes and his face was bound with a napkin. So in other words, there's nothing more to say. He couldn't walk.

He couldn't bring about deliverance by his own hand. And I think that's where some people are today. There's nothing more to say.

It's all been said. As far as you're concerned, it's a dead issue. You've deferred your hope and your heart is now sick.

And there's nothing more to say. There's no more promises to make. It doesn't matter what you say.

You know you're not going to get out. This thing has a grip on you. And there's nothing, there's no more vows or oaths or promises you can make.

All the crocodile tears that you've cried about how you're going to change, you're tired of it now. And you said, well, I've got to learn to live with this and one day I'll be free. One day I'll be changed.

His feet were bound. He couldn't walk. There's no way of getting out of this on his own.

His hands, he's all wrapped up by this death. And that's really where we get to sometimes in some areas of our lives. We're just absolutely wrapped up.

And it's at this very moment that we begin to hear the voice of God. It's amazing because he is actually dead. But somehow, miraculously, he can hear better than those around him who still possess measures of natural strength and reason.

And he's a dead man. You know, it's the dead men that get the prize. Isaiah said, the lame take the prey.

I want you to think that thought through for a moment. It's the dead that get the prize. It's the man who knows he can't get the victory on his own.

It's the woman who knows there's no power over this. I'll never get free. This thing is so interwoven in me that it's wrapped me up.

It's taken away my strength. I will never get the victory. Mary and Martha, one is sitting still in the house.

The other is accusing Christ of not being there when something could have been done. And they're not hearing anything that he's saying, but a dead man is hearing him. Isn't that amazing? A dead man is hearing him.

And everyone around is saying, forget it, Jesus. He's four days dead. He stinks.

There's no point of calling his name. But Jesus said, don't you understand, Martha? As much as I will bring people out of the grave on the last day, I can take you out of the grave of sin now. Do you believe this? The writer of Hebrews said, today after so long a time, today, that's in Hebrews 4, 7. After so long a time, as it is said, today if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

If you can hear, if something is rising in your heart, if faith has come back in, the only thing you can do is what Lazarus did, move towards his voice. Move to the sound of his voice, because divine life is about to be yours. Move to the sound of his voice.

You don't bring anything to the table, beloved. There's no self effort required. Christ said, I will do it for you, and that will be the testimony.

All I ask you to do is move to the sound of my voice. When I call you, get up. You know, it's funny, a lot of people are concerned about how he walked out of the grave, because his feet were bound.

Theologians are funny people sometimes. They're more worried about that than the fact that he rose from the dead. It boggles me at times, trying to figure out how he got out of the grave.

I mean, it doesn't even bear any comment when you think about it, it's so ridiculous. The gospel is about dead men living. That's the gospel.

It's about dead men living. It's about a savior being raised out of the grave by the power of God, and it's about everyone who trusts in him being raised out of the grave by the power of God. Ultimately a physical grave, but initially a spiritual grave.

Set free, death conquered, the chains of sin broken, and we are made into new creations in Christ Jesus. Divinely planted by the hand of God, an astonishment to those who knew us. I had an old hockey coach come to hear me preach one time, and when I played, I was known for not a very... I was not gentlemanly, let's put it that way.

And he came to hear me preach, and he was in his seventies then, and after the service was over, he said, if I wouldn't have seen it, I wouldn't have believed it. But he said, now I've seen it. And he took a copy of a message and made everybody in his family listen to it.

Everybody who came into his house had to listen to that message. It was amazing. But he said, I wouldn't have believed it had I not seen it.

Isn't it awesome? If you will trust God, people will say that about you. Those that are here today and you have a violent temper maybe, or you have a problem with your tongue, and you say, God, I'm just so wrapped up in this, I'm dead. But I hear you calling me.

And the Lord says, if you will come, I will make you an astonishment. I'll make you an astonishment to those that once passed by and saw nothing but desolation and horror. I will change you.

I will set you free. I will empower you. I will set you on high.

I will use you for my glory. That is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Everything else is a fraud.

That is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Amazing. Hallelujah.

Father, thank you. Father, thank you. Jesus, I glorify you.

Lord, I worship you. Because today you're going to call people out of the grave. Today, Lord, you're going to give life.

Today, Jesus, there are hearts now that have heard your voice and are stirred once again. They're hearing it more than those that still are struggling to do something about it in the flesh. They know they're dead.

They know there's no hope. But today you're going to set them free. Lord, you spoke it to my heart.

I believe it. I know who you are. I know what you can do.

You've done it for me. And today I'm believing that there will be grave clothes all over the floor at this altar. You're going to break homosexuality and alcoholism and drug addiction, pornography, a lying tongue, adultery, fear of the future.

You're going to break all of these things and others that you are now speaking to people's hearts about. You're going to break them. We're going to pray.

And, Lord, you're going to set people free. You stake your very honor upon your word, Lord God. And so I look forward with anticipation to the freedom and the joy and the testimonies that are going to come because the Lazaruses of this house have heard your voice.

My altar call is very simple. Education annex, main sanctuary, balcony, come forth. If you are in a place of death, if death has got you wrapped up in its grip and you are hearing the voice of God, this altar is open

to you.

I'm going to ask you to come. Let's all stand together. Hallelujah.

Make your way down. Balcony, you can go to either exit. Education annex, you probably should.

Well, make your way here, too, as well. We're going to pray together. We're going to shout together.

Make your way down. Please move in very close. Every Lazarus, every person that's got death at work in them, captivated, given up, you've deferred your hope, and you hear the voice of God calling you now.

The Lord will not call you and disappoint you. He's going to set you free. Please move in close.

Make room for those that are coming. Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord. Mighty God, we proclaim you, Jesus.

We proclaim you, Lord. We proclaim you. King of kings, Lord of lords, mighty deliverer.

We believe that you're the resurrection and the life. God, I believe it with all my heart. This is the covenant.

This is what you're calling us into. This is your church. This is your testimony.

Father, I thank you. God, I praise you with all my heart. I praise you, Lord.

Bless you, Jesus, for what you do. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Just keep coming. Even if you have to go into the rotunda, that's all right. The Lord's going to set you free.

I'm telling you, there's going to be freedom here today. We're going to wait. We're just going to wait.

Let's just sing softly. We're going to wait. You cry out to the Lord if you want to right now.

Those that are at the altar, you just do what God's calling you to do. We'll just play softly. Now, Holy Spirit, there are things so deep at this altar that only you can call us out.

But you are calling us. That's the wonderful thing. These people have heard your voice.

Lord, this is awesome. This is wonderful. They've heard you.

My God, thank you. The power of the grave can't hold anyone. The power of sin has no dominion any longer.

We're not under the law. We're under grace. God, I thank you so much that we're hearing your voice.

And, Lord, you will never disappoint your children. You'll never disappoint those that call out to you. You say you'll give the Holy Spirit to those who ask.

God, thank you. Thank you that you're causing something to happen right now. You're causing life to come where there's death.

You're unwrapping even this moment. The grave closed and the power of death is being broken. I thank you, Lord God, that the enemy is being vanquished.

The power of the evil one is broken by the word of God. I praise you for it, Jesus. Bless you, Lord, for what you're doing.

God, we magnify you. Lord, we worship you. Jesus, we magnify you for what you're doing.

Hallelujah. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, God.

Hallelujah. Pray with me now, those that have come to this altar. Lord Jesus, I am dead in this area of my life.

I'm all wrapped up by it. And I don't want to live this way. I don't want sin to have dominion over me any longer.

I don't want fear to govern my life. I don't want weakness to be my only testimony. Jesus Christ, I believe that you are the resurrection and the life that if I believe in you, death has no dominion over me.

I hear you calling me and that's why I've come. And I thank you that this very moment I believe in my heart and confess with my mouth that Jesus, you have broken the power of this sin in my life. And you have given me a testimony.

Thank you, Lord, that people are going to see your hand in this area of my life. And they will be astonished. And I will be astonished because of your goodness that is working within me.

Now I give you the glory. I give you the praise. I thank you from the very depths of my heart.

In Jesus' mighty name. Now do that right now. Thank you.

Thank you. Hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you, Lord. Mighty God, thank you.

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