

When the Enemy Comes in Like a Flood - Part 2

by Carter Conlon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God's presence and power to find true happiness and peace, and warns against the dangers of self-seeking and the pursuit of worldly happiness.

Duration: 30:12

Scripture: Isaiah 59:9-11, Malachi 3:13-18

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Redemption Restoration"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the futility of seeking happiness and peace in worldly pursuits, highlighting the emptiness and temporary nature of such endeavors. It delves into the societal confusion and darkness that arises from turning away from God's truth, leading to a search for security and blessings outside of God's presence. The message warns against the self-seeking spirit prevalent in society, leading to a spiritual death and a departure from God's ways. However, it also offers hope for a remnant of people who turn back to God, seeking true fellowship, discernment, and surrender to His will, ultimately finding redemption and restoration in the Redeemer who comes to those who turn from transgression.

Transcript

...show and attraction to attraction, looking for happiness and I always find it interesting at the end of the night to see them heading towards the parking garage at 51st and 8th with this deadpan look upon their faces. There's no gaiety, there's no joy, everything that they may have experienced, the laughter that they may have known in some of these places has all been temporary. It's all elusive, they can't hold on to it.

It's like sand in your hand and people are searching constantly, they'll go home and they'll plan the next set of tickets they buy to come again and to look for one more night of elusive peace and happiness. Looking for that which only can be brought by the presence of Jesus Christ and the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah chapter 59 again in verse 9, he talks about a society which has redicted God's truth and then tries to do right but can't.

Ever-increasing confusion leads to a deeper and deeper darkness. Listen to what he says in verse 9, therefore his judgment far from us and neither does justice overtake us. We wait for light but behold obscurity, for brightness but we walk in darkness.

We look for the truth, we try to do right but it seems this ever-increasing confusion is leading us to an ever-increasing darkness in our country. We search for our previous borders, in verse 10 it says, we search for the wall like the blind and we grope as if we had no eyes. We stumble at noonday as in the night and we are in desolate places as dead men.

What he's saying is that we search for our previous borders, we search for the ones which brought security at another time and we can't find it. We're walking around and we have the stories, we have the history, we have the legacy of God's blessing but it seems that it has eluded us as we seek to find it and sadly to say society seeks to find it outside of the parameters where the true blessing that came from. It came from the presence of God, it came from walking in obedience to God, it came from the loving arms of a risen Savior.

When there were one time when people embraced him and those borders were secure, they were established, we were a lender and not a debtor. The scripture says, Isaiah says in chapter 59 verse 10, he said we are in desolate places as dead men. The original text, the word dead man means an unnatural death which was not the will of God.

We walk around suffering an unnatural death and it really is speaking about a spiritual death, searching for the walls and unable to find them. All of the symposiums now, all of the think tanks getting together and trying to figure out why our children are now being predisposed to such horrendous violence. New York City now, I suppose many of you are aware of it now, some of the initiation rites into some of the young youth gangs now is to take a razor blade or any kind of a cutting object and to find a baby in a carriage and to slice up that baby.

That is the new ritual now, not even babies in their carriages are safe anymore and so all of the the brilliant men get together and they form symposium and think tanks trying to figure out why this is happening in our midst, groping for the wall but unable to find it because they're trying to find it outside of the parameter where true life and true freedom really is and the life surrendered in submission to the laws of God, to the heart of God is revealed through his son Jesus Christ. Verse 11 talks about again our society, it says we all we roar all like bears and mourn sore like doves. We look for judgment but there is none for salvation but it is far off from us.

In other words we roar like bears, he says, we give the impression that we're powerful and in control. Our politicians stand up and some civic leaders and others even religious figures stand up and roar like bears about the good days that are ahead of us and the ever-increasing prosperity and the walls that will never fall and all the hindrances before us that will never take us down. Recently some braggart in the Wall Street Stock Exchange said we have now compartmentalized the stock market, it can only fall a certain amount every day and even though a temporary panic may set in he said there is no chance, common sense he said will prevail and the market can only fall a certain portion every day and common sense will prevail and he said the American economy will remain and will stand firm and then he said some foolish words that I'm reminded of that were spoken back in the early 1900s and it was recorded I believe in the New York Times he said not even God could sink the American economy today.

I remember when the Titanic was dedicated some fool shouted it from over the railing, not even God he said could sink this ship because it was compartmentalized there could only be a certain amount of water that could enter in at certain intervals of certain times and surely they said we can make it to a safe port before any tragedy would come upon us. We roar like bears we give the impression that we're absolutely

powerful and in all control but he said and we mourn sore like doves in public we give this great impression that we're in control but in private we are inwardly afraid. Every man in the chambers of his own heart going home to his own house at night is wringing his hands and wondering what the future is really going to hold because outside of all this false bravado there really is no inward confidence in the heart.

Fear really has gripped the heart because the only source of true strength and confidence comes from the enabling power of the Holy Ghost through Jesus Christ there is no other source. We look for salvation in verse 11 but it is far off from us. In other words we look for inner peace we look for an assured future but it cannot even be seen in the distant future it's so far off we can't even fathom where it's going to come from.

Even among God's people many had been drawn aside with the moral and spiritual landslide of the nation. Put a marker please in Isaiah chapter 59 and go ahead to the last book in the Old Testament Malachi chapter 3. Even God's people were drawn away with this rebellion against what is it a rebellion against? It's a rebellion against the revelation of God through Jesus Christ as God himself has chosen to reveal himself to us as a servant as one who is despised and rejected by a society that is bent on hell and intended their hearts on pushing God out of its borders. He revealed to his church that those who wanted to follow him had to take up their cross which really represents a denial of self had to seek out the will of Almighty God and as they begin to walk in that covenant relationship with Christ to yield their bodies as a living sacrifice unto him and say Lord here I am as Isaiah said send me whatever you'd have me to do wherever you'd have me to go.

Church years ago used to sing a song and it went whether in sorrow or in shame or my life I give you rain father glorify yourself in me. This is what this generation has rebelled against a generation that is so intent on the increasing of itself the bettering of itself the glorification of itself the positioning of itself in society that permeates now secular society all around us and folks it is it is perilously dangerous and many people don't even understand nor realize what we're looking at in the immediate future what we're seeing the butchery we're seeing in our children now are beginning to arise it's not in all of our children thank God but the the terrifying things we're beginning to see arise in our children is just symptomatic of what this society has become and what it's all about. Folks there are people now in the court systems that are fighting for the right to die with dignity.

There are people being euthanized who still have an opportunity to receive Christ as the Lord and Savior to be filled with the Holy Ghost and in spite of their concept that they don't have quality of life because they may be in a wheelchair for the rest of their days God can use them powerfully for his honor and for his glory but there are people there now fighting for the right to die as they call it with dignity when one feels that his life or her life no more is bears any sense of a sensible achievement I suppose in the goals and objectives of the world today as we know it.

I read a story recently of a young person who was euthanized because he was depressed chronically depressed and felt the future held no hope for him so he subsequently put to death at his own request.

Now what a tragedy now this this is a voluntary thing they're pushing for this in the courts but folks I want to tell you something it is it is symptomatic of a self-seeking people and there's going to be a sudden twist in this a sudden turn especially when the economy begins to go sour it will become your right to die with dignity when you're in a wheelchair or have some kind of a physical infirmity or a fatal disease condition or something like that or perhaps a mental illness but it will shift suddenly from the right to die to the

responsibility to die for the betterment of that society and folks if you think I'm off the wall just hang around a few years and you're going to see that what I'm saying to you today is about to happen in this nation it will become the responsibility of

people with certain diseases and conditions to happen to be put to death or to die as they call it with dignity for the betterment of the whole so that others who are healthy can go on see that's the end result of selfishness it's the pursuit of self the elevation of self the preservation of self at the expense of everybody else around you it is the Antichrist spirit it is completely opposite to the heart of God God showed us that he would expend himself and give of himself and pour out of himself for others for our benefit that is the heart of Christ what we see being manifested in our midst now is the heart of the devil himself saying everything everybody can everybody can perish as long as I am safe and I am secure Malachi talks about the roots of this how did it even get into God's

house it's not as tragic as this in God's house but we are supposed to be light and salt in our generation we're supposed to be a people who are presenting the heart of Christ to this perishing world but yet self-seeking has gotten into God's house to such a degree that doctrines of self in the house of God so mirror the philosophy of this society that there's virtually no distinction other than the church building itself folks listen to me carefully Malachi chapter 3 beginning at verse 13 the Lord says your words have been stout against me saith the Lord and yet you say what have we spoken so much against thee in verse 14 he said you have said it is vain to serve God what prophet is it that we have kept his ordinance and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts now listen

to me the word vain the original text is shall it means empty and disappointing the word serve is avad it means to work as a slave or a bond slave the word ordinance is mishmareth which means a watchman a guard a watch post a sentry or a person in a place or position of duty the word mournfully I can't even pronounce it so I won't even try but it means those who were in sack cloth and mourning and it has a twofold application those who were repenting of their sin and wanting to walk right before God and those who were beginning to share the heart of God for a fallen generation all around them and God says to these people you have said it is vain it is empty it is disappointing there's no personal prophet what he says God and they say what prophet is it that we have done this it is empty

and disappointing to work as a bond slave for the Lord to stand as a watchman a guard a watch post a sentry to be on duty in the things of God to go about repenting of our sin and to share the heart of God for our generation this got into the hearts of some of many of God's people they said it is of no personal prophet to walk this path denotes the fact that God's own people saw no personal profit or gain and drawing close to God and becoming partakers of his heart and his work in and among the people their focus was only temporal by that I mean their focus was on themselves their focus was on the here and now their focus was on self and its betterment and all forms of self and therefore the only recourse left it was to develop their own moral code and back it up with their own redefined

theology and here's what they came up with and now he says in verse 15 this is an incredible scripture and now he says we call the proud happy yea they that work wickedness are set up yea they that tempt God are even delivered now that's incredible if I was to stand here and preach a message it sounds like many of the messages that are preached today in some of the charismatic movement happy set up and delivered it sounds almost spiritual doesn't it but Malachi says we call the proud happy those who have exalted their thoughts about the thoughts of God those who have charted their own course those who are walking their own path those are spitting in the face of Jesus and says no I'll do it this way I will walk this

way and I will have my will I will have my betterment I will have my own

personal fulfillment and I will also have the kingdom of God thank you very much now he says we call them happy and they that work wickedness are set up I think of the covetous for example where Paul the Apostle said clearly it's idolatry and no idolater shall inherit the kingdom of God I think of the thousands upon thousands in the American church in the last 20 years that have fallen prey to doctrines of absolute greed and covetousness fallen under the voices of false teachers that teach the people that godliness is a means to acquire financial gain and we call them now set up and they the temp God are even delivered now it's interesting when you look at this in the original text the word temp is back on which means continually searching out or testing the integrity of something in this

case it's God continually questioning the integrity of God and he says we call them delivered the word is malach and this is what it means escaped freed or saved that's incredible we call them the temp God delivered in other words we call those now today who continually question the integrity of Almighty God we call them saved now that's an incredible indictment and Malachi calls this whole thing into question but then something begins to happen and God begins to open up something of the word that hell itself doesn't want you to hear hell would fight with all of its fury that that I can't hear that you can't hear the church can't hear it but it slips in this one verse in verse 16 in the midst of all the upheaval and confusion Malachi records something which begins to happen a people begin

to come together then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another and the Lord hearkened and heard it and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name I'd like to just read it to you from the Living Bible if I may then those who feared and loved the Lord spoke often of him to each other and he had a book of remembrance drawn up in which he recorded the names of those who feared him and loved to think about him they began to get together there were a people that began to assemble I don't know where they were I don't even know who they were but I know what they were they were people who were in love with Jesus Christ notice it doesn't say they began to speak about the church or they began to speak about theological

doctors they began to speak about him something began to happen a stirring began to happen in the hearts of a people and they began to come together whether it be in homes whether it be in church services no matter what environment there was a gathering together of people who said I've had enough of this I've had enough of this false theology I've had enough of this this nation the the philosophies that govern it I've had enough of these things coming into the house of God and even more important I've had enough of it in my own life I know this is ruined I know there's no security in this I know there's no life in it I know there's nothing about eternity I am coming back to the source of life as I have been shown as I have been taught by Almighty God I am coming back to this place and in

their heart they began to hunger for God I tell you when you begin to hunger for Christ he'll begin to lead you and all of a sudden one becomes two becomes three becomes four becomes five and before you know it something begins to happen fellowship true fellowship as ordained by God begins to come to the surface hallelujah men and women begin to get together they start crying out to God again they start crying out about the state of the nation they start pleading for the father they start pleading for the widows they turn away from all self-gratification and say Jesus you gave me your life God we give our lives to you it is reasonable and the glory the glory it may not be a fancy building you may not have fancy preachers in your midst but the glory of God begins to come into your

fellowship the glory is the revelation of Jesus Christ it's his heart being revealed it's the heart of God it's the path of God it's the power of God it's the place that you and I are in Christ Jesus at the right hand of God begins to be revealed the mercy of God begins to come into the heart and like Isaiah a little group of people somewhere begin to cry out Lord God use me use my life for your glory use my life whatever I have is yours God take it if you want it it's yours use my sons use my daughters use them for your glory let your kingdom come let your will be done in me as it is in heaven hallelujah a people who began to come together who loved him who loved him and I believe with all my heart this is happening now in the Western world in spite of all the chaotic confusion in spite

of all the charismatic foolishness there's a people now who are coming together and they're saying they're not coming together they're not forming their fellowships around criticizing the existing church you will never grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ if the basis of what you're doing is built on criticizing somebody else where you will grow is if your foundation is not on criticizing somebody else but say I want to be like Jesus I want his power I want his grace I want his glory to come into my life and I want my life to be used of him for his honor in my generation hallelujah and they shall be mine Malachi chapter 3 verse 17 now this speaks from the Lord's perspective God says they're coming together they're speaking about Christ and they shall be mine said the Lord of hosts in

the day when I make up my jewels and I will spare them as a man spares his own son that serves him now that's an incredible translation this word jewels because in the original text it has a connotation of that which a man is able to fashion with his own hands that's really what it should say the translator used the word jewel which really is appropriate but really what it means is that which a man is able to fashion with his own hands and God says they're crying out to me and therefore they're mine I'm going to respond to their cry I'm going to respond to their hunger and I'm going to do something with them I'm going to set my hand in the midst of them I'm going to set my word in the center of their hearts and I'm going to mold them I'm going to put them on a wheel and I'm going to start

fastening them and they shall be mine and I will spare them hallelujah as a man spares his own son he said that serves him they shall be mine because they're going to place their lives in the center of my hand they're not gonna run from my word they're not gonna run when I talked about the yielding of one's life they're not gonna run from the sharing of my heart but they're gonna run to me and I'm going to begin to fashion them and he says and they are going to be mine and it gets even better he says in verse 18 he says and then shall you return and discern between the righteous and the wicked between him that serves God and him that serves him not Malachi said I'm gonna God said through Malachi I'm going to bring them back and and I'm going to give them discernment it's not they're not

good I've met people over the years that come into a meeting and they think they have discernment they're like I saved Sherlock Holmes I don't if you ever met some people like that they come in and their eyes are like two spiraling saucers and they're looking around for devils and flaws and everybody all throughout the room and that's not what he's talking about he's saying you will love me so much you'll be so in love with me you're not you don't have to walk around looking for what's not of me you'll know it right away you walk right into it you're just gonna know because you love me with all your heart your soul your mind and your strength you will know how you don't have to speak a word you don't have to point the finger and talk about devils in people's hearts you just simply will

know hallelujah now you may ask me where will they return to these people who says then you shall return and how will they get there I go back to Isaiah chapter 59 again verse 19 Isaiah says so shall they

fear the name of the Lord from the West and his glory from the rising of the Sun when the enemy shall come in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him now that can also be translated shall put him to flight but I think it's an appropriate translation shall lift up a standard and let me tell you why as the children of Israel traveled through the wilderness to the promised land when it when it came time to make camp each tribe would reassemble together by name now if you know God's design in the Old Testament as the children traveled there would be the

tabernacle would be right dead center in the camp which really represented the fact that everything we do all that we are must center around the presence of Almighty God then next to that would be Aaron his sons the Levitical priesthood and the closest I suppose to that particular place then outside of that would be all of the particular tribes the twelve tribes eleven actually by that would be mentioned by name and during the course of travel when the when the Lord would decree and the people would move everybody would pull up stakes and away they would go they'd be heading on the journey and as they would travel it is conceivable that obviously people would become intermingled with one another some from the tribe of Issachar would head over and visit some from another another particular

tribe another family and there'd be fellowship there'd be an intermingling and then all of a sudden the Lord would speak to the leadership and the camp would begin would stop they would begin to set up camp and how do you find your way back then you're talking we're talking now at this time six hundred thousand soldiers that were numbered among them so that's only the men and those are only the fighting men over I believe the age of 20 or 21 years old and so now we're talking women and children were conceivably as many as or more at least as many as two to three million people were involved in this particular movement so we'd say now I've got to find my way back to the place that I'm supposed to be now how do I get back there now it's an incredible thing because there would be a man in

every tribe and he would be called a standard bearer and when the camp would stop he would raise up a high wooden pole a very very high wooden pole oft times would seek the highest part of ground that he could find and on that pole would be an insignia or an identifying mark of each man or woman's tribe and every person would have to make his way towards it now David said in Psalm 121 I will lift up mine eyes under the hills from whence cometh my help my help comes from the Lord which made heaven and earth he will not suffer thy foot to be moved and he that keepeth thee will not slumber Jesus said it even better in John chapter 12 verses 31 and 32 he said now is the judgment of this world now shall the prince of this world be cast out and I if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all

men unto me now folks it required the lifting up of one's head and the determination to leave one place where perhaps they had wandered to and get back to that where they originally were supposed to be and during our travel during this journey through this life from time to time we find ourselves having wandered away from the place where we're called to be and it requires a stopping it requires a lifting up of one's head a calling out again looking around where is the place where I'm supposed to be I know where I'm supposed to be I have a standard bearer over my life he is the Lion of the tribe of Judah he calls to me daily he calls my name he calls with his voice and when I have wandered in a way that I shouldn't go he gives me revelation and shows me through him and him alone how to get

back to where I've walked away from now to walk towards the standard required obedience in Acts chapter 5 verses 29 Peter said Peter and the other apostles answered and said we ought to obey God rather than men the God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you slew and hanged on a tree him has God exalted with his right hand to be a prince and a Savior and to give repentance to Israel and the

forgiveness of sins in verse 32 he said and we are his witnesses of these things and so is also the Holy Ghost whom God has given to them that obey him to walk back to the standard is to walk towards it with humility an acknowledgement in the heart to say Lord I have I've wandered away but your thoughts are higher than my thoughts in your ways are higher than my ways I acknowledge you as my God we

begin to lift up our heads and we begin to head back it requires humility cannot find it without humility cannot find your place in Christ before becoming humbled before him to walk back towards the standard required surrender surrender to the purposes and direction of God as they journey to the place that he had promised them so God is a God of order and it's conceivable that some people could have said well I this is just as good as over there why can't I stay over here but no God has placed us in the body as he sees fit he has a purpose and a pattern and a plan and everything that he does and requires a surrender to him to say Lord God I come and I yield my life to you you know the direction of my life you've already charted my course you know the journey that I have to undertake you

have given me the power and the promise to get there and Lord so I make the choice to yield my life and surrender to you any child of God makes his way back to that place of truth and hell will scream some of you will be hearing this word today and there's something of hell in the flesh inside of you screaming no no no and you wonder why it's why is it such a battle just to yield why is it such a battle just to come back to the to Jesus Christ to the standard that God has established for our generation the place where every Christian is supposed to be what is it that hell doesn't want us to know about this why does the devil fight so hard why does he come and lie and say you can't get back it's useless to get back you've got you wandered too far and God's upset with you he give you he

put a call on your life and look what you've done you wanted so far away from the place where you were called to be there's no hope of getting back so just settle in where you are and follow along with the crowd you'll fight so hard because there's something in this that he doesn't want you to know even your own flesh fights against this because it doesn't want you to understand and you find that truth in Isaiah chapter 59 and verse 20 he says in the Redeemer shall come to Zion and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob saith the Lord now the best way I can explain this to you is found in the book of Luke chapter 15 there's no better way that I can show you what it means the Redeemer shall come to Zion and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob you know Luke chapter 15 is

the story about a son who had a call upon his life but in his heart he didn't understand his father's kingdom he didn't love his father as he should and therefore that that lack of love and obedience caused him to rebel against the love and authority of his father demanded his inheritance and took it and spent it on foolish living in verse 17 talks about a time that he came to himself he was in another place the standard was somewhere else and he came to himself and said how many hard servants of my father's have bread enough to spare and I perished with hunger he said I'm in the wrong place I remember the kindness I remember the goodness of my father how good he was to me

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