

# When the Serpent Bites Your Hand, Victory Is at the Door

by Carter Conlon

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*When Satan attacks our hand, it's a sign that victory is at the door, and we must stay committed to God's will to overcome.*

**Duration:** 42:36

**Scripture:** Exodus 4:2-4, Isaiah 58:4, Matthew 6:33, Mark 16:17, Acts 28:1, Acts 28:3

**Topics:** "Victory"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the journey of Paul and how he faced challenges and storms. Despite being misunderstood and seen as a murderer, Paul continued to serve and help others. He provided food, guidance, and encouragement to those on the ship, even when his own hands were chained. The speaker emphasizes the importance of selflessness and serving others, using Paul as an example of someone who continued to minister and work for the well-being of those around him, even in unfamiliar and difficult circumstances.

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## Transcript

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Acts chapter 28 please. When the serpent bites your hand, victory is at the door. Father, God Almighty, I have your word.

You've spoken to my heart. Now I bring it back to you, Lord, and I ask you to multiply the little that I understand. And God, take me far beyond any natural borders that I have.

Make me what I am not. Give me wisdom I don't possess. Lord, this is all about you.

This is your word. It's a living word. I only want to stand as an oracle of God, and I pray for the grace to disappear, that you may appear, that Jesus Christ, you may be lifted up, honored, glorified, understood, and that you might be appropriated in victory.

Father, thank you for this. Thank you, God. Speak to our hearts today.

I pray with all my heart that a lot of snakes should be shaken off over the fire today. Father, I thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.

Acts 28, beginning at verse 1. When the serpent bites your hand, victory is at the door. Now when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita. And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness, for they kindled a fire and received us, every one, because of the present rain and because of the cold.

And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat and fastened on his hand. We're going to stop there just for a moment. Now I have personally little doubt that this is an attack against the Apostle Paul that's instigated by Satan himself.

It's strategically time to take away something that God himself was forming in this man called Paul. Now Paul, as many of us are here today, was on a journey from which he could not be turned. You remember earlier on in the book of Acts, well-meaning Christian people, even with tears, tried to stop him from the journey that was before him.

Paul had set his face as it is in Acts chapter 21, verses 13 and 14. Let me just read it to you. He said, What do you mean to weep and break my heart? I'm ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.

And verse 14 says, And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done. He could not be stopped in this journey that God had him on. He could not be threatened away from it.

The number of times that violence was his portion, and he would speak to crowds, and not only the crowds, but government officials and temple officials and others would become angry. They would threaten him, but he could not be turned from it, because Paul had an inner knowledge that a divine purpose was going to be fulfilled through him if he followed Christ's leading to the conclusion of the pathway that God had set before him. Now, if you're a genuine Christian here this morning, you also have that feeling in your heart.

And I know there are people here today that tears, people have tried to stop you with tears. I know this. I experienced it personally.

I was shocked when, as a young Christian, I decided to give my all as it is and follow Christ. The number of Christian people that tried to stop me, I found that rather disturbing at the time. I didn't understand it as much as I might today.

And in threats, those that are outside, hopefully, of the kingdom of God, and who threaten those that are going on with God, because there is something that Satan himself knows that will happen through the life of a man or woman, any person, really, who is surrendered to the complete will of God, and who is not scared by their own Jerusalem. Now, Paul set his face to Jerusalem, and elsewhere in the Scriptures he

said, I don't know the fullness of it, but I know that the spirit witnesses that bonds and afflictions abide me there. Paul is saying, I know this is not going to be an easy journey, but there is something of God that is going to be fulfilled through my life, if I will not turn back from this journey that the Lord has set before me.

Now, you better believe today that Satan is afraid of this kind of a man or this kind of a woman. Satan is terrified of you. You might just be a single mother here today, and I don't mean that derogatorily, I don't mean the word just, as if you are nothing in the kingdom of God.

No, you might, in a sense, not have a position of power and influence and authority in society or in the church, for that matter. But if you have in your heart to go exactly the full distance that God has prescribed for your life, you'd better believe that you are something in the eyes of darkness, because they're looking at you, first of all, in the eyes of God, but secondly, darkness knows what God is able to do through a fully surrendered vessel. The kingdom of hell has suffered more violence throughout the years from the simple people who just rose up and said, God, use me, take me, take me right through and help me to endure the scorn and all of the threats that will come against your will being done in my life.

And Paul had this inner knowledge. And because of this, he could write later on to Timothy from prison. And second, Timothy four, seven and say, I have fought a good fight.

I have finished my course and I have kept the faith. And folks, I'm 53 now. And if I have any desire in my life, it's when I get to the end of my course, wherever that is, that I can look back and perhaps even write back and write these same words.

I not writing. I have regrets. I wish I had.

No, I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I know in my heart that I walked the path that God had prescribed through for my life, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

And I have kept the faith. I've not turned to men's devices. I've not tried to reason this thing in my own reasoning.

I've trusted the keeping power of God on this pathway he has set before me. We ask ourselves the question, what was it that Satan was after in Paul? And why did he attempt to infuse poison into his hand? I really do believe this is Satan himself. Now, folks, reason it for a moment.

The only one that's a threat to the kingdom of darkness here in this whole scene before us is Paul. There's barbarians, they're no threat. The soldiers on the ship are no threat.

The other slaves are no threat. Paul's the only one that had the word in the storm. He's the only one that had brought these people actually out of the storm and onto this island.

He's the only one on a journey as it is to his own Jerusalem. He's following the footsteps of his master and the devil himself knows. And I find it interesting in this text where it says the viper came out of the heat.

Now, literally, I don't understand this other than if it was a real snake, it was in a pretty hot place. Or it was something just supernaturally put there by Satan himself. Because it came out of the fire.

It came out of this place of heat as Paul was just putting the sticks on the fire and it fastened itself onto his hand. Now, why the hand? Now, remember in Genesis chapter 3, Satan is described as a serpent in the Garden of Eden. He came down into the Garden of Eden as a serpent and he infused the poison of his

own nature into man.

And man received that day as it is into himself a fallen nature. He received the poison as it is of Satan's logic, became intertwined with him. And he became a fallen creation.

In the very next chapter, we see one of the sons of Adam raising his hand in violence against his own brother. You remember the story. How Cain looks over, how quickly now the poison is in Adam and how quickly it's transmitted.

There's a DNA now as it is of this kind of poison. And we see him raising his hand in violence against his own brother. It could easily be said that the poison of the heart and the hand are one.

Now, consider Paul just for a moment. What were the events that had led up to this incident? In Acts chapter 27 and verses 10 and 11. Now, Paul was on a voyage.

He's in the will of God. Now, he's the only one really on this voyage that knows where he's going. And he says to them, I perceive this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only to the leading and the ship, but also our lives.

And nevertheless, the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken about by Paul. Now, Paul, his word had initially been discounted, just like many here today. You really know where you're going.

You know why you're here. As a Christian, you know what life is all about. You know what Christ has done for you.

You know the end result, actually, of this journey. And you know the peril of those who are not listening to the voice of God. And you're trying to speak and nobody is listening.

Trying to tell your own family. But just like Lot, his family looked at him and laughed and thought it was all just a big joke. You go into the marketplace and people just literally wave their hands at you.

And write you off as if you have no understanding of the future. And Paul himself had been brought into a terrible storm by the spiritual ignorance of those who had charge over him. People who are not listening to the word of God were responsible for the storm that had come into his life.

And how many even sitting here today, you are the product, even of Christianity, that is spiritually ignorant. And many storms came into your life because you didn't fully realize the keeping power of God. You didn't understand the New Testament covenant.

You were led into ways of the flesh because of the ignorance of those who were in charge of your life on this journey. And this is exactly what had happened to Paul. A terrible storm had come to him.

Now in verses 21 to 44, it's Paul who brings them the word of God. He brings them cheer. He brings them food.

And he told them all how to get safely to land. Now I want you to see for a moment the hands of Paul. Now the hands of men on the deck of the ship, perhaps the hands of the other slaves in the belly of the ship where Paul had been are still chained.

And they're begging for mercy. They know this whole thing is going down, but they don't know how to get out. And that's exactly the way it is with people who are without God.

Quite often they try to raise their hands, but they can't get the chains off. And they're chained to this whole system that is sinking all around them, and they don't know how to get free. Up on top, I see the hands of soldiers and sailors throwing the tackling of the ship overboard.

Fearful hands, not quite knowing what to do, and impulsively beginning to move to the left and to the right. And others are perhaps facing the deck of the ship, and they're wringing their hands. And others perhaps are trying to find somebody to blame.

Maybe looking at the person who should have read the signs of the sky as they saw it a little better than they did. And you can see all this display of how unbelief is manifesting itself among the people on the deck of that ship. But now Paul emerges, and the Scripture says, after long abstinence.

They didn't want to hear him. He was brought into the storm, but now when everything is falling apart, this man of God appears. And he stands, and he says, you should have listened, but you didn't listen.

Well, anyways, be of good cheer. I've been with God. I'm on a journey.

And God's given me everyone who will stay on the ship and travel with me. God's given me your lives. You're not going to perish if you will just listen.

I love the fact that Paul, by God, was brought from being a captive to a captain. When you look at the end of this ship, Paul is giving all the orders. Take on food.

Do this. You over there, you do this. He's giving all the orders.

Everything now has been relegated to this man who was sloshing around as it is for a long time in the bottom of this ship, seeking God, while everyone's trying to work this out in their own strength. But now, see the hands of Paul. Because this is about the hand.

And I'm speaking today about why Satan felt it necessary to try to bite the hand of Paul. I see Paul's hands praying, first down in the belly of the ship. Not giving in to the ringing.

Not giving in to the despair. If I can challenge you to do anything in this hour, do not give in to the spiritual climate or the secular climate that is all around us today. Do not wring your hands.

You don't have to figure it out because the God you serve is in control of absolutely everything. I see Paul praying, God, show me your will for my life. Where is it that I'm going? The ship seems to be going down, but Paul's got an inner sense.

I'm not going down with this ship. Yes, men who chart their own course without you are going to perish. But I'm not destined to perish.

I have an inner sense that you are going to be glorified through my life. So, God, show me the plan. And the Lord stands with him and shows him the plan.

You must be brought before kings, Paul. You are going to suffer, but there are going to be great things done through your life. I see Paul rising up onto the deck of the ship and his hands are encouraging

people.

When everyone else is running around fearful and afraid, Paul, you can see him putting his hand on the shoulder of maybe the assistant captain or something. He said, be of good cheer. I've heard from God.

Everything's going to be okay. He walks around. He finds where the food is and says to everybody, here, now, here, you eat some meat.

Here, you take on a little bit of wheat. You folks have been without food for a long time. You're going to need your strength because you've got a fair swim ahead of you and you're going to need strength.

And I see the hands of Paul bringing provision and providing. I see Paul's hands pointing. Look, look, there's what God showed me.

You see the channel over there. We're not too far from shore. Very soon, very soon, everybody, we're going to be exactly where God said we're going to be.

He starts to point to the ship. Everybody, now, if you can swim, swim. If you can't, grab a piece of the wood.

It's a type of the cross, folks. There's lots to go around. Grab some of the wood.

You're going to make it to the destiny that God is taking us to. Hallelujah. And I see now on the shore where we begin in Acts chapter 28.

It's a cold time. It's raining. They're in an unfamiliar place.

And Paul is still ministering. Paul is working. And Paul is working for the comfort and the well-being of those around him.

Others may have been terrified. Others may be half frozen. But I see Paul, who's a type of the true church of Jesus Christ.

He's out there. He's gathering sticks because it's all about other people. It's all about God extending his hand to foolish and ignorant society that is perishing all around because they've cast off the knowledge of God.

And Paul comes to the fire with his sticks. I can envision it. Follow me with this.

And he's about to put his sticks on the fire when out of the heat, it says, a viper comes and fastens itself on his hand. That's very symbolic. Now, Paul is most likely aware of what some of the people are thinking because there's an interlude between verse 4 and verse 5. And it says, Now, can you see Paul just for a moment? He's been doing all of this for so many people.

Review it with me. He's been praying for people that they don't perish. He's been encouraging people to give them hope in the storm.

He's been providing for those that have no provision. He's been pointing the way to safety. And now he's working with his hands to give provision and warmth and comfort and assurance to those who are standing around obviously confused, very cold and most likely very terrified.

And out of the heat, a serpent attaches onto his hand. I see Paul looking up and he looks into the eyes of the people around him and he begins to see something in the eyes of the people. They're looking at him and say, this man is a murderer.

It's amazing how quick people can come to wrong conclusions. I don't think it's just the barbarians. I think the people on the ship are looking and say, well, yeah, we spared this guy, but obviously there's issues in his life.

And the Lord or whoever they think God is, is going to look after him. And David knew this battle. It's when you're reaching out.

It's when you're doing everything you know to do for the betterment of others. And all of a sudden, out of the heat of a situation, the heat of an argument, something, maybe a moment of temper, all of a sudden the serpent comes. And those very hands that have been an extension of God, he grabs onto that hand and attempts to infuse the poison of his nature into the hand of the man or woman.

Now, this is not something that necessarily happens to a young Christian. Young Christians can generally just blow it off. It's the older Christian.

It's the person who's walking with God. It's the person who's given to the things of God. It's the person who's yielded in a sense and say, Lord, I'm willing to be spilled and spent that others may come to know you as Lord and Savior.

This is one of the final traps of Satan to stop that kind of a man or woman. Come and bite their hand and infuse this poison. Now, I want to read to you a psalm of David.

Now, there's a lot of controversy over this psalm. Some call it ungracious. Some call it theologically wrong.

I call it what David was going through. David was going through a certain thing in his heart. Every person who will ever be used to bring God's presence to fallen humanity.

David was used to bring the ark of God back into Jerusalem. We'll have to go through this. David cries out in Psalm 140.

Let me read it to you. Verses 1 to 3. Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man. Preserve me from the violent man, which imagine mischiefs in their heart.

Continually are they gathered together for war. They've sharpened their tongues like a serpent. And Adder's poison is under their lips.

And then verse 10. David cries out. He says, Oh, let burning coals fall upon them.

Now let them be cast into the fire. Into deep pits that they rise not up again. Now, David is writing down the thoughts of his heart.

It doesn't necessarily mean it's right. But that's what he's going through at this time. And this is where the commentators say, Well, how could this reflect Christ? David is actually praying a prayer that these people be burned.

The people whose tongues are like the tongues of a serpent. Who have obviously at this point in his life gotten through to something in his heart. And he's at a crossroads.

And I do believe every person who wants to live for God will have to get to this crossroads. And David says, Let them burn. Let them be cast into the fire.

Put them in a deep pit. Don't let them rise up again. Now, you see, folks, it's always Satan's desire.

To either have man withdraw his hand from being extended on God's behalf. Or to distort the image of God's hand as he's revealed through the hand of man. This is the last tactic he's got to get some of you who are gathered here today.

You are determined to walk with God. You've counted the cost. You've gotten through the valley of tears as it is of others trying to stop you.

You've passed through the gauntlet of threats. And you're moving on now. But now you're going to come to one of the biggest traps that Satan has ever led or laid for a man or woman of God.

It's that your hand is now bitten. In a sense, by the very people around you that God has sent you to help. And now what the enemy says is withdraw your hand.

Pull it back. You don't have to do this. You don't have to go to Jerusalem.

What is the point of giving your... You can see Paul just for a moment. Now this is a moment. This is only a camera flash.

But Paul looks up. And the very people he's trying to help in their hearts think he's a murderer. Think he's under the justice of God.

Because his hand has been bitten by a viper as he's doing the work of God. Or to distort the image of God's hand. Isaiah 58.

The prophet Isaiah talks about this. He said to the people of Israel who now had a distorted image of the hand of God. Because they were internalized.

It was now all about themselves. You remember Isaiah 58 was about God's own people hiding from the poor. They were not giving clothing to the naked.

They had ceased to do really the work of God. There was no compassion for fallen men in them anymore. And everything now was in the house.

It was all about meeting. It was about seeking God. It was about Bible study.

But none of this was producing this life of God where he stretches out his hand to the needs of fallen men. And now what kind of hands were in that church in Isaiah's day? In Isaiah 58. He said in verse 4. He said you fast to smite and debate with the fist of wickedness.

And so the hand of God had become a fist in the house of God. Contention seemed to be everywhere. People are studying scripture but not for the point of reaching out and fulfilling the call of God on their lives.

Just to be proven right over somebody next to them. It had become just a house of doctrinal argument. And hardly anybody is walking in the truth anymore.

It's not brought them to this place where they're an extension of the hand of God to fallen men. Which has always been the work of God. It is the work of Calvary.

There is no other work of God. But that my hand be extended. God's hand as it is through my hands be extended to a fallen world.

Oh God help us. That's why the hands of Christ were the first no doubt to be nailed to the cross. That the weakness in my hands might be changed into the strength of his hands.

When he rose from the grave he gave me the power to reach out my hands again in the strength of who he is. To a whole world that doesn't even want him. But still he stretches out his hand even to the evil as well as the good.

Isaiah 58, 9. He says if you'll take away from you the yoke and the putting forth of the finger. The hand was not only a fist in this church time but it was a finger pointing hand. Pointing to blame.

Not pointing direction but pointing to blame one another. Oh this is all your fault. No it's your fault.

No this wouldn't have happened if you wouldn't have done this. There was no humility in these people anymore. There was nobody there hardly who would just say well in spite of who's right or wrong.

I'm asking your forgiveness. I don't want contention. We've got a higher call than to point fingers at one another.

We're called to reach out into the sea of the ocean as it is a fallen humanity around us. So I'm willing to put my pointing finger away. If you're willing to put, whether or not you put yours away I'm putting mine away.

I'm going on with God. I've got a place that God has appointed me to. 2 Timothy 4.10 talks about what also can happen to the hand of man.

Paul says Demas has forsaken me having loved this present world. Oh yes it is Satan's desire that you just wave goodbye to the work of God. Goodbye Paul.

Goodbye Jesus. I've had enough of this. I've had enough of giving my life for people that don't even seem to appreciate the sacrifice.

It's a shame because Demas walked all the way to Paul's imprisonment as it is. And then waves his hand goodbye. Oh how the devil must have loved that gesture of the hand.

I've had enough of this. Think of what Demas could have been. He was right near the finish line.

God could have done something miraculous through his life. But this man chooses instead of reaching out to fallen humanity he waves goodbye to the plan of God. He waves goodbye to the Roman soldiers.

He waves goodbye. And as that psalm says let burning coals fall on the whole lot of them. Let them be cast into the fire that they're not able to rise up again.

The Bible also speaks in Proverbs 19.24 of selfishness. When the hand becomes selfish. It says the slothful man hides his hand in his bosom.

It grieves him to even have to take his hand out and meet his own need. He's so focused on himself. Oh how the devil loves it when the hand of the church of Jesus Christ becomes self-focused and selfish.

Oh how that hand has been so bitten and so infused. You see Satan was after the healing that was about to flow through Paul's hand. Acts 28 verses 8 and 9. It talks about the father of one of them lay sick of a fever.

Paul entered in and prayed. And now this is the same hand that had been bitten. One of the hands actually that had been bitten by the serpent.

And it said he laid his hands on him and healed him. And when this was done others also which had diseases on the island came and were healed. Satan was after this folks.

You see when he bites your hand he's after the healing that God wants to flow through it. I believe with all my heart. Many people are praying now for others and nothing happens because their hands are full of venom.

Something is wrong in the hands. There's something that has been embraced in the enemy towards men in their hearts. And there's no healing that flows anymore through their hands.

The enemy was after the hospitality. Well first of all in verse 15. Paul tells us as he continues his journey of thanking God.

The enemy is after these uplifted hands of prayer and trust in almighty God. And then again at the end of the chapter. Verse 30 it says and Paul dwelt two whole years in his own well as a prison house really.

And received all that came to him. You see the hand of Paul being stretched out and shaking the hand of ruler, leader. Whether or not it was a man or woman who was causing him pain.

Whether it was a Roman ruler that was living in spiritual ignorance. I see the hand of Paul stretched out. The same one that the viper had bitten.

Perhaps stretched out shaking the hand. Welcoming hospitable to everybody who would come in. Sharing with them the wondrousness of this kingdom of God.

The incredible vision of God's keeping power which would flow through the pen in his hand. The enemy was after this folks. You see that was the hand that God was about to put a pen in.

And in prison that pen was going to be placed in his hand. And in prison he was going to write to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians. He was going to write to Timothy.

A young man who was being trained in the ministry. And with this hand not only was going to flow revelation. Could you imagine if the poison of Satan had been in the hand of Paul still.

You imagine what our epistles would look like. Could you just imagine. Thank God this man didn't go that way.

What a terrible tragic legacy. See God, if God's going to put a pen in your hand. If your life is going to mean something after you're gone.

If you're going to leave a legacy. The enemy is going to come after it. He's going to try to put poison in that hand.

And the tender encouragement that would be in the hand of Paul. To call others like Timothy to follow him. Amazing.

You can see Paul in his writing saying, Timothy you don't have to be afraid. I made it here. God has sustained me.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. God's not given you a spirit of fear, Timothy. But power, love and a sound mind.

Don't be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ. Or of me, his prisoner. But be thou a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God.

He's writing. His hand is clear. His heart is clean.

He's writing. Now, where did Paul get this ability? Let's go back to Acts 28. I guess you've never left there.

I have, but you haven't. We see this momentary stopping. This momentary looking.

And I honestly, at this moment, feel that the enemy is right there. He's on his hand. And he's saying, Paul, why would you want to give yourself to these people? Go back to Ephesus.

They love you there. Minister there. They all wept when you left.

Go back there. You can do a lot of good there. Why do you have to follow this course? These people don't even appreciate you.

And for all you know, the soldiers around you are planning to put you back in chains again. And here you have spared. Their lives have been spared through your life.

But they really don't care. They don't care that you love them. They don't care that you're working for them.

And I see just for a moment, Paul looking at these people and looking at this serpent that has fixed itself on his hand. But then verse five says he shook off the beast into the fire and felt no harm. I don't, you know, this is only my opinion.

I felt the Holy Spirit took me in some measure into this story. But I feel Paul looks right into the serpent's eyes and says, not them into the fire. You into the fire.

You into the fire. This is your destiny, Satan. You go right back where you belong.

You left me out of the fire, but I'm putting you right back in the fire. You are under the judgment of God. Your ways are not my ways.

The ways you think I'm not letting you put infuse your thinking into me. That's how you think. You didn't want to follow the ways of God.

You didn't want to be given to the things of God. And therefore you have infused poison into all these people. And you think you have them for all of eternity.

No, no, no. Not them into the fire. You into the fire.

I'm going with God and believe that God is going to bring a marvelous deliverance. Not the people, Satan. You go into the fire.

Now, go to the Gospel of Mark very quickly. Read it in the last chapter of Mark chapter 16. I want to share with you what the Scripture says.

These signs shall follow them that believe. Now, folks, there are times that these make sense to us and times that they don't. But I'm trusting to bring some understanding to this.

Mark chapter 16, verse 17. And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name shall they cast out devils.

They shall speak with new tongues. In other words, they have a new way of speaking. In my name, there's no demonic power that can get a hold of them, that can stand in front of them, that has authority over them.

They understand that as Moses did, they have authority over the powers of evil. Moses had a staff in his hand. And when he threw that staff down, it became a serpent.

And when he picked it up, it became a staff again. It was really symbolic of the fact that God says, No, in the hand of those who trust Me, there is authority over all the powers of darkness. I've given you that authority.

I can cast you down, Satan. I can pick you up again any time I want. Oh, folks, there's something in the hand of faith.

God, help us to understand this. Not those that are strong in themselves, but those who know their God. Those who are willing not to place the devices of man in their hand, but to trust in God and what God has spoken.

A trust that in my weakness, I have the power to stand in the nation of Burundi in the beginning of July and command the devils that have instigated the slaughter of millions in this part of the world to loose their hold of the people and let them go. I believe it with all of my heart. I'm not just showcasing.

This is not just soapboxing. I believe it inside. I believe there's authority in the hand of a surrendered believer who's walking in right relationship with God.

I believe it. Or I'd be a fool to even attempt to go into these places if I didn't believe it. These signs shall follow them that believe.

In my name, they shall cast out devils. They shall speak with new tongues. In other words, I don't speak the way the people around me who don't know God are speaking.

I have a new tongue. God has put a new tongue in my mouth because I have a new heart. They shall take up serpents.

And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them. They shall take up in their hand this power of evil. They have authority over Satan.

They have authority. Jesus said, I give you power over serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall by any means hurt you. And if the enemy has bitten you, if some deadly thing has gotten into your system, if you are a true son or daughter of God, it shall not hurt you.

You have authority over it. No matter how deep the bite. No matter how potent the venom.

No matter how intended it was to hurt you. It shall not hurt you, God says. These signs shall follow.

I will give you the power to hold it out over the fire and drop it back where it belongs. I'll give you the power to forgive. I'll give you the power to go on.

I'll give you the power to stretch out your hands, Peter, and be taken where you couldn't go. In your own strength. I will give you the power.

Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. And lastly it says, and they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. After these other things are done, I want no poison in my hands.

Hallelujah. We have the right to shake that serpent off in the fire. We have the right to say, no, these hands belong to God.

This life belongs to God. You will not stop me from being a vessel through which the love of God will be manifested in my generation. You will not take away the authority that God has placed within my life.

Hallelujah. Satan, in Jesus' name, back in the fire. Oh, hallelujah.

Praise Him with everything you've got. Give Him praise. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. I'm going to give you an altar call. But listen to what David said.

Three Psalms away from Psalm 140 that I read earlier. He said, Oh, the enemy has persecuted my soul. He's smitten my life down to the ground.

He's made me to dwell in darkness as those that have been long dead. Therefore, my spirit is overwhelmed within me and my heart within me is desolate. I remember the days of old.

I meditate on all thy works. I think about or I muse on the work of your hands. And then David says in verse 6, I stretch forth my hands to you.

My soul thirsts after thee as a thirsty land. And I do believe, you see, we read from Psalm 140, David has been bitten. And there's an anger, an obvious anger, I think, that is in his heart.

But in Psalm 143, he writes again. He's going through the series of natural emotions that we all feel. I wish I could forgive the moment the serpent bites me, but it does take a little while sometimes.

David says, My heart is overwhelmed. My spirit, my heart is desolate. I'm thinking about the old days.

He said, I'm thinking about the way it used to be. I'm remembering the way God used to flow through my life. And I'm thinking about the works of your hands, he says in verse 5, which means, God, you are kind.

I remember the times, even through history, that you could have destroyed even your own people and you didn't do it. How kind you have always been. And then he says in verse 6, I stretch forth my hands, because that's really the bottom line again, to you.

My soul thirsts for you as a thirsty land. Hear me speedily, O Lord. My spirit is failing.

Hide not your face from me, lest I be like them that go down to the pit. Cause me to hear your loving kindness in the morning, for in thee do I trust. Cause me to know the way wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee.

Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies. I flee unto thee to hide me. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God.

Thy spirit is good. Lead me into the land of uprightness. Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake, and for thy righteousness' sake, bring my soul out of trouble.

And of thy mercy, cut off my enemies, and destroy those that afflict my soul, for I am your servant. Hallelujah. That is my altar call.

It's really not mine, it's the Lord's. But the people that are here, and you say, oh, pastor, I was bitten bad. And I fight a battle of, do I really want to do this? Do I really, really want to be yielded to people that don't really like me, and I'm not even sure I like them.

And yet, I feel God calling me. Remember, Jesus said to Peter, do you love me? And Peter said, I do. And he said, well, when you're getting old, as you're getting older, you're going to stretch your hands out.

And you're going to be led to a place that you can't go. And that's the bottom line. We can't go there.

None of us can go there. We don't have the power to go here. We would all shrivel up and die, be poisoned, and it would be over.

But Paul, in his heart, knew the keeping power of God. And he knew and could pen, I don't understand all things, but I believe that all things work together for good. Because I love God, and I'm called according to his purpose.

And Paul, in his heart, I know, said I'm not letting the poison of the enemy stop me from being what God wants me to be. Praise God. I want to get to the end of this journey, folks, with tender hands.

I always know people who have walked with God honestly, truthfully, men and women, because when they get old, they have soft hands. And people who have not walked honestly, their hands are rigid, tight, quite often. There's no tenderness in the hand.

It's almost like you're shaking hands with a claw. And their personality quite often matches their hand. It's sad, but it's true.

But you mark somebody who has walked with God how tender their hands are. When they just touch you, when they put their hand on your shoulder, they write you a letter, they're not condemning, but there's a tenderness. And it's exhibited in everything, because they've found this tenderness of God that can only be ours through Jesus Christ.

I want everybody here in the annex, in the sanctuary, that you've been bitten, and maybe that serpent is still hanging on your hand. I want to suggest to you it might be time to throw it back in the fire. And the moment he did this, healing started to flow.

If you'll let it go and say, God, there's a higher thing than just being right. If you can just let this poison go, then healing will begin to flow again. That's the promise I have for you today.

In the annex, you can stand between the screens, if you will. In the main sanctuary, as we stand together, we're going to worship for a few minutes. I'm going to ask you as we stand, just make your way to this altar.

And we're going to worship God. Let it go. Just everything you've heard, just bring it to him now and let it go.

Thank you, Lord. The Bible speaks about those who know God have clean hands and a pure heart. Thank you, God, for the power today.

Pray with me. Lord Jesus, thank you for giving me the power to lay down this poison. This poison of mine enemy, Satan himself, who wants to distort the image of God that you have placed within me.

God, once again, I choose to stretch forth my hands and trust you for the power to be your extended hand of goodness and grace, encouragement and provision, instruction and direction to this generation. Help me, Jesus, never to withdraw my hand. May I never wave goodbye to your will for my life.

At the end of my days, I ask you, Lord, there be found in me a tenderness and a confidence in you that will be an encouragement to many who come after me. May I finish this race like the Apostle Paul, saying, I have run. I have finished.

I have fought. I have kept the faith. There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.

Oh, God, thank you for cleansing my hands. No, give him thanks. Just give him thanks.

Give him praise. This is the conclusion of the message.

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