

# Who Gets the Power of God?

by Carter Conlon

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*The power of God is available to those who know they are weak and need a Savior, and faith is the key to entering into the victory of Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 48:09

**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 1:27

**Topics:** "Victory In Christ", "Gods Power"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the victory we have through Jesus Christ, urging listeners to live in victory and not settle for defeat. It challenges individuals to understand that the power of God is available to those who acknowledge their weakness and need for a Savior. The message calls for humility, honesty, and a genuine desire for God's power to transform lives, homes, and communities, leading to a deep belief in God's ability to bring about change and victory in challenging times.

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## Transcript

How wonderful it is to get together and celebrate the victory that we have through Jesus Christ. We live in victory. And if you're not living in victory yet this morning, you've come to the right place.

Because I believe that the opportunity is going to be presented to you to understand something of the power of God that is hidden from those who are strong in themselves. The power of God is available to those of us who know that we're weak and we need a savior. I thank God for that with all my heart.

I do with everything in me. Special greetings to the North Jersey campus this morning and to those that are listening to us online. And I want to encourage everybody who's here today to not only come out this evening for the evangelistic service, but for Tuesday night.

Please don't forget Tuesday night. We're beginning to pray. We're praying for an awakening, for victory, for freedom, for people across this city, across this nation.

And starting in September, I think it's the 8th, we're going to be going out across the nation calling this country back to prayer and back to righteousness again. So please be in prayer for that. We believe, God, that this is a divine moment for this nation.

First Corinthians chapter two, please, if you will. First Corinthians chapter two, I want to speak to you about who gets the power of God. Who gets the power of God? Is it the learned? Is it the royal? Is it the

noble? People that know more scripture than others, who gets the power of God? Father, I thank you, Lord God, with all my heart for this day.

Oh, Jesus, son of God, be glorified and let the desire of your heart be satisfied. Come today, Lord God, and do the work that you died to do. You died and lived for a specific reason, to set the oppressed free, to heal the wounded in heart, to give sight to the blind.

God, to give hope to the hopeless, to have the treasure of heaven open to those who know they are poor. Oh, God almighty, I ask you this day for nothing less than what you died for. God, let your kingdom come.

Let it be revealed in our hearts, in our lives, in our homes. Oh, God, set us as a city set upon a hill that cannot be hidden. Give us victory, Lord, that would stagger us, would cause us to sing and clap and shout and dance, not just on Sunday, but Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday.

Oh, God, give us victory. All of us, Lord, give us victory. Come and gladden our hearts, Lord, breathe upon your inheritance and revive us, oh God, in this day in which we live.

We lift up New York City to you today, oh God, and we ask for mercy on this city this morning. We ask you, oh God, that you'd breathe in every house of worship everywhere and begin to draw people back to yourself again. You are able to do that, Lord.

Oh, God, we thank you for this word today. May it live in our hearts, cause it to burn in us, cause it to give us faith for today and tomorrow. We thank you for it in Jesus' name.

1 Corinthians chapter 2, beginning at verse 1, who gets the power of God? And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come, this is Paul writing to the Corinthian church, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God. In other words, I came to you with something of God and it was a demonstration of power, but it wasn't eclipsed or overridden by any human presentation. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Listen to me.

We are going into a very, very dark time in the history of this world. You're going to need the power of God. You're going to need strength that only God himself can give.

For Jesus himself, speaking of this day in the gospel of Matthew, spoke of a season of darkness coming into the world where one half of those who felt that they belonged to the kingdom of God couldn't see anything in it. They couldn't see hope. They couldn't see strength.

They couldn't see a future. And yet there was another group of people who had oil in their lamps and they could see Christ in everything. Behold, the bridegroom was their message.

They could see Jesus no matter how dark the day got, no matter how despairing the hour became. Their focus was not on the earth. Their focus was on things of heaven.

They had transferred their affections already to the kingdom of God and the glory of the name of Jesus and the winning of the lost had been their passion. And because of this, they had life within them. Presence of God was inside of them and they could see in the midst of the darkness.

I am fully aware of the ominous days in which we are living, yet I'm not afraid by God's grace of these days. For my value system is not Wall Street. My value system is the people who live on the street.

And because of that, the cry of my heart is, Lord, whatever it takes that they may find you as Lord and Savior, then so be it. If we have to go through the valley of the shadow of death, if we have to walk through the fire and through water, so be it. I believe that it's all worth it.

For there is no measure of worth that you can put on the value of a soul in the sight of God. And whatever it takes to reach a backslidden people, whatever it takes to reach a nation that is murdering its own children for its convenience, redefining family and marriage, calling evil good and good evil, whatever it takes to reach a people in that condition, then so be it. I am willing by God's grace alone to go through whatever I have to go through that many, if not all, may have an opportunity to hear Christ's message of Christ as Lord and Savior.

Paul's saying to the Corinthian church, when you looked at me, you saw clearly that I was weak. I didn't try to portray myself as something exemplary, even though he had credentials. Paul had learning.

Paul was most likely in the natural and eloquent speaker. He had attained position in the hierarchy of his day, but yet he chose rather to be weak, that the power of Christ may rest upon him. And he said, I didn't possess any of the natural qualities that would account for the strength that I had to do what I was called to do.

In reality, Paul was saying to the Corinthian Christians, I brought to you an example of the victory which God alone gives to us through Jesus Christ. Not by might, not by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord. Paul said, I determined not to know anything among you except Christ Jesus and him crucified.

In other words, I wasn't bringing anything to you. I recognized the bankruptcy of human reasoning, human effort, and human knowledge. We have, by God's grace, entered into the victory of another who died, defeated hell, put everything of darkness under his feet, took captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

And it's in him and him alone, Paul was saying that I will boast and make my statements of God's glory. Isaiah the prophet asked the question that I asked you today. The title of this message is, Who Gets the Power of God? Isaiah said to the Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? In other words, God, I see in my heart what you're about to do, and I see how you're going to do it, but who's going to believe it? For the religious systems of our day are essentially man-effort centered.

There's so much of human effort put into the sacrifice as it is, and I see something coming, a power of victory and glory, but oh God, who's going to believe it? The plan looks so frail. He said he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, speaking of Jesus Christ, and as a root out of dry ground. The plan looks so frail, and it looks so unsure.

It looks so feeble. It looks like a mild breeze is going to blow it over as if it doesn't have any roots in it, and when we see him, there's no beauty that we should desire him. There's nothing in the human spirit alone looking at the plan for the pathway of God that would be attracted to it, because God doesn't do things in the way that you and I think they should be done.

Thank God he doesn't. He's despised and rejected of man, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Men who live by their own strength and reasoning find his plan offensive. It's offensive to those who are proud of their religion. It's offensive to those who like to stand and pray and judge others who are weaker than themselves.

It's offense to think that the ground is actually level at the cross of Jesus Christ, and it's the hungry heart that gets the victory. But I thank God today I'm not offended by that. I rejoice because it's just, it's right, and it's good, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

There's not one righteous. No, not even one. Thank God, no matter where you are today, no matter what you're struggling with today, I want you to know that Jesus won the victory for you.

By faith you enter into that victory. He didn't say, the spirit of the Lord is upon me to give strength to people to open their prison doors, give strength to people to go to a meeting so that their wounded hearts can be healed, et cetera, et cetera. No, the spirit of the Lord is upon me because God sent his son to do these things for us that we might enter into that victory by faith and by faith alone.

Oh God, thank you. God, thank you. God, thank you.

That's why I have hope for our day. I don't care how backslidden the nation is, how far down we are. The cross still stands.

The victory is still sure. And by faith and faith alone, multitudes, multitudes, multitudes. I asked God today, I felt the Lord speaking to my heart on the way to church.

I'm going across the nation to call the nation back to prayer. And then next year to go out on a half hour week radio program. And I felt the Lord asked me, what would you like it to do? I said, well, you got, you give Isaiah, Isaiah a tide.

You gave him a 10th of the people for his efforts. And a 10th of America has 33 million people. That's what I'm asking for.

God, that at least a 10th of this nation turned back to you. A 10th of your people go back into the temple again and start to pray. A 10th of the people start living righteously.

A 10th of this nation. My God, a 10th, that's the starting point. Oh Jesus.

I'm not asking you to save America as a society. This great experiment in self-government and freedom may indeed have come to an end. It's not about saving a society.

It's about people. It's about saving people no matter what happens to the nation. Yet in spite, it says in verse four, surely he's borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

And we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. And the chastisement of our peace was upon him.

And by his stripes, we are healed. In spite of man's rejection of the ways of God, the cross made a way for the power of God to be revealed through us again. It's not over.

Don't listen to anybody who tells you it's over. It's not over. The only thing that's over is man attempting to be godly in his own strength.

That's over. The only thing that's over is all the silver-tongued orators that have spun a web for the people of God and brought the house of God into powerlessness. That's over.

That's all that's over. But what's beginning is the lame, the blind, the maimed, the weak, the nobodies, the nothings of this society coming back to the cross of Jesus Christ, divinely empowered by the Holy Spirit, standing up, a living, vibrant testimony of the reality of God one more time, one more time, one more time for the glory of God and for the souls of men. Paul says our faith should not rest in the wisdom of man.

That's the clever presentations of man, but in the power of God. In 1 Corinthians chapter 4 in verses 18 to 20, listen to what he says. Some of you are puffed up as though I'm not coming to you.

Now Paul was receiving opposition against his leadership. I'm absolutely sure because he seems to indicate in these books to the Corinthian church that powerful orators were rising up and they were spinning the scriptures that they had of that day to their own agendas. And they were laughing at Paul because his presentation was feeble.

He was weak. He probably at this point, by his own admission, was not a very attractive speaker. And they were puffed up.

They're saying, listen, God has sent us in to take his place and he's not coming back. There's no way. He can't compete with us.

And Paul says, some are puffed up as though I were not coming to you, but I will come if the Lord wills. And I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

It's not just in talk, Paul is saying, it's in the power of God that the word of God in surrendered vessels produces. Oh, thank God for that with all my heart. The kingdom of God is not just knowing truth, but that truth being supernaturally revealed through us.

It's wonderful to know truth. I thank God that I know truth. I thank God that you do, but it is also possible to accumulate truth without power.

You and I need to be careful of that. In 2 Corinthians 4, 2, Paul says, we have renounced the hidden things of shame. In other words, we have turned away from that which is powerless, that which has been proven to be false, that which has led us into captivity and bondage.

We have made a conscious choice to turn away from it, not walking in craftiness or handling the word of God deceitfully, not trying to twist the scriptures, not trying to make it say something it's not saying, not trying to excuse our powerlessness, not trying to cover up our bankruptcy with knowledge. No, we haven't handled the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, we are commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Paul's saying, no, we're not just out there talking about God.

We're letting God speak through us to the people. We're letting God change us from image to image and glory to glory. We're letting God set us free.

We're letting God make us into what we could never hope to be in our own strength. We're letting God heal our wounded hearts. We're letting God take us out of our powerlessness and the curse of everything that's been spoken over our lives that isn't of God.

We're letting God take us out. We are not just hearing his word. We are believing his word.

We are embracing his word. We are walking in his word. We are trusting his word.

And he is so changing us that God is being brought into the consciousness of the society around us through us. That has always been the role of the church of Jesus Christ in the world. Think of Martha for a moment.

As Jesus came to raise her brother Lazarus from the dead, she was doctrinally correct. Nobody can argue the scripture that came out of her mouth, but she was bankrupt of divine life. And it's possible to be that.

It's possible to learn, but never let that learning bring you to the knowledge of the truth. That means the freedom, the testimony, the life, the joy. This is an exciting life.

This is a supernatural life to walk with God. If you're bored, something is really, really, really wrong with your walk with God. We don't come here to meet with God, folks, on Sunday.

I know that sounds bad, but that's the reality of it. We come here to meet with each other. We're walking with God all week.

We don't come here to meet with somebody we're walking with. We come here to meet with each other and say, we're going to get together as a group and say, God, thank you for what you've been doing throughout the week. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, God, for the faith you're putting in our hearts to believe for our families and our neighborhoods and our friends. And thank you, God, that the way we used to do things, we're not anymore. We're not fully what we should be, but we're leaving behind that which should be left behind, and we're pressing on to the mark of this incredibly high calling of God through Jesus Christ.

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. Think of the church of Sardis in Revelation chapter 3. A reputation of life, Jesus said, but in reality, they were cut off from the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit. When he says you are dead, the word is necros.

It means the quickening power of God is not in you. This is a church that just learned to do it. They were church probably on Sunday.

They would come in and they knew how to sing the songs and clap their hands and get all excited, and everybody slowed down and their language changed, and they became suddenly kind. Jesus said, you have a reputation. That means that people would come into the church of Sardis and say, wow, this place is so alive.

But you see, Jesus is not just here Sunday. He goes home with you tonight. He goes into your house.

He goes into your room when you're on your laptop. He goes into your relationships. He listens to your conversation.

He's with you in the workplace on Monday. He's with you Tuesday night. He's with you Wednesday.

He's with you Thursday. He's with you Friday. He's with you Saturday.

So you can clap your hands all you want on Sunday. Jesus can say, you're part of a church that has a reputation that lives, but you are dead. You are cut off from the enlivening influence of the Holy Spirit.

For our faith is not to rest in the wisdom of men. Our faith is not to be based on exuberance and excitement as much as that is wonderful. Our faith is not based on singing.

Our faith is not based on a sensory feeling that God is in the atmosphere with us. Our faith is based on the power of God operating within us all week as we embrace the Word of God, and we believe Him. We believe for His covering.

We believe for His forgiveness. We believe for His change. We believe that in spite of the frailty of our vessels, He has covered us with His blood, and He is changing us from image to image and glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.

I don't know about you, but I'm not interested in belonging to the church of Sardis. I canceled my membership to that church a long, long, long, long time ago. The answer is before us so plainly.

The answer to who gets the power, but as always, the self-focused, the self-satisfied, the agenda-driven, and those who lean on natural wisdom and strength. Those who are in places where men and women are drawing to themselves, even for a noble purpose, they often have to settle for living outside of the power that the cross provides. Think with me just for a moment.

Back in the Old Testament, in the book of Judges chapter 20, one of the 12 tribes, Benjamin, had become so wicked. I don't have time to go into the story, but they had become so vile. Immorality had so gripped that particular tribe that the other 11 felt it was their duty to stand up against it.

Just as today, you and I look out over the nation, and we see how immoral this nation is becoming, and we feel this sense of obligation in our hearts. We've got to stand up. We've got to make a difference now.

We've got to get back to godliness, and I'm absolutely sure that was in the hearts of many of the people. And so they went into this place called Gibeah, the 11 tribes, and then they just casually went into the presence of the Lord, and they said, who should go up against it? This is going to be an easy victory. Who should go? And the Lord said, send Judah first.

And so Judah went, and Judah was defeated, cast down, slain in the field. And so they came back, and now they weren't so casual, but they came back with tears, but the tears were because of their defeat. And the Lord told them to go up again.

They went up again. This time they were one more time defeated. And so they came in a third time, and this time everybody came.

The scripture says all came. They all came into the presence of God. They all came with one accord, and into one place, and for one purpose.

And this time they came with weeping. This time they came with fasting. This time they came with worship.

This time they came wholly dependent upon God, and I know exactly what they prayed. Oh God, forgive us for offending you. If this doesn't, if you don't come, we're not going to win this victory, and we're not going to win it with casual seeking, and self-presumption, and human effort, and we're not going to win it with just tears alone.

The shame that we bear because of part of the testimony of God has become. No, we're here for one reason. Lord, that your name be glorified in the earth again, and we acknowledge that you are the only source of power.

There is no power in human effort. There is no victory in human effort. There is no future in human effort.

God Almighty, you give us the word, and we will obey you. And then God began to speak and gave them the plan. Suddenly divine purpose is open to them again, and they walked in the wisdom of God, and they won a marvelous, marvelous victory.

So who gets the power in this hour in which we're living? It's a question that has to be asked because this time is too great. As the Lord said to Elijah, you've got to rise up and eat. The journey is too great for you.

Folks, we're going into something in this world that's too great for you and I to face it in our own strength. Our human strength was going to fail us. Doesn't matter how many fancy tapes and preachers you've got, that's not going to give you what you need for the days ahead.

You need the power of God. You need the power of God. You and I need faith like we've never had before.

Who gets the power? It's a question I've asked my own heart this week, and the Lord spoke to me and said, firstly, it's those who no longer care about reputation. In Mark chapter 10 verses 46 to 52, there was a blind man. He was part of the heritage of Israel, of course.

On the side of the road is people like Bartimaeus who are not ashamed to cry out to God. They're not ashamed. They don't care.

Who knows? He probably got himself a little bit of a niche as it is in that society and he was more slightly greeted, but he didn't care. He knew that Jesus is the way out of darkness and he had to press through all the voices, even religious voices, telling him that he should just be quiet and accept his lot in life. There are voices that will come against you when you begin to cry out.

Voices that will say, well, people will think you're beside yourself. Voices that will say, what, who do you think you are? Why do you think that Jesus, he's on a mission? Why do you think he will stop and take time for you? Why do you think he even would want you? You're blind for a specific reason. You were born that way.

So just accept it and get over it. But he would not be quiet. He would not be quiet.

He would not be silenced by anybody because Jesus was passing by and he knew he had the power to give him sight. And he began to cry out, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. Didn't care about reputation.

No matter what he had done to garner one, it didn't matter to him anymore. Didn't matter to him who knew he was blind or weak. He wasn't trying to pretend that he could see.

He wasn't trying to pretend they had it all together. And so many people come into the house of God and don't get the power of God because they're trying to pretend that they can see. They're trying to pretend that everything is, is all together.

They're trying to hold up their reputation, especially those that have been the longest in the house of God are the worst for this. And yet they're falling apart. They're on the side of the road.

They know that the power of God is passing by, but they seem to be excluded from it. And God just says this one thing, humble yourself in the sight of God and he will lift you up. For God gives grace to the humble, but he resists those that are proud.

Don't be ashamed to cry out to God. We're all on level ground folks. Don't be ashamed to cry out to God.

The irony of it all is the religious crowd were more blind than he was. And like Zacchaeus, he was a short man who had to go up into a tree to be able to see Jesus. Sort of like some people in the balcony today.

Not that you're short, but you're up there in a nice high place and you get a nice view of the platform. He was despised by the society of his day and he knew it. He was a tax collector.

He was in cahoots with the Romans, not only a tax collector, but most likely an extortioner of the people. Hated. He'd be only a hair's breadth away from assassination himself.

He'd be so hated by his own brethren. But he heard that Jesus was passing by. He climbed up into a tree just so he could see.

And suddenly Jesus stops and says, hey Zacchaeus, come down. I want to go to your house today. Now his house is filled with deceit.

His house is filled with greed. It's filled with fraud. But he was about to get the power of God.

This man was about to have a change of heart because he didn't care if Jesus saw what was in his house. He had nothing to hide anymore. He said, I'm not leaving Jesus a church.

I'm bringing him home. He's coming home and he's going to speak to me in my house. And Jesus came into Zacchaeus' house and he began to speak.

And as he began to speak, Zacchaeus' heart began to burn. And I love this portion of scripture that he stands up and he says, I'm going to give a great portion of my goods that I've accumulated to the poor. And if I've taken anything by fraud, I restore it for him.

Can you imagine? He'd taken most everything he had by fraud. And I could just see Jesus sitting there smiling because we start where we start. He saw his heart.

He knew this man is going to walk with him. He's going to do it God's way. And Christ was able to make the proclamation this day.

Salvation has come to this man's house. The power of God comes to those of us who are not afraid to cry out to God. I don't know about you, but I cry out in my prayer closet all the time.

I can't do this, God. You keep setting before me open doors and tell me to go through and I can't do it in my own strength. And God says, I know you can't just give it to me.

Walk with me. Let me do what I've called you to do. I can't do this.

There's things in my own life. I can't do them. I'm not ashamed to cry out to God.

I'm not ashamed to declare my need before you and before God and before all heaven, for we're all on level ground before the cross of Jesus Christ. I'm not ashamed to have Jesus Christ examine my home. Examine what's on my laptop.

Examine what's in my bookcase. Examine what I speak in private when nobody else apparently is there to hear it. Now those who get the power are not those who leave Jesus in church, but they take him home.

Oh, thank God. Did you know today that he wants you to come down and he wants to go home with you? That may not really be part of your thinking. Maybe you've compartmentalized Christ and he simply belongs here in church and you come and meet with him once a week.

But today, if you want the power of God, let him come to your heart and let him come to your home and let him speak. And lastly, it's people like Lazarus in John chapter 12 who know that in these final moments of time given to us, that unless God does this, it's not going to happen. It's people who live in a dark and a powerless place.

It's amazing. We're living in the last moments of time, folks. Do you recognize that yet? Do you know that? This world is mounting an ever-increasing offensive against Christ.

There are going to be wars and rumors of wars. People who follow God in truth are going to be hated. Glory of the Lord is going to come again soon to Israel.

And when the day of the church is over, the gospel is being committed to Israel to preach in all the nations. This is truly a momentous time, folks, to be alive. It's an incredible time to be walking with God.

Lazarus is living in a dark place. Everything around him speaks of hopelessness. His last words that he would have heard would be, it's too bad, so sad, it's too late.

Would have even perhaps heard plans for his funeral. People talking about how difficult and how God didn't show up. But the whole time that this is going on in the life of Lazarus, Jesus is already speaking to people about what he intends to do.

And no matter what you are going through, hard, dark, and down your situation is, listen to me now, Jesus is already speaking about what he intends to do in your life. Lazarus is not aware of it. Lazarus is sick and eventually is dead.

He is absolutely not aware of what's going on. And many who have come here today, you just say, God, I'm in such a place of weakness. I'm in such a place of darkness.

I feel so dead inside. I feel so hopeless. And not only do I feel that, but others around me are beginning to feel it too.

I've told them you've come to my house. I've told them that I knew you, but I seem to be powerless to change. And it's so despairing.

Where are you God? And all that Lazarus is met with is silence, but he has no idea that God is already speaking. The son of God is already making a declaration of what he's about to do. Folks, there's a whole realm that we don't hear what's going on in that realm.

God says, I know the plans that I have for you. Plans of good and not evil to bring you to a desired end. And not only did he speak about what he intended to do, he set out towards you at just the right time.

Not when you were strong, not when you could have put your hand into the mix. Not when it would have been while Jesus and me did this. You finally know you're dead.

You finally know you have no hope. You finally come to a place of despair because until you and I get there, folks, we will mix ourselves in with the testimony of God. And we will just make the perfume stink.

That's all you and I can do when we mix in with this victory that God gave us through Jesus Christ. But he's setting up towards you. He's already moving towards you.

Do you understand that? It's not in his heart to judge you. It's in his heart to set you free and give you life in spite of your struggle, in spite of what you've spoken, in spite of even the accusations you've made against him. It doesn't matter.

His love is an everlasting love. He engraved you on the palms of his hands. Now he's removing the barriers.

Lazarus still doesn't know what's going on and you don't know either, but he's giving the commands in the spiritual realm. Remove that which separates my voice from my son and my daughter. Remove and get it out of the way.

Remove the stone of death. Remove everything that the devil in the world in your own heart has spoken. Move it out of the way.

And then he stands on a mountaintop and the scripture says with a loud voice. Now he could have done it with a whisper. As a matter of fact, he could have just thought it and it would have happened.

He's an all-powerful God, but there's something in the heart of God. There's the passion in the heart of God. Lazarus come forth.

He calls because of the passion, not because you're deaf. He calls out a passion in his heart. I love you with an everlasting love.

I have a plan for your life. You're going to sit at a table with me. I'm going to give you a testimony and your testimony is not how many pills you took to get off that bed of sickness.

Your testimony is going to be, I was dead and now I'm alive by the power of God. Isaiah chapter 23, the prophet Isaiah or 33 rather prophet Isaiah talks about this coming day of Christ. This day when the nations are going to be on fire.

This day of incredible victory that's going to come not only to those who are hungry for God, but also to the nation of Israel. And he talks about this great victory and then he makes this statement. He said then the prey of great plunder is divided and the lame take the prey.

I love that. It's not the strong. It's not the wise.

It's not the noble. It's not the movers and shakers. It's not the guys with the shiny shoes and the girls with the nice hairdo.

It's the lame. It's the beggars. It's the blind.

It's those that know they need a savior. It's Bartimaeus who's blind. It's Zacchaeus who's a little short on integrity.

It's Lazarus who's dead. Bartimaeus gets new eyes. Zacchaeus gets a new heart.

Lazarus gets a new life. Oh Jesus, Jesus, would you help us oh God Almighty to see how simple it is to understand why Paul spoke these words. I didn't come with excellence of speech or wisdom.

I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. John the Baptist was having doubts in his heart and pointed his life about whether or not the Christ he had embraced was really the Christ. It can happen.

It can happen to any one of us. It happened to John. John who knew him.

John who had revelation and vision. Yet even he in a time of sorrow and apparent captivity began to doubt that the one he had introduced was actually the Christ of God. He sent word.

He said, are you he or do we look for another? Because if you were him, what am I doing here? Why am I in this place of weakness? Jesus told his disciples of those who came on John's behalf. He said, go and tell John the things you've seen and heard. Tell him the blind see.

Tell him the lame walk. Tell him lepers are cleansed. Tell him the deaf are hearing.

Tell him the dead are being raised. Tell him that the poor are having the gospel preached to them. The strength of God has come to all these people and blessed is he who is not offended because of me.

Blessed is he. Blessed is the man who's come to the point in his life of weakness, who's come to the point of nothingness in himself, who's come to the point that says, God, your ways don't offend me at all. Oh, thank you, Lord God, for not letting me be strong.

Thank you for not letting me be wise in my own sight. Thank you for not letting me become religiously proud. What a stent that is in the nostrils of God.

Thank you, God, for bringing me to an understanding that I am in the same place as every other man, woman ever created in the image of God. I stand by Greece alone, and I'm not offended at your work. I'm not offended, Lord, that you choose those that are nothing and nobody, those that are not weak or noble or royal in their own strength.

You chose those things that are nothing, that your name alone might be glorified in the earth. And you lift us out of a place of a dunghill, as David said, and you set us among princes and you give us a new song and you give us a new heart and you give us a new testimony. And we stand not boasting of ourselves and our degrees and our diplomas.

I want nothing but the cross of Jesus Christ and him crucified. I don't care how my preaching sounds, Paul said, as long as you understand that the power of God is available to you. You don't have to live in captivity.

You don't have to be blind. You don't have to go home to mixture. You don't have to be dead inside.

The Son of God has come to give you life and give it to you more abundantly. I'm not offended. I'm not offended.

I'm not offended. I've walked with God for 36 or 7 years now, and yet a new Christian, six months old, could have a deeper revelation about some portion of scripture that I've never seen. I'm not offended.

It's God's choice to do what he wants to do with whom he wants to do it with. Blessed is he who is not offended in me. Blessed is he that's not offended that I waited to come to him or her until you knew that you needed the power of God to live.

I'm not offended. Thank you, Lord, for bringing me down to nothing that you might become everything. I'm not offended, Lord.

It's your work. And now the choice becomes yours. Do you sit on the side of the road and let Jesus pass by today? Do you go home and take your Sardis membership card out of your wallet just to make sure it's still intact? Do you stay in your seat knowing that you're going home to a corrupted place, knowing that your ways in a place of employment are not going to change, knowing that a lot of what you built around you is fraud and deceit and lies? Or do you take Jesus home and say, Lord, you're welcome in my house and you're welcome to sit at my table and you're welcome to speak to me.

And I invite you, Lord, to change my heart. I invite you to make me the person that I should be. I'm not going to play games with you.

This is what it is. What you see is what I am. But, oh God, would you help me to see what I can be through you, through your word spoken to me? Do we lie in death? Do we settle that we're just going to live there? Or do we hear today the voice of God calling us to life? Oh God, the choice is not mine to make.

I have made my choice. The choice is yours. What do you do with the word of God and the power of God? It requires an honest heart.

It requires a humble heart. But I'm going to do what Bartimaeus did. I'm going to call out to God every chance I get.

And I'm not going to pretend I see if I don't. And I'm going to come down from whatever place I happen to be in and invite Jesus to come to my house because I hear his desire. And I'm not going to hide from him what's in my house.

He's free to look at it and speak to me in spite of it and give me the courage to change what needs to be changed. And I'm not going to live in the past. I'm not going to live in a place of death when I have been promised life and life more abundant.

I'm not going to let this nation go to hell without fighting with everything that God gives me to fight for the sake of every man, woman, and child who can still hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. I pray today that that would be the cry of your heart as well. The days of playing church are over.

Only that which is of Christ is going to stand. Everything that can be shaken is about to be shaken. But for those who make the right choice, oh God, we ask you to make the right choice because we will bear fruit for the glory of God.

We will have a song in the midst of sorrow. We'll have vision in the midst of darkness. We'll have integrity in the midst of unspeakable corruption.

We'll be a testimony, a last day testimony of the reality of God through Jesus Christ. My faith is not resting in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. If God's spoken to your heart today, I'd like to open the front of this sanctuary North Jersey campus and in the annex and at home.

You don't have to, but sometimes it's a good thing to just make a motion, take a step and move forward and say, God, you've spoken to my heart. I don't think this is revelation today. I think God's already been speaking this to many here.

This is really just a confirmation of what you're already hearing from the Lord. And in your heart, you're saying, I'm not willing to settle for anything but the power of God now. I want to be a living testimony in my generation.

I don't want to be just somebody who quotes scripture. I want to be a living testimony. So Lord, I'm yielding to you.

I'm calling out to you in humility. I'm asking you God to do what only you can do in my life. That's the cry of your heart as we stand together, please.

I'm going to ask you to make your way to the front of the sanctuary or between the screens in the annex and in North Jersey. We're going to worship for a few moments. Could you stand please in the balcony, go to either exit and make your way down.

Same thing in the sanctuary. And let's believe God. Folks, let's believe God.

Let's believe God. Not just for us, but for this generation. Let's believe God.

Let's believe God for our children and our schools and colleges. Let's believe God for our neighborhoods, our homes, our families. Let's believe God.

Let's not die on the side of unbelief. Let's believe God. Let's believe God when we gather to pray on Tuesday night, that God hears us and is moving his hand.

Let's believe God that prison doors still do open. Blinded eyes still do see. Wounded hearts still are healed.

Broken marriages still are restored. Let's believe God that evil still can be overturned and good can still come. Let's believe God.

With everything in our hearts, let's believe God. And it starts with me. I have to have an active experience with God in order to be able to believe him.

I can't just simply agree with concepts that I've never experienced. I have to be a partaker of it. It makes it easy to believe when your life is changing, when God has the reins of your heart, when you let him go into those darkened areas, those powerless areas of your life, and you realize that he does give life.

He does come in my poverty. He does give sight where I can't see. Oh God, help us.

Father, I pray in Jesus' name. Help me. Help us.

Help us as a people, God. Help us, Lord Jesus Christ, to make a difference in this hour in which we live. We are to be a city set on a hill.

We are to be an undeniable testimony of the reality of the victory of the cross of Jesus Christ. Oh God, God Almighty, come where we're blind. Come, Lord, where we're compromised.

Come, God, where we're dead. Give us life and power in Jesus' name. Let's worship.

Lord, we ask you as a congregation, take us on a journey of victory, that the power might be of God and not of ourselves. Give us a song of gladness and of joy. Oh God, that can't be contained.

Give us a love, Lord, for people that cannot be withheld. Give us victory, Lord God, that will cause us to sing at the top of our voices, clap our hands, and even dance in our streets. Oh God, we thank you for sight.

We thank you for strength. We thank you for cleansing, oh God, in victory. Thank you for life from death.

Oh Jesus, I thank you, God. I praise you. I praise you, Lord.

Take this church, oh God, and use us for your glory. But don't let our voices be silent. Don't let our service to you be Sunday only.

God Almighty, be glorified through us. Be glorified as your people. We ask this in Jesus' name.

Hallelujah. Thank you, God. Thank you.

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