

# Why Is It So Hard to Pray?

by Carter Conlon

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer as a lifestyle, and encourages listeners to overcome Satan's opposition and unconfessed sin by walking in God's will and obeying Christ.*

**Duration:** 51:36

**Scripture:** Hebrews 4:14

**Topics:** "Hinderances"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of starting at the beginning and taking steps in one's spiritual journey. He highlights that many people are not willing to start small and expect immediate success. The speaker uses the example of a child learning to walk and compares it to the process of spiritual growth. He also mentions the story of David and Goliath, emphasizing David's faith in God's supernatural strength. The sermon concludes with a prayer for the audience to understand and experience a deeper dimension of prayer.

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## Transcript

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This recording cannot be posted on any website. However, written permission to link to the Times Square Church homepage may be requested by emailing [info@timesquarechurch.org](mailto:info@timesquarechurch.org). Other recordings are available by calling 1-800-488-0854 or by writing to Times Square Church Tape Ministry, 1657 Broadway, New York, New York, 10019. Why is it so hard to pray? I'm not asking you to answer that.

That's the title of my message tonight. Let's pray. Father, I ask you tonight, Lord, you're taking us on an incredible journey into your life.

And I pray tonight for the young, the struggling, the weak. Lord, you'll not leave any of us behind in this journey. You'll reach out and not let the body move any faster than all its members can move together.

I pray tonight that you give me the ability to speak clearly and simply. That every person in this room can understand this message. And at the end of it, we will be encouraged to move into a dimension of prayer that you long for us to be in.

Now, I believe, Lord, you're going to do this. God, you have to give a nice anointing tonight to see this. It's not something that is learned.

It has to be understood and experienced. And I pray, God, tonight that you do the miraculous. And, Lord, we give you the glory.

Even before we open your word, we give you the glory because you love us. And you're taking us as your church into a dimension of your life that will get us through everything that is before us. And not just through, but we will be a living testimony of you, Lord.

We thank you for it with all our hearts in Jesus' name. Now, you don't need to open your Bibles yet. We'll get there in a moment.

Why is it so hard to pray? 1 Thessalonians 5.17, Paul says, Pray without ceasing. Now, the Holy Spirit would not anoint him to write these words if God didn't intend that to be the lifestyle of the Christian. Our life is to be just a walking, breathing prayer.

We're communing with God. And he's communing with us as we walk through our day. We're just living in an attitude of prayer.

1 Timothy 2.8, Paul says, I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere. So, it's not just, it's wonderful to go into the prayer closet. We should do that and have a pattern and a habit of that.

But Paul says everywhere. That means subway, workplace, when you're being chewed out by your boss. You can just bleep out the voice for a moment and just drop away into a moment of prayer.

He says, lifting up holy hands without wrath. And the definition of wrath in the Greek New Testament is, it's a mind free from anger or the desire to punish others who have done us wrong. That's really what it means.

Paul says, I will, therefore, that men pray everywhere. Lifting up holy hands with a mind free from anger and free from the desire to punish other people who have done us wrong. And without doubting.

Matthew 21, chapter 21, verse 22. Jesus said, in all things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing you shall receive. Philippians chapter 4, verse 6. Paul says, be careful for nothing.

And the word nothing, again, in the Greek means not even one. Not one. Not even one person.

No matter who he may be. In other words, the Lord is saying, I don't want you to be worried about people. You put things into my hands.

No matter what the circumstances. Whether it's a backslidden family member, an unbelieving person, whether it's somebody who's giving you heartache. I don't want you, God says, to worry about this.

I want you to give it into my hands. And in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. Now, with thanksgiving, how do you give thanks unless you believe that you're going to receive the answer? I don't know how you can do that.

With thanksgiving, the Lord says, I want you to come into my presence without ceasing, everywhere. I want you to come in with a believing heart. And I want you to come in with thanksgiving.

I want you to lay down the cares and concerns of this life. And no matter all the things that come your way because of people around you. And I want you to come into my presence and bring back to me, as it is, the things that I've told you.

We're not bringing things that are unfamiliar to God. We read the word of God. We know what God says.

And we just simply bring it back to him with the heart of thanksgiving. Oh, God, thank you. Thank you, Lord.

In spite of what I see. In spite of what I hear. This is what your word says.

I bring this back to you. God, thank you. You're going to bring this to pass.

So, folks, I have lived this. I have walked this. And I know this is true.

Wonderful when we can come to God with thanksgiving. Now, the question then comes, if prayer, then, should be the natural expression of my life, then why does it often or always seem so hard to pray? Now, I'm going to share with you a few things tonight that I've learned in this journey. What I'm about to share is not all-inclusive.

But these are things the Holy Spirit has laid on my heart and that I know to be true. Now, first and foremost, Satan will oppose prayer. Because he knows that it's your lifeline to God.

God has always desired a relationship with you. So Satan will oppose you in this relationship by bombarding your mind with accusations of failure. The moment you try to come into the presence of God, he will bombard you with thoughts that you're unworthy to be talking to God.

You're unworthy to ask God for anything. And if you even remotely believe that, then he will even increase, he'll turn up the heat and cause you to believe that God is looking down upon you with an angry or a disapproving countenance. He'll try to destroy you before the prayers even come from your heart.

The devil himself knows. He knows history. He knows that on occasion and throughout the course of time, there have been men and women who've had the courage to go in and believe God in the prayer closet.

And he knows what happens. He can be building some evil empire as it is for years, tens, hundreds of years. He can be putting walls around the people and pushing out as it is all the trace of Christ.

The only danger now, even in countries, the only danger now is that somebody somewhere is going to lay hold of God again. And he knows it. So he has to come down.

And when a saint begins to pray, the powers of evil begin to bombard the mind, saying, no, you're not worthy to come into the presence of God. And God doesn't want you to come into His presence. He's been looking down upon you.

And he's been observing all of your failures. And what right do you have to come to the throne of God? This is the ultimate lie, folks. You see, this is what the cross was all about.

When Jesus Christ went to the cross, the wrath of God for all of the sin of everyone who's ever trusted in Him was poured out on His Son. Now the Son in victory was raised from the dead, sitting now at the right hand of God. God does not deal with us in the manner of holding us to account for the wrong things that

we have done.

He deals with His Son. And you and I enter into the victory of the Son simply by believing that He took our place on the cross. We cannot be condemned, because the devil has to condemn Christ to be able to condemn you and I. We are in Him, seated in victory at the right hand of Almighty God.

I have a right to go into the presence of God. It's not by works of righteousness that I have done. It's by His mercy that He has saved me.

It's not my perfection. It's Christ's perfection. It's not my victory.

It's Christ's victory. He sits at the right hand of God. He is at the throne of God.

And I am in Him. Paul says in the book of Ephesians, if I have trusted in Christ for my salvation, I can have had the worst day of my entire Christian life. But God knows I am a genuine Christian.

God knows I want to walk with Him. God knows I want to love Him. God knows I want to serve Him.

I'm not playing games with God. And I can have had the worst day of my entire Christian experience. But I can still walk in with confidence to the throne of God.

And I'm fully accepted in Christ. That's why Paul says, if God be for us, who can be against us? Who can condemn us if Christ has justified us? Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. That's why he says in the Old Testament, I give you the power to condemn every voice that rises against you in judgment.

You can condemn these voices. You have the right that the devil accuses you. Turn and look him in the face and say, listen you, I'm not here because of my righteousness.

I have trusted in Christ. He has bought my redemption. He's invited me to the throne of God.

And because of His grace, I am here to place my petitions with thanksgiving before God. 2 Corinthians chapter 10, verse 4 and 5 says, The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. We have that power, beloved.

The weakest of saints here tonight, you have that power if you are a genuine Christian. If you have truly trusted in Christ. If you truly in your heart want to walk with God.

If you are truly, truly believed in Him for your salvation. You have the power to cast down the thoughts of the devil himself. You have that power given to you of God.

If you can't remember anything, just turn to the devil if you must and just say, obey Christ. Just obey Christ. That's all you have to do tonight.

Obey Christ. Hebrews chapter 4, if you go there please, I'd like you to see this in your Bible. Hebrews chapter 4 and verse 14.

Right after James, or right before James rather. Hebrews chapter 4 verse 14 says, See then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens. Jesus, the Son of God.

Let us hold fast our profession. Our profession of course is that He is our redemption. He is our righteousness.

He is our cleanness as it is. He is our forgiveness. He is our access to the throne of God.

He is our assurance that when we die we are going to heaven to be with God. He is our all. He is our everything.

Oh, thanks be to God. Verse 15 says, We have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. But he was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace. That we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. And really boldly means, God says come with incredible confidence.

I am not looking for those who come with their own righteousness. It is those who come and they know they are clean because they have trusted in Christ. And He says, yes you have got needs and you are weak and you struggle.

But I am inviting you into my presence. And not only inviting you, I am asking you to come in with confidence. Because I will hear you.

And I will answer you. And you will begin to know that I am God. Hallelujah.

Now I have seen three reasons over the years why people can't pray or they start praying and then they give up praying. These are things that I have just observed in the years that I have walked with God. First and foremost, people stop praying because their journey is not in line with the will of God.

Now many people start out with incredible zeal and they are at all the prayer meetings and they are getting hold of the promises. And they come in to the kingdom of God with a youthful innocence. And it is a delightful thing to see that.

But God says, I don't want everyone in my body to be youthful and unknowledgeable forever. You see, there is a plan I have to bring the gospel to all men and women throughout the world. That is why he has a body on the earth.

It is to be a testimony and to go into all the nations and preach the gospel to every person created in the image of God. And many, many people come in to the church of Jesus Christ and they begin to pray. But they are not willing to undertake the journey that God has for them.

Every person here tonight, you have a journey that God has destined you to walk on. Now you or I may not be aware of this. When I first got saved, if the Lord would have told me what he was going to do, I don't know if I could have contained it.

It would be so far out of the realm of possibility. And many, many people never leave this realm of possibility. Or the realm of what they feel their life should be and how God should be obliged to add to it.

And they begin to pray, but they are inwardly driven for personal reward. And not just to bless the people. I want you to think about Balaam.

You don't have to go there, but in the book of Numbers, chapters 22 to 24. Here's a man that God, in spite of his backslidden condition really, but God is speaking to this man. But he's unwilling to really walk the path that God... God says, I want you to bless the people.

I want you to bless my people. And there was a foreign king that was hiring him as it is to curse the people of God, to stop their journey. But the Lord says, no, you're to bless my people.

And he heads out and he starts out on this journey. And he is, in a sense, communicating with God because the scripture indicates that God is actually speaking to him. But he's not clean in this journey.

He's got an agenda. And he's not willing to lay it down. And there's so many people today that they're communicating with God.

And God really is speaking in the beginning, but there's an agenda. And they're not willing to lay it down. It might be just a viewpoint of who you and I think we are.

What we think our life should be. How we view ourselves. And we're quite happy with our view of ourselves.

And so we bring this view into the prayer closet. And we now expect God to agree with it. And to bless it and to go with us on this journey.

And this man is unaware that God is actually opposing him on his journey. He sees this blessing. And he stands on these mountaintops and he says, Oh, that my end could be like his.

Oh, I see no iniquity in Jacob. I hear no iniquity in Israel. I see among them the shout of a king.

He's got this vision of Christ right before him. But he can't bend his own heart and say, God, lead me. He can't give up his agenda.

So he sees this incredible mercy with his eyes. But he will not yield himself to God's purpose for his life on this journey. So he ends up seeing it, but he's living outside of it.

And that's how you can come to church. And the Bible can be opened. And you can see the promises and know the history.

But end up living outside of it. And then eventually you can't go into the prayer closet anymore. Because ultimately God says, You're not willing to embrace my will for you.

And of course, God's yoke is not burdensome or heavy. If we're walking with the Lord, He says, My yoke is easy, my burden is light. There's a delight of God.

There's nothing more delightful to the Christian person than to be living in the will of God. There's nothing more laborious than to be outside of His will, trying as it is to cut into this place that you can't get into. James says, you ask in chapter 4 verse 3, And you don't receive because you ask amiss that you may consume it on your lust.

It means that you're coming into the prayer closet. You're asking for things, but they're not according to the will of God. Amazing.

The second reason that people stop praying is unconfessed sin. Now, Isaiah 59 verses 1 and 2, The prophet says, Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, Neither is His ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God.

And your sins have hidden His face from you that He will not hear. Now, I'm not talking about struggles. We all have struggles.

There's a difference. I'm talking about unconfessed sin. I'm talking about known and willful practice.

The person sitting here tonight, you know it's wrong. But you are determined in your heart to continue this practice. And you come into the prayer closet and wonder why you can't get through to God.

Your iniquities have separated you from the voice of God. David the psalmist said, If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Remember, Paul says, I want men to lift up holy hands everywhere without wrath.

In other words, without the desire to punish others who have done you wrong. And I think of Jesus in Mark 11, 25. He said, And when you stand praying, forgive.

Just forgive. Just let it go. Let the debt go.

I think of the numbers of people that I've known over the years who just will not obey this. They won't do it. And they somehow think I can get around this.

Oh, of course, God doesn't understand my situation. No, you don't understand what God has for your life. If you just bring your life in line with what God says and say, Lord, I don't know how to do this, but your Word says to do it, so I choose to do it.

And you're going to have to give me the power. And when I fail, I'm going to boldly come back in and say, Lord, it's been a bad day. You've got to give me more grace tomorrow.

You've got to help me through this. But I'm not going to embrace this. I'm not going to willfully do this any longer.

I'm not going to live this way anymore. You see, some people can't pray because when they do, God will continuously bring you back to the area of disobedience in your life. They can't go into the prayer closet.

Because God doesn't forget. You can be years pushing a certain thing out of your mind. Listen, Jacob wanted the blessing of God.

He's the grandson of Abraham. He wants the blessing that God said was his grandfather's. And he realizes this is in the lineage of my family.

I want this. So he goes to his father and pretends he's another man than the man he really is. And he goes to his father, and his father says, Who are you? And he gives another name, the name of his brother Esau.

And his father gives him his blessing, which he thinks, How many people today think you can steal the blessing of God? Now, God honored it because he wanted it. And his brother didn't, but he didn't want it the right way yet. But God would give him the blessing he was looking for.

So now, because of his sin, he's driven into a far place for years. He works 14 years just for the girl that he fell in love with. And now, God calls him to go back.

And some of you, maybe, the Lord's saying to you tonight, I want you to come back. I want you to come back again to that place that you feared. You thought it was going to bring you into disaster to just simply trust me and obey me.

And you went away, and you've been out of the prayer closet for a season. But I want you to come back. And Jacob's coming back now into the place of promise.

And the Scripture says he wrestled with God. Because he knew he couldn't go there unless God gave him the strength. He said, God, I can't do this unless you strengthen me to do this.

I can't give up my image of myself. I can't give up my sense of destiny and future. I envision myself as a great evangelist.

Not an usher in the church. The Lord says, no, if I called you to be an usher and you obey me, that's greatness in my sight. It's not about what you do, it's the fact you obey me.

And you know that I will give you an empowerment to do what I call you to do. I've learned that greatness is simply obedience and servanthood in the body of Christ. Thanks be to God.

Thanks be to God. And so Jacob ends up wrestling with God all night. And the Lord says, basically, I've got to go.

And Jacob says, I'm not letting you go until you bless me. And it's almost like all of these years have not happened. And the Lord says to him, well, I beg your pardon.

You want me to bless you, but what did you say your name was? It's as if all these years hadn't happened. What did you say your name was? When you sought my blessing years ago, you gave the wrong name. You were going in the wrong direction.

But what is your name now? And you see, he's just looking for an agreement. I gave you a name, so just tell me what your name is. I gave it to you.

God says, tell me what the name is. And the man or woman has the courage to go in the prayer closet and say, I'm fearful. I'm afraid to lay down my life and follow you.

I'm whatever you are. And the Lord says, good. Now you've prevailed with God.

And now you've prevailed with man. He says, now you're entering into the blessing of your grandfather. Amazing.

Because you've just come in honestly into my presence. And now we can talk. Because now we're on the same path.

We're walking down the same highway as it is. And now you're going to know the blessing that you've been seeking for all your life. Thirdly, people stop praying or leave the prayer closet because they have a wrong perception of what prayer is.

I remember in the early years as a Christian, I'd go to a prayer meeting. Oh dear. Two hours of laborious condemnation and faithless begging.

Holy prayer was when everybody got on their knees, you ground your face into the seat in front of you and you confessed what a rotten sinner you were. You begged and whined for two hours and everybody walked out of the church looking like they'd been run over by a Mack truck. And the whole community is supposed to say, give us a reason for the hope that is in your life.

And that's the way a lot of people pray. You go into the prayer closet. Oh, I'm such a rotten sinner.

I don't deserve any of your blessings. No. Prayer is knowing the mind of God and moving forward with Him in belief and faith.

Knowing what God is thinking. Did you know tonight that God is thinking thoughts about you? More than the sand of the sea. And according to the Scriptures, they're thoughts of good and not evil to bring you to an expected end.

The Lord says, I have a place. I'm taking you to that place. And in that place I'm taking you, you're going to be supernaturally and sovereignly sustained.

You're going to be given giftings that you don't have. You're going to begin to know that I am a supernatural God. Some of you will be given gifts of the Spirit.

Others are just going to be such drastic character changes in you. From a lying tongue to a man or woman of truth. From selfishness to a generous open heart and open hands to a needy world all around you.

You're going to be given these things because these things are in my mind towards you. And you're going to begin to know that I am God. You're going to know it by experience, not because you went to a Bible study at Times Square Church.

You're going to know I am God. He said in the Old Testament, they shall all know me from the least to the greatest. Those who come to me are going to know me because I'm going to be God in them.

They're going to become new creations. The old things are going to pass away. All things are going to become new.

They're going to go from image to image and glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord. There's going to be continuous change going on in the lives of those who are mine. Those who know my mind towards them.

Those who come into the prayer closet and their hearts are open and I can begin to speak to them. And they begin to believe what I am saying. Hallelujah.

Thanks be to God. John 16, 13. Jesus said, when He, the Spirit of truth has come, He will guide you into all truth.

And He will show you things to come. Now, it's not just events of the future for our nations, as wonderful as that may be. No, the things to come are in you and in me.

He will show you. God will say, no, I'm going to change your heart in this area. I'm going to make you a man or woman of such compassion.

Right now, you don't care. But if you'll just hear what I'm speaking, I'm going to change you. There's going to be a compassion come into your heart.

Yes, you're fearful right now. But I'm going to put a love in you for men and women in this world and children that is going to cast out all fear. That's what the Scripture says.

Perfect love casts out all fear. Because fear has torment. God says, I'm going to put a love in your heart.

And you'll be standing before people everywhere. It may not be crowds. It may not be large gatherings.

But wherever you go, the fear of men will be gone from your life. You'll have a love that compels you to tell them there's a Savior in heaven that loves them and died for them. God says, you'll know I'm real.

Because you will know the things that are coming out of your inward parts were not in you before I came into your life. You will know me from the least to the greatest. Once you begin to experience the supernatural working of God.

Beloved, let me tell you. There is some people in the Bible that Paul says were addicted to ministering to the saints. This probably is a couple.

Maybe they've been selfish before. I really don't know. But God gave them the gift of hospitality.

And the ability to care for those who are walking this journey through this world in Christ. And Paul describes them as addicted to ministering. And I see a good addiction in the spirit.

That when you and I begin to walk with God. And God begins to work in us supernaturally. We want more.

Oh God. Oh God, why would I limit you? Why would I say this far and no farther? Why wouldn't I let you begin to speak through me? Why wouldn't I let you begin to heal through my hands? Why wouldn't I let you take me in places where it's impossible for anyone to go unless God is with them? In the book of Acts, when they came out of the upper room, the scripture says they began to speak forth supernaturally into known languages of the world which they had never learned. They were immediately exhibiting abilities.

And these were sensible abilities because people who were visiting Jerusalem could understand what they were saying. God gave them supernatural ability. This is what the church has been meant to be from the day of Pentecost.

A supernatural church with the life of God inside of her, given abilities to do things that she doesn't naturally possess. A testimony to the glory of God. People all around are looking at this and saying, we've never seen anything like this.

Immediately their hearts are stirred and they begin to want to know what it means to be saved. And the scripture says they were speaking in known languages, other tongues, the wonderful works of God. The things that only God can do.

They were making a declaration of the wonderful works of God. Beloved, that's what it's always been about. It's about you and I going into the workplace and saying, I've got to tell you what God is doing.

I've got to tell you what God has done. I've got to tell you what God has spoken to my heart. I've got to tell you what God has told me about you.

What He's going to do for you. They began to speak, in the Greek it's the megalios, which means the anticipated outworking of the inward life of Christ. Oh God, help us to understand these simple truths.

Here's a fearful people in an upper room. The bloodlust of that generation is very real to them. The cross is very fresh.

The anger of the crowds is very real. And they go up into that room and in a moment of time, God comes and says, listen, I'm going to give you abilities that you've never possessed. I'm going to take you places you could never go.

I'm going to make you into a person you could never hope to be in your own strength and you're going to change the whole known world in your generation. And they walk out of the upper room believing it with the power of God upon them. Hallelujah to the Lamb of God.

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. What an exciting life. Think of David when he came to fight Goliath.

Here's a young man. He's not a warrior. He's not been trained.

He's not been in the army. He's been out in the field with a slingshot and with God. He's been communing with God.

He's learned to believe God. He's learned that God gives supernatural strength to those who would simply believe Him and do what He asks them to do. He's been able to slay beasts in a sense that in the natural have the power to absolutely tear them in pieces.

And he knows that God has given him supernatural ability. So when he walks into the midst of the army and looks through the valley and sees this giant challenging the very honor and the very nature of God, he begins what I've always believed was a prayer. We record it as a statement.

But David's got an open heaven. He knows what God can do. And looks down at Goliath.

He's now prophesying. He's no longer speaking in the natural. You come to me with your stick and you come to me with your weaponry and your shouts and your terror.

But I come to you in the name of the Lord God of Israel, the God of hosts, the God that you have defied this day. He said, God's going to give me your head and not just your head, but the bodies of the Philistine army are going to be given to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field, and all the world will know there's a God in Israel. That's got to be the cry of the Christian life, folks, that all the world will know there is a God in me.

All the world will know that Christ sits at the right hand of God. All the world will know that God is alive in Christ and has a church on this earth. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

If you will lay down and confess sin, if you will just come in, not with your life plan, but find the life plan of God, and God begins to speak out of heaven, and now the choice you have is to agree with Him. This is where it gets real quiet, doesn't it, right now. To agree with Him.

That's what it's always been about. Think about Joshua. The Lord of hosts comes to him.

Christ himself, pre-incarnate Christ, is standing before Joshua, the captain. Now Joshua bows and calls him Lord. It had to be Christ.

An angel would never allow it. He gives him the battle plan. I'm bringing you in now.

This is the promised land. And here's the plan. You're going to just see this walled, great walled city, and a place of impossibility, and you're going to walk around it for seven days.

The seventh day you're going to shout. The walls are going to come down. You're going to go in, and you're going to conquer.

Now you have to believe. You have to believe. Now God will speak to you things that are just as impossible.

God will tell some tonight, I'm going to make you a person of such incredible compassion that your whole family will be astounded when they see the walls of selfishness have come down. I'm going to take that root of anger out of your life because it's rooted in unforgiveness. I'm going to pull it up right by the roots.

And you're going to be the most forgiving person in your entire clan. And people are going to look and say, how does this victory ever come about? What happened to you? That you're speaking words of such incredible grace when everyone around you is shouting for vengeance and shouting for retribution. You're talking about forgiveness.

You're not only talking, but you've truly forgiven. I see it in your countenance. God says, that's only the beginning.

You know, a lot of people never make it to the end because they're not willing to start at the beginning. They want to go from aisle 7, row 6, seat 52 to preaching to 100,000 people. And if they don't get the big invitation, then they just determine that God's not real.

He's got no plan for their life. No, folks. You don't take a child that's just learning to walk and send them into the Boston Marathon.

There are steps to take. There are victories to be won. There are half-acres, as Jonathan did, of ground to be taken.

It starts with, God, you have to help me in this area. And the Lord says, come boldly. I'll help you.

And it starts with, God, you've got to give me victory over this besetting sin in my life. And the Lord says, come boldly. I'll help you.

And as we begin to walk in that, we begin to realize there is no limitation to what God can do. If I'm willing to hear His voice, if I'm wanting to live a life that brings glory to His name, there is no limitation. He can take me from image to image and glory to glory.

And I can drop my impression of what I think my life should be. It's not about preaching to the crowd. Some of us may be called to do that, but others are not.

It's not about that. Wherever God calls us, there will be a supernatural infusion of His life. And not only we will know, but the people around us will know.

Hallelujah. That's one of the greatest revelations I've ever had. I've had somebody in a conversation with me recently and said, well, what would you do? Or maybe I initiated the conversation.

I don't remember exactly how it went, but the point was just this. If it happened that my health went and I couldn't preach anymore, I would get involved in any body of believers anywhere that had compassion for the poor. And I would take boxes of groceries to families.

And if I had to, if I couldn't speak anymore, I'd write it out on a tablet. Hallelujah. And I would be completely fulfilled.

Completely. Because it's not about numbers. It's about walking with God in whatever He would have us to do.

Whatever He would have you to do or me to do. It's about simply walking with God, knowing that I am fully justified, not by what I do, but by what He did for me. I can come in in my struggles, and He promises, He said, come boldly to me.

He promises strength. And then He says, I'll speak to you about things that you've not considered before. Things about yourself.

Things I intend to do through you. This is where you have to have a really surrendered life. Because the things that God speaks may not be the things that you think about yourself.

But they will be great. And they will be supernatural. And you will get to the end of this journey.

Hallelujah. With a shout. Here's what the Holy Spirit told me tonight.

Give an altar call. And I'm going to speak to people who don't have the courage to believe anything good about themselves. God said, I'm going to speak to you.

You're going to come to an altar tonight. Now, it doesn't have to happen here. But if you choose to.

The Lord says, now you don't come before me with begging. You don't come before me with a life plan, asking me to fulfill it for you. Just come before me.

Acknowledging that I'm God, and that I'm good. And that where I lead you is a good place. And I'll begin to speak to you.

Now, here's how it starts. I want to share this before you even come to the altar tonight. Now, don't come to the altar expecting that you're going to see huge crowds.

Now, some of you might. It might happen. He might show you the end from the beginning.

But others, he'll show you a reconciled relationship. He'll show you the power to speak good when everyone else is speaking evil in your workplace. Others, he'll show you victory.

Maybe others, he's going to show you how he's going to guide you into prayer. Prayer becomes delightful, folks. Prayer is a delight.

Prayer is just agreeing with what God is speaking to you. Hallelujah. Some of you have never known this.

And it took me years to get to this place of understanding. That God speaks if I'm willing to listen. And I simply agree with him.

I'm like Joshua saying, let's go. Let's go. As ridiculous as the battle plan seems to my natural mind, let's do this.

Lord, it's a good thing you're with me. Because my shouting is not going to bring these walls down. Do you have the courage to believe God tonight? Do you have the courage to follow him? Do you have the courage to put it all in his hands and let him speak into your heart? Oh, Jesus, thank you.

Thank you, Lord. You are drawing this body to yourself. You're guiding us into something of your life that the natural mind can't lay hold of.

Lord, it's supernatural. You've got to give us the grace to hear this. Help me, help this church, Lord, to come boldly to the throne of grace with expectant hearts, praying everywhere without ceasing, lifting up holy hands, giving our requests to you with thanksgiving, believing that everything we ask according to your will, in prayer, you will answer.

Oh, God, thank you, Lord. I'm asking you, Lord, to do the miraculous tonight. I'm asking you, Lord, to do the miraculous in the future.

I'm asking you, God, to bring our families to you, all of them. Bring our families home to the living Christ. I'm asking you, God, to begin to move in the miraculous.

I'm asking you, Lord, to open our minds and our hearts to the realm of Christ. God, give us an understanding of the things that we've studied, we've read tonight. Give us an understanding of these things.

I'm asking you for joy and anticipation for what you're going to do every day. Morning by morning, new mercies we see, God. We thank you for this.

I'm asking, God, that in this church you establish a testimony throughout the city or wherever we come from, oh, God, that would bring honor and glory to your name. I'm asking you, Lord, tonight for giftings of the Spirit to be realized, things that you've called us to be, words of knowledge, words of wisdom, gifts of healing. I'm asking you, God, for things, oh, Lord, that can only come from the hand of almighty God that begin to be manifest through this body of believers.

And to those who have hungry hearts, God, all over the world, let the glory of the Lord again come to the church of Jesus Christ. My God, I call out to you tonight with confidence. I'm asking you, Lord, to come with glory.

I'm asking you, God, to open heaven again. I'm asking you, Lord, for another Pentecost in our generation. I'm asking you, God, to do what only you can do, Lord, to encourage the hearts of your church, oh, God.

Deliver your body from all of the charlatans and frauds that are speaking in your name in our generation. Draw us again into the closet of prayer. Begin to speak to us, God, about your work and your way.

Lord, let the promises become glorious. Let us finish this journey like the apostle Paul, with incredible joy. Oh, God, let us finish with joy, with absolute unspeakable joy at the end of this journey.

Having run, having known we walked with your God, be able to turn to the next generation and say, follow me as I've followed Christ. God Almighty, give us the power to stand in the coming storms. Give us the power, God.

Give us the power to stand because we know your promises, Lord. Hallelujah, Lamb of God. Do the miraculous in your church, Lord Jesus Christ.

We call out to you tonight, oh, God. Do the miraculous once again. Lift us to the realms of faith, oh, God.

Let the glory of the Lord walk with us one more time in this generation. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. Thank you, Jesus.

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

Thank you, God. Mighty God, thank you. We praise you.

We give you glory. We thank you, Lord God. We thank you.

We come boldly. We come boldly tonight. We come expecting tonight, oh, God.

Hallelujah. We come because the victory is ours. We come because your righteousness has become ours.

We come as the church of the living God. We thank you, Lord, with all our hearts tonight, oh, God. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you, mighty God. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah. God, thank you.

Step out. Let's all stand together. The Holy Spirit drawing you, please come join me at this altar.

Now, when you come to the altar, let God speak to you. Let the Holy Spirit speak to you. Don't resist His voice tonight.

Let Him speak to your heart. He's going to speak to you tonight. Don't resist Him.

Don't say, but, oh, God, you know I can't speak. Oh, God, you know I can't do this. Don't tell Him what you can't do.

Let Him tell you what He can do. Open your heart and let Him speak tonight. Hallelujah.

If you're backslidden, come back to God. Stop trying to win this in your own strength. Let the Holy Spirit give you the power over besetting sin.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah, hallelujah. I speak to every defeated Christian here tonight.

If you will turn to God, you will know victory. You will know what it is to walk in victory. Hallelujah.

Thanks be to God. Let's worship for a little while tonight. Praise God.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, God. Now, let me tell you how you exalt the Lord.

We exalt Him when we believe Him. We exalt Him when we receive His Word to us as a higher law than our present condition, our present frailty, and our present circumstance. We exalt Him when we say, God, I believe you, Lord.

You are able. I'm going to ask the entire church. I want nobody to shout out, nobody to pray out loud, nobody to prophesy or any of this.

And if anybody tries, it's in rebellion. I want you to stay quiet for one minute, maybe two, and let the Holy Spirit now tell you what He's going to do in your life. Where it's going to begin.

He may not show you the end, but He'll show you the beginning. Let's do that right now, and then we'll sing that again. We exalt Him.

Praise God. Let's sing that one more time. I will exalt you, Lord, by believing you.

Now we exalt Him. Say, Lord, I'm not walking out of this house in unbelief. I'm not living under the lies of the devil anymore.

I'm not walking in condemnation. You are merciful, God. Your life is inside of mine.

I believe you, Lord. I believe you. Now we exalt Him.

We exalt Him with faith. We exalt Him by saying, God, you are true. God, you are faithful.

Let's do that before we go. This is the conclusion of the message.

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