

Yielding To The Spirit Of God

by Carter Conlon

This sermon emphasizes the importance of yielding to the Spirit of God, highlighting the need to wait on the Lord, trust in His strength, and avoid relying on our own understanding or efforts. Drawing from the story of King Saul's failure to yield to God's Spirit, the message encourages listeners to surrender their plans, thoughts, and actions to God, seeking His guidance and strength in every aspect of life. The speaker underscores the necessity of developing a relationship of trust with God, allowing His Spirit to lead and empower believers to fulfill His will.

Scripture: Isaiah 40:31, 1 Samuel 13:12, Proverbs 1:23, Ezekiel 36:25, Acts 1:4

Topics: "Yielding to the Spirit", "Trusting God's Guidance"

Description

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Transcript

I want to talk to you this morning about yielding to the Spirit of God, learning to yield to the Spirit of God. What does that mean? What does it look like? How does it work for you, for me, for the new, for the curious, for the seasoned Christian? How does it, how do we yield to the Spirit of God? Isaiah chapter 40, if you'll go there, please, with me, Isaiah chapter 40. So Father, I thank you, Lord God, that I get to be first out of the gate this morning, yielding my body and mind to your Holy Spirit.

I thank you, Lord, that you have put this word on my heart and you've given it to me for the sake of your church. Lord, build this house, build your people. If you don't build it, Lord, our labor is in vain.

We can't build the house, O God. It can't be built by natural means. It can only be built by the Holy Spirit.

And so, Lord Jesus Christ, would you teach us how to yield to this inward presence of God in each of our lives? Would you help us, Lord God, to escape the confines of the mediocrity of our own strength and to let you take over, Lord? For you are going to have to give us strength, Lord, for these days now that we live in. And God, we thank you for this and praise you for it. In Jesus' name, amen.

Isaiah chapter 40, beginning at verse 25. To whom then will you liken me? This is the Lord speaking. Or to whom shall I be equal, says the Holy One? Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these things, who brings out their host by number, these are the stars, and calls them all by name.

By the greatness of his might and the strength of his power, not one is missing. Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, my way is hidden from the Lord and my just claim is passed over by my God? Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord, the everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the weak and to those who have no might, he increases strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

You know, one of the deepest mistakes that we can make as believers in Christ is to fall prey to the thought that God left us, you and I, in our own strength to come up with something that will bring glory to his name. You know, thank God he didn't leave us like that. That would be like putting a garbage can outside of a five-star restaurant and saying, do your best now to attract people to come in here and eat.

And so the garbage can would look within itself and it has some leftovers from days gone by. It has some things that people threw in there like you and I have, some comments that were made along the way, things that were thrown in as we're being raised. Not everything that was thrown inside of our physical body, our physical being was good for us.

And I don't know about you, but I've never passed by a garbage can that has drawn me into a restaurant. I hope that's not your story. I hope that's not your case.

But realistically, whenever you see a garbage can outside of a nice restaurant, you wonder who left that there and why did they leave it there? And the tendency would be to just step away a couple extra feet and do a bit of an arc around it. And you see, people who feel that we have to somehow come up with something from within ourselves to bring glory to God are exactly like that. That's what we look like from heaven's perspective.

You remember the story of King Saul. Now King Saul was, he was called as you and I are to rule and to reign and he was given an incredible promise and he was brought in to something that very few that are born into this world ever fully understand. God gave him incredible promise that he would have wisdom, he would have strength, he would have ability, he would have a lineage, he would be given the power to rule and to reign.

But he failed to understand that in order for all of this to happen and to become part of his life, he would have to learn to yield to the spirit of God. So hard for us to do that, for many of us, because we're so full of ideas. We're so full of things that we think are strengths, things that we feel that we can do like the two boys who had the Ark of God in their living room for a couple of years and when it was decided to send it back into its rightful place, they casually stretched out their hand to give help as it was to the presence of God heading back into its rightful place of worship and God struck one of them dead who touched it because he failed to realize that we are not responsible for propping up the kingdom of God.

God is well able to prop up his own kingdom, praise God. That's why in the book of Isaiah it says, go outside and count the stars. And God, we're just starting to invent devices now that are able to look deep, deep, deep into the galaxies and we're still probably not one, one millionth of the way through to the end of the galaxies.

But the Bible says, we just read it this morning, that God knows every star, put them exactly where they're supposed to be, called each of them by a name and not one of them is missing. So tell me who needs to prop up his kingdom? What ideas of ours does God need to promote his kingdom that he has established on the earth? The redemption that he has freely given us through his son, Jesus Christ. Samuel, the prophet came to Saul and Saul said these words in chapter 13 of first Samuel beginning at verse 12, then I said, the Philistines will now come down to be at Gilgal and I've not made supplication to the Lord.

Therefore I felt compelled and offered a burnt offering. Now his, he was told to wait, just wait, wait for God to come, wait for the instruction of God, wait for the strength of God. For the battle was not his, it was the Lord's, but he failed to understand that.

And he was the kind of a man who always feels like he's got to take things into his own hands. I have to do something, I have to make something happen. He was, he was not faith driven, he was fear driven, afraid for the future, afraid for his leadership, afraid that the outcome of the battle might not be the way that he thought it should.

And so preempting the spirit of God, there was a promise God's coming to you, his words coming to you, wait, don't, don't be governed by your eyes. Don't be governed by your natural mind. Think about your situation right now.

Think about the panic that's in your heart about something right now that you're facing. But the word of God to you is wait on the Lord, wait for God. Don't take matters into your own hands because you will ultimately make a mess of what it is that God would want to do through your life and how he would want to bring glory to his own name through your circumstance that you're facing.

Wait on the Lord. Don't try to fix everything. Men are terrible for this.

We always want to fix things. How many guys have had a conversation with your wife and she's, you're, you're jumping in before she's had a chance to even speak and you're, you're trying to fix it. You got your tool bag out and you got your wrench and you got your hammer.

And what does she say to you? Just listen to me. Now it's all past tense in my life that happened years and years and years ago. And I've learned that lesson.

But for all you guys that are young and getting married, listen, just listen. And this is what Samuel was trying to get through to Saul. Wait, just listen.

He would plead with him. Saul, listen to what God says and do what God says and God will do the rest. Wait on the Lord.

But Saul said, I started to be afraid. Elsewhere he says, the people started to leave me. The enemies were gathering and I felt compelled to do something spiritual.

That's the worst of it all, is when we are living in unbelief and we try to make it a spiritual thing. When we're moving in the flesh and we try to, you know, squirt a little bit of spiritual perfume on it and make it smell like God. But it's still a garbage can outside of a five star restaurant.

And Samuel said to Saul, you have done foolishly. You've not kept the commandment of the Lord, your God, which he commanded you. For now the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever.

If you had of listened to God, if you had listened to God, Samuel said, nobody could have defeated you. No circumstance could have taken you down. Don't you understand? He says, but now your kingdom will not continue.

The Lord has sought for himself a man after his own heart. And the Lord has commanded him to be commander over his people, because you have not kept what the Lord commanded you. Your kingdom, in other words, shall not continue.

The promises of God come to an end for you, Saul, because you simply wouldn't listen. You never learned to have confidence in God. You never determined in your heart, I'm going to trust him.

No matter how high the water gets, I'm going to trust him. He's given me his word. I'm going to obey his word.

I'm going to follow his word. I don't have to take this matter into my own hands. And the promise to him was your kingdom would continue.

In other words, there would be a presence of God and God's strength and power, not just in you, Saul, but it would be in your house and be upon your children and be upon your grandchildren. There would be a strength that we imparted from God through you to all that come after you, if you had only learned to listen. If you had only learned to obey what God speaks and not try to do it your own way, because of fear.

But now, he says, the Lord has sought for himself a man after his own heart. In other words, a man who understands the heart of God. Fear not, little flock.

Jesus said, it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. He's not withholding from you. The one who put the stars in the heavens, the one who created the galaxies, the one who called them all by name, the one who was in the beginning with God and all things were created by him.

The one who became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his face as of the face of God, full of grace, full of mercy, full of truth. The one who went to a cross and died. The one who told us, don't be afraid, I'm going to prepare a place for you.

The one who said, you're going to have trouble in this world, but don't be worried about it, I have overcome the world. Don't let it govern your thinking. It's in my heart to give you the victory.

That's what God would say to you today. It's in my heart to take you through your impossible places. It's in my heart to take you through those doors that you think will never open to you.

It's in my heart to make you into everything you could never hope to be in yourself and to give you giftings you don't have. And when I ascended up on high, I took captivity captive and I gave them to you. I showered you with these giftings of heaven.

And all I required of you, the Lord would say, is faith. I simply want you to believe that what I say is what I mean. Don't lean on your own understanding.

In all your ways, acknowledge him and he will direct your paths. The steps of a good man or good woman are ordered by the Lord. In other words, God has pre-planned your steps for the rest of your life.

He's pre-planned every valley of the shadow of death that you're gonna have to walk through. He's pre-planned every fire that's gonna try to bring you down, every flood that's gonna try to carry you away. And he's already promised you.

The flame will not kindle on you. The floods will not drown you. You're gonna come through the valley of the shadow of death and realize that goodness and mercy have been following you all the days of your life.

You're going to learn how faithful God is. And your testimony will one day soon be, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. I'm not gonna be put away like Saul.

I'm not gonna lose the presence of God in my home and on my family. But now I'm gonna dwell in the house of God. I'm going God's way.

I'm going with God. Let the world call it foolishness. I don't care.

Let them call me inactive. I'm simply gonna wait, because God said to wait. He said I would renew my strength.

He said I would mount up with wings like an eagle. He said I would run and not be weary, and I would walk and not faint. And that's good enough for me.

God gave me that promise, and that's what I'm going to believe. You know, one day the garbage can outside the five star restaurant comes in to the owner and says, listen boss, this is just not gonna work. There's only one thing that's gonna make this work, because everybody is just kind of bypassing.

They're actually not coming, they're not being drawn to this incredible banquet. They're being actually repulsed, because I'm out there in my own strength. You've got to do something for me that I can't do for myself.

You've got to wash me, first of all, of all of the filth of the past, and of everything that's been thrown inside of me, and everything that causes there to be a stench when it should be a sweet aroma of this place. And you have to put something inside of me that will draw people who are passing by to want to come into this place. That's what God does.

I mean, realistically, you think it's a funny illustration, but we really are a garbage can that the Holy Spirit has chosen to occupy. And listen to what he says in the book of Ezekiel, chapter 36. He says, I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean, and I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

I'll give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you will keep my judgments and do them.

Verse 36 of chapter 36 says, then the nations which are left all around you shall know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruined places and planted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken it, and I will do it. I'm gonna cleanse you.

I'm gonna put something good inside of you. I'm going to make you into a vessel that will draw people into the incredible banquet of God through Jesus Christ. I'm gonna do it, God says.

I'm gonna do it for my holy namesake. Not for your sake, but for my holy namesake, because you are mine. I bought you with a price and you belong to me, and I am going to cleanse the church of this generation.

I believe that with all my heart. I believe that's from God. He's going to cleanse the church of this generation in the midst of our sense of unworthiness, in the midst of coming to a realization that we can't build this kingdom in our own strength.

And forgive us, Lord, for ever trying to do what we're not able to do. The beauty of this whole story is the good news is that you and I can all become that man or that woman that God is searching for. Saul was put away and David was brought in.

So God in his mercy can put the Saul away that's in all of us and bring in the David. Put away the heart that can't believe. Put away the heart that can't trust.

Put away the life that just always has to figure everything out and bring in the man who simply has a song of praise and worship and a song of trust in God. Bring in the one who will face the lion and face the giant, the bear, not in his own strength, but in the strength of his God. Bring in the one who knows the source of his strength.

Remember David's prayer. He says, oh God, take not your Holy Spirit from me. For he understood that his strength, his song, his life, his ability to govern and rule and every promise came because the spirit of God was on him.

And he had learned to yield to the spirit of God. When he walked into the camp of Israel, when they were facing the armies that were threatening their very freedoms and their very existence, the spirit of God came upon him. And he began to prophesy to the voice that was being raised against the people of God.

And he ran into the valley and he ran into face the danger of that present time, not in his own strength, but in the strength of God. And I'm telling you folks, we are facing a giant in our generation and we need to learn again to yield to the spirit of God. We've got to become a people who can honestly say, my life going forward is not by might, not by power, but by the spirit of God.

It's by God's spirit, I will run this race. It's by God's spirit, I will know what to do. It's by God's spirit, I will live to experience the victory that only he can give.

In Proverbs chapter one, verse 23, the Lord says, turn at my rebuke and surely I'll pour out my spirit on you and I will make my words known to you. Turn at my rebuke, when I challenge you, the Lord says, it's all through the word of God that you can't walk this walk in your own strength. You can't represent the kingdom of God by anything you can produce by human effort.

So when I rebuke you for trying, he says, simply turn, turn and I will pour out my spirit on you. And I'll make my words known to you. In other words, not just it will be the promises that I make to you, that I will do for you what you can't do for yourself.

And by the spirit of God, you will start to understand this is a kingdom of supernatural power. This is a kingdom where God desires to be God inside of every life. You have a unique calling, everybody that's here today, you do.

Now you can't fulfill it in your own strength. So don't try, you will wind up like the garbage can outside the five-star restaurant. You can't fulfill it in your own strength.

You can only fulfill it by yielding to the spirit of God. The recognition, I'm not talking about complacency. I'm talking about, Lord, you lead me.

Lord, you guide me. Don't let me be governed by my own thoughts. Don't let my own reasonings lead me.

You guide me. Guide me as I face the small problems in life. Guide me as I try to raise a godly family.

Guide me as I'm choosing a life partner. For those of you who are single today, if you don't yield to the spirit, if you don't pray now, you're gonna pray after. I'll promise you, you'll pray after you get married if you don't pray now.

And you'll be at every meeting, you'll be at every church service, you'll be at every Tuesday night. You'll even sneak into young adults meetings on Friday night. You'll be so desperate for God.

If you don't pray now. Listen to what the Lord says through Isaiah again. He says, why do you say, in chapter 40, verse 27, why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel? My way is hidden from the Lord.

In other words, God doesn't see me. Where is God when I need him? Why is God not in my problem? Why is God not leading me where I need to go or giving me the strength that I need to have? He says that my just claim is passed over by my God. Am I not a child of God? Do I not belong to you, Lord Jesus? Why then are you so far from my crying, my roaring? Why do you not seem to be speaking to me and leading me? Have you not known, verse 28, have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary, and his understanding is unsearchable.

Remember in the book of Luke, when Jesus was raised from the dead, right at the end of the gospel of Luke, and he's walking on by two men who were discouraged on the Emmaus road, and he starts speaking to them, and they said to him, are you just a stranger here? Have you not heard of the things that have gone on here? It's ironic because it's actually the inversion of what's actually written here, where God is saying to his own people, have you not known? Have you not heard? In other words, do you not know who I am, God is saying? Has it escaped you somehow that I created the universe by the words of my mouth? Are we missing something here? What have you been studying? Where have you been getting your instruction? Why are you so fearful in the middle of your struggle? Have you not heard that the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth, doesn't faint, nor is weary, his understanding is unsearchable, and he gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might, he increases strength. Even youth shall faint and be weary, and the young man shall utterly fall. In other words, have you not known? Have you not heard that it's in God's heart to give strength to his people? Have you not understood yet that you are a supernatural being now, that you've come to Christ, you have the Holy Spirit living inside of these earthen vessels? Has it somehow escaped you? That's what God's saying to his own

people Israel.

Do you not know who you are? Do you not understand that through your father Abraham, you were destined by God to be blessed and to be a blessing in the earth? Do you not know that all the people of the world are supposed to be blessed through you? But then you look at God and I say, well, God, why then have you passed me by? Why am I so weak? Why do I seemingly have no strength? Why don't I have a voice? Why doesn't my life make any difference? And he says, he gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might, he increases strength. Even you shall faint and be weary and the young men shall utterly fall. You see, the point being, you can't do this in your own strength.

It doesn't matter how many degrees you have on your wall or how much you can bench press in the gym or how big a marathon you can run. You can't do this. You might be able to do some things in the earth, but you can't fulfill the will of God in your own strength.

And so he basically saying all flesh is going to come to a place where the scripture says in Isaiah chapter 40, he says that all flesh is like grass. The grass withers, the flower fades because the breath of the Lord blows upon it. And surely the people are grass.

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of God stands forever. You can't do this. Settle it.

Settle it. Settle it in your heart. You can't do this.

I can't do this. None of us can do this. I don't care how smart you are, how young you are, how strong you are.

You can't do this. This is a walk you can't walk in your own strength. The youth will become weary.

The vision will begin to fade. Young men will utterly fall. Try.

Oh, I've been there. I know what this is all about. Oh, I got saved at 24, filled with the Spirit shortly after, headed out to win the country for God.

Oh yes, I did. North, south, east, and west. I went up with the Eskimo people.

They're called First Nations or something now. And I went on Indian reservations. I went everywhere.

I became a revivalist to drying up churches. And I ran. I would fast until my ribs showed.

That's a long time ago. As you can tell, that's a long time ago. And I would jog during the day and preach at night until I hit 37.

And one day, trying to carry the cross of Christ, I went face down in the dirt and couldn't get up again. Lost all strength, could barely preach. Took about six months or so to fully recover.

And I was so angry with God. I was just so angry with God. I went out on a country road one day and just screamed at Him.

I just got it. I was so mad. If He would have said, I'm gonna turn you to dust, I would have said, go ahead right now.

I don't care. I meant it. I was just fed up.

I said, I remember saying, is this how you treat your friends? I gave you my life. I gave you my home. I gave you my family.

I gave you my career. And now you respond by taking away my strength. And so I was just so fed up.

I said, is there some crooked side to you that I'm not aware of? Is there some delight, secret delight, in letting me just go down into the dust at the age of 37 and not rise again when I've done it all for you? You see, I didn't fully comprehend these scriptures. Even the youth shall faint and be weary and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary and they shall walk and not faint. And I remember, I expected to receive something back in kind from the Lord because I had just let it all out on that gravel road that day.

And I got down on my knees and the only thing I could hear him say is I love you. And it melted my heart. Why would he respond like that? When I was accusing him of saying, my way is hidden from you, God.

My just claim is passed over. I've claimed the right to be a revivalist and travel the country and see it turned back to you. And when he said, I love you, the only thing that came out of my heart was what would you have me to do? And he said to me, only what I ask you to do.

No more, no less. You don't have to win the country for me. That's not, I've not asked you to do that.

As a matter of fact, he said to me, much of what you've done is gonna burn on the altar one day because when the purity of God touches it, it won't stand. Only what I've asked you to do. And so I said, Lord, what do you want me to do? And he said, take that little group of people that I've given you in the wilderness and love them.

Bring my word to them, dedicate their children, bury the dead, marry the young and make sure that every one of their names, when you stand before me, make sure every name on that list is there. Do your best. And I stood up from that place of weakness.

I stood up from that place of confusion in the strength of God and my strength returned, but not mine this time. It was his strength that came into this physical body. And since that day, I've had no desire whatsoever, whatsoever to be anywhere or do anything apart from the will of God.

There's no value in it. There's no strength in it if God's not in it. Those who wait upon the Lord shall renew.

Wait carries the connotation of being bound together by twisting. That's really the actual definition of it. It's like two twist ties tied together.

Those who are intertwined, those who recognize God, those who open their hearts to his strength, those who yield to the power of the Holy Spirit, those who trust in his promises. It doesn't mean you just sit there and wait. There's an action involved in this.

It's a trust. It's developing a relationship of trust. It's saying, God, I'm gonna believe what I read.

It's gonna become my guide. And I'm not gonna move unless you tell me to. I'm not gonna go to the left or to the right.

I don't wanna be anywhere that you don't want me to be. Nowhere. I wanna be in that place where you've called me to be.

And I wanna trust you for the strength to fulfill what I'm called to do. You see, I always carry that in my heart. You recognize now, and some people say, oh, it must be great to pastor a church of thousands of people.

Well, in one respect it is, in another it isn't. Because I stand at the throne of God one day and I'm gonna give an account for every one of you. Every one of you sitting here today, those of you online who consider this your congregation, I will give an account to God for you.

If you are there or if you're not there, I will have to answer for it. And so by the grace of God, I know that I need to be where I need to be, where God's placed me, or I won't have a word for you. But if I'm in the will of God, then God promises that I will renew my strength.

I will mount up with wings like eagles. And believe me, when you get to be an old eagle, you really need new wings. They shall run and not be weary and they shall walk and not faint.

Learning to yield to the spirit of God. I think next to that initial humbling where we received Christ as our savior, it might be the greatest struggle that you and I face. It's so hard for us to give up because remember the sin, the original sin that's in the heart of all people created in the image of God is to try to be as God is without God.

That's the original sin. The belief that we can be as God is without the presence of God in us. And so it's so hard to yield that and say, Lord, I can't be godly.

I don't know the way forward. I am prone to making rash decisions. I'm prone to doing things that are gonna cause pain, not just to me, but also to those around me that I love.

And so God, I'm asking you, give me the grace to wait on you. Help me to learn to yield to the spirit of God. This is the key.

This is the key to the church becoming strong again. Jesus could have appeared in the John 21 and he could have basically said to everybody there, here's the Holy Spirit, here's the clove and tongues of fire, where you go. No, there was an instruction that came before that.

Most of you know what that instruction was. Terry, wait. The one thing Saul couldn't do, he told the disciples, wait.

Wait until the Holy Spirit comes. And when the Holy Spirit comes and touches your life, you will know what to do. And the rest is history.

When the spirit of God came upon those first believers, they came out of that door and everybody knew what they were doing and where they were supposed to go. And they had the divine enablement to accomplish the will of God for their lives. And it was through these early believers that the whole known world received the gospel.

And that you and I are now carrying the torch of this particular moment in history, where once again, we have to learn to be yielded to the spirit of God. May God help you. May God help me.

And now, here's where it comes down. Here's where it becomes practical for every life. I want to talk to you for just a moment about the decision that you're facing.

You know, some of you, it's about relationships, either entering into or exiting. Others, it's about jobs, personalities, careers, difficulties. You see, it's as with David the King, it's your lion and your bear.

It's your secret battle that you're fighting. This is where God is going to start teaching you the power of learning to yield to the spirit of God. You simply yield by saying, God, show me what to do.

Tell me what to speak. And it's just step by step, day by day. You don't have to have the grand master plan.

Just every day, Lord, just show me what to do. And as he shows you what to do, you start to realize this is indeed a supernatural kingdom. I never would have thought of doing it that way.

Which is the truth. And as you walk with the spirit of God leading you, the enablement of God comes behind you. And something of God begins to be established in your life that nothing of this world can take away from you and can't take it away from your family either.

And so I challenge you with all my heart, whatever it is that you're facing, yield it to the Holy Spirit now. Say, Lord, it's just a matter of surrender. Lord, I yield.

I yield my thoughts. I yield my plans. I yield my schemes and designs.

I yield my anger. I yield everything, God, to you. And I'm asking you, Lord Jesus Christ, cleanse me, change me, help me.

And may my life become an attraction to even your enemies. May they want to sit at your table one day because of something they see and they feel through my life. Oh God, I pray for your church this morning, Lord.

Lord, we have been a natural people as the body of Christ in this nation for too long now. And Lord, we're facing an enemy. We're facing a moment in history, God, where if we don't yield to you, we're not going to win.

Just as Saul wound up nailed to a wall. God, so many of your people are going to go down in defeat if we don't learn, if we just don't learn to yield to you. And so I'm asking God for an open heaven today, an open transaction with your Holy Spirit that you would touch every heart, you would touch every life.

And God, give us all the strength to wait. And Father, I thank you in Jesus' name. Now, I want to give an altar call today.

This is online too as well in our campus churches, here at Times Square Church and in our annex. For those who simply say, Pastor, you just went down the center of my life right now. You went down the center of the highway I'm traveling.

And I've got to learn to wait. I've got to learn to wait on God. I'm in danger of doing the thing that Saul did.

I'm in danger of taking my own course of action and adding a measure of religion to it. And Lord, you won't tolerate this. There's no victory in this.

Give me the grace, oh God, to wait on you. Give me the grace and lead me. Lead me, Holy Spirit, lead me.

If that's the cry of your heart, I'm going to ask you to come forward. We're going to stand up in the balcony of the main site. Just come out and meet me here at this altar.

And we're going to take a moment to worship. Then we're going to pray together and believe God for great strength, great strength. Let's all stand, please, if you will.

And if the Lord's speaking to you, just make your way down here. In the annex, we'll wait for you. If you want to make your way here, we'll wait for you.

God, help me. God, help me to wait. God, help me to wait.

Some of you, you're going to be so happy that you prayed this prayer today. A year from now, a month from now, you will be so, so happy that you took this time to pray. John the apostle was still alive when Jesus came to him and spoke to him about the condition of his own people.

And I really want to encourage you to go and read the letters to the churches in the revelation of Jesus Christ, the last book in the New Testament. Because there's a promise in each of those letters. Said, he who has the ears to hear, let him hear.

And to he who overcomes, I will give. And then you see all of the promises. But you have to have the ears to hear.

And only God can give those ears. And that tells me there's a group of people, and it's less than a full generation away from the death and resurrection of Christ, that have cultivated a religion, but they've not cultivated a relationship of listening to the voice of God. So that when Christ himself speaks, they can't hear.

Because they're so given to doing things their way, that they've plugged into a religious system. And they've gotten used to taking control as it is from God. And the promise of God is, the son of God, who has the ears to hear, I will.

And you look, I'll make him an overcomer. I'll give him a new name. And you just look at all the things that he says he's gonna do.

So I'm gonna pray for you that God give you ears to hear. The voice of the spirit. Because he promises to be that voice that says, this is the way, walk in it.

And it starts with just little things, little things. Wait, wait, in that situation, whatever your situation you're facing, wait, let me work for you. Let me do the work.

You can't do this work. Let me do it for you. Wait, wait, don't try to cover it up with some religious activity.

Wait, that's exactly what Saul did. He covered up his disobedience with activity, religious activity. And it looks so holy, it looks so good, but it cost him everything.

And it cost his family too. Wait on the Lord, wait on the Lord. He's the only one who can build the kingdom.

If he doesn't build it, the Bible says, our labor is in vain. If he's not the one that's changing my life, then my efforts to change myself are in vain. I can't change certain situations, but if I learn to wait the promises of God.

So I'm gonna pray for you now that God give you ears to hear, ears to hear, ears to hear. And always, always try to ask the Lord to do that. Say, God, help me to hear you today.

Help me to hear you today. And it'll be a whisper. It'll be a whisper to give a kind word.

It'll be a whisper, don't go down that street today. Now don't get goofy on with this stuff, you know, but it'll be there, it'll be just there. I can't explain it any other way.

It'll be God just speaking to you and flowing through you when you and I learn to let him lead. So Father, I pray for my brothers and sisters today at this altar and those on their knees or standing in their homes, God, online today as well. And in our campus churches, God, I pray.

Oh God, give us ears to hear. Give us ears to hear and hearts to obey what we hear. Lord, you are our life.

As Paul once said, it's in you that we live and move and have our being. God, you have to deliver us from ourselves. And give us the grace, Lord, to hear your voice and to do the things you say and the things you've already spoken.

I pray God for this church, Lord, that we'd be a church that can hear you every day, all day, Lord, everywhere we go, Lord, and the miracles of God would begin to abound. Lord, when you find an obedient heart, there's no limit to what you can do. Lord, to step out of the box and maybe lay hands on somebody who's sick, to give a kind word to somebody who hates us.

Lord, whatever the situation might be, whatever it might be, to learn to yield to you, O Spirit of God, because you know every heart, you know every life, you know every thought of every person. God, give us the grace to yield. Help us not to take over this walk, Lord.

Father, thank you, God. I pray, Lord Jesus Christ, especially at this Christmas time, that you would give us the gift of tender hearts and listening ears. Give us courage, Lord Jesus Christ, every one of us, to actually trust you, to step out of the boat and walk on the water again.

Give us the grace, my God, to believe for healing in situations that seem to be irreconcilable. Give us the patience to wait, Lord, to wait, God, until you bring that right situation to pass or that right person into our lives or whatever the situation is, God, give us the grace to wait, to wait. Help us, Lord, not to take charge, O God.

And I just thank you, Lord, because you are preparing us, Lord, to stand. You are preparing a people with listening ears and hearts filled with the Spirit of God. So, Father, God, set us aflame for you again, Lord, in our generation.

And we ask that we might have the privilege of being supernatural examples of your presence, Lord, that will draw people to your banquet table. They will not take a wide step around, Lord, your house because of us, but, O God, they will see and sense something in us that will draw them to you. And, Lord, we thank you and we praise you in Jesus' name.

Amen and amen. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/KrVLSpZw9Tk.mp4>

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