

# You Could Not Cast Him Out

by Carter Conlon

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer and fasting in bringing true freedom of Christ to this generation, and warns against the dangers of self-indulgence and a prayerless church age.*

**Duration:** 53:13

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Mark 9:14-17, Mark 9:19, Mark 9:22, John 11:25, Acts 16:26

**Topics:** "Unbelief"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the increasing violence and hopelessness in society, particularly among young people. He highlights the deep wounds and disillusionment that many individuals are experiencing, leading them to search for answers in various paths that only bring more pain. The speaker emphasizes the importance of hearing and knowing the truth, as many have been deceived and left without direction. He also references a biblical story in Mark chapter 9, where a young man is described as being torn apart and wasting away, symbolizing the plight of many in society today.

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## Transcript

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None of these messages are copyrighted, and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to friends. The Gospel of Mark, Chapter 9. Mark, Chapter 9. The message that God put on my heart last night. It's called, They Could Not Cast Him Out.

They Could Not Cast Him Out. Jesus, we come to you tonight. We declare that you are the resurrection and the life.

If a man believed in you, though he were dead, yet shall he live. For God, that's what your word says. And Lord, I'm asking tonight that by the power and unction of the Holy Spirit, that the man that came out of my body would be living water.

Lord, that you would touch lives, that you would open prison doors, that you would deliver those that have been oppressed to the devil. Thank you for this tonight. We praise you and we bless you.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Mark, Chapter 9, beginning at verse 14.

And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great crowd about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And it'll come. Take the handheld mic.

You ever wonder what the apostle Paul did without all this technology? Hallelujah. And when he came to his disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them. And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to him saluted him.

And he asked the scribes, what question ye with them? In other words, they were asking questions to his disciples. And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit. And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him, and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away.

And I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out, and they could not. He answered them and said, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him, and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tear him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming.

And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child. And oft times it hath cast him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him. But if thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us.

Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out and said with tears, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief. When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

And the spirit cried and rent him sore and came out of him, and he was as one dead, insomuch that many said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting.

We're here seeing a scenario where Jesus comes down upon a scene where there's much discussion, there's a gathering, people are talking, questions are being asked. Many of Christ's disciples are there and all kinds of scribes are around, and I'm sure that there were no shortage of a curious multitude of the local people, both religious and unreligious, that had gathered around to discuss some of the things that were going on. And he comes down upon this scene and was wondering what the situation is, although he already knew he was the Son of God.

And a man steps out of the crowd, in verse 17, and he says, I have a son, and I brought him to your disciples. My son has a dumb spirit, and wherever he goes, he takes him, he tears him, and he foams and gnashes with his teeth and pines away. In other words, he's wasting away.

And I spoke to your disciples that they should cast him out, and they could not. And also in verse 22, again, this father describes the plight of his son. He says that oft times it's cast him into the fire and into the waters to destroy him.

And we're seeing a situation that really sounds familiar to what we're living in today, does it not? I believe there's multitudes, multitudes of people that are wandering about in this society now, afflicted by the powers of darkness. You see it continuously, especially in New York City. I've never seen more people in

one particular place, grumbling and mumbling and cursing to themselves as they walk down the street, afflicted by the powers of darkness, having no answers.

This young man was dumb. He couldn't speak. And we're living now at a time when many people, especially young people, don't have any answers.

They've not been given any truth. And so they walk down the street, afflicted, wandering, dumb in one sense of having no answers, unable to speak. Somebody would ask them, where are you going? What purpose is there to life? And they don't know.

They can't tell you anymore. No direction. And they're deaf as well as this young man was, simply because they've never heard the truth.

And no matter what is said, it seems that in so many people now, nothing seems to enter in. Everybody's heard so much. Everybody's had an answer.

And now we're watching society virtually decay all around us. And we're seeing the plight of this young man that is described in this verse in Mark chapter 9, is the plight of very many people in this society that we're living in right now. In verse 18, his father says, Everywhere wheresoe he taketh him, he teareth him.

In other words, the devil's got a hold of him. And everywhere he takes him, he tears him. In other words, every pathway just brings more pain.

Just like the prodigal son that left the blessings of his father and went out and spent his inheritance with riotous living. And every pathway that he took just brought him down deeper and brought him darker and brought more pain into his heart. Wherever he takes him, the father said he tears him.

And that's what the devil does. When people don't know truth, he takes them down path after path, and it promises them liberty. Down here you're going to find peace.

He walks a little farther down that path, and sooner than he knows it, there's a tearing. His heart just rips even more. Deeper abuse comes into his life.

More despair, more discouragement. And have we ever seen a generation, especially in North America like this one, with so many young people especially, walking down so many different paths, looking for hope, looking for something, being led about by powers of darkness, and every path they go down just seems to tear them more. Every new thing brings a deeper disillusionment into their lives.

And he also says, and he foams and gnashes with his teeth. We see now an increase of violence in our society. Especially, I didn't come here to talk specifically about youth, but there's a concern.

You read about it, all you've got to do really is pick up a Time or Maclean's magazine now, and you're consistently reading articles about the violence of youth in our society. It seems that we have a generation of young people lost, unable to hear, with no answers, and foaming at the mouth and gnashing with their teeth. Seeing such an increase of violence, articles continuously in the paper about high schools and gangs and guns and the things that are going on.

An incredible violence because they've been lied to and not given the truth. And there's a deep, deep feeling of wounding in the hearts of so many people. We're seeing now ever-increasing acts of senseless violence throughout society, such as the recent trials that have so much publicity throughout America.

Things that are unheard of before. Things that just didn't happen with the frequency that they're happening with today. He also, the Father says, and he's pining away.

He foams and gnashes with his teeth, and he's pining away. He's wasting away. Would you agree with me, brothers and sisters, tonight, that we're living in a generation that just seems to be wasting away? You leave the doors of this church and go out on the streets of New York tonight, and we meet people all over the streets that are virtually, some are physically, wasting away.

The ravages of sin have taken hold of their body, and they're losing weight. It's obvious they're just wasting away. I remember one man one night coming to the altar in this church and responding to a Salvation Altar call, and two of his friends virtually picked him up and brought him down here.

He was dying of a disease. There was nothing left, just skin and bones. He just bowed his head on the platform here and wept and gave his life to the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

But a whole generation wasting away, pining away. We see people that no matter how good they look, out on the streets there's a deep yearning, a deep wasting. There's a sense of hopelessness in the lives of many people as they travel to and fro now throughout society.

They have a feeling that, I'm going nowhere, I'm accomplishing nothing. My life is a waste. You hear that even in the testimonies tonight of the lives that have come to Christ.

I was going nowhere. I was dying. I tried every avenue and nothing was bringing any satisfaction.

We're seeing now people oppressed to the enemy, wasting away all throughout society. I think on a scale that we've never known before, especially since North America has chosen to cast the Word of God out of our schools and cast the Word of God out of most of our public institutions. And the mockery that the public are now subjected to throughout the media of the things of God.

And also in verse 22, the Father is describing His Son even further. He said, And oft times it has cast Him into the fire. And so many of you can even attest to that tonight, that oft times as you were oppressed to the devil, that He cast you into all kinds of trouble.

He threw you into the fires of affliction and you try to get out and seemingly get some respite for a day and then the next day you're into another fire all over again. All kinds of people now in society are being cast into places of uncontrolled passion. Cast into the fire.

Go for this and go for that and somehow that's going to satisfy your need. All you have to do is go down some of the streets after you leave the church tonight and watch all these people going in and out without even any shame anymore. There was a time when there was shame associated with immorality, but now they go in and out of all of these places and they're led by their passions.

Their passions are now uncontrolled. The testimonies of so many people that even though they knew they were dying, they cannot control their passion. They're cast by the powers of darkness into uncontrolled fire and into the waters.

He says also in verse 22, young people now especially are looking for truth. They're looking for something and they're being cast into all kinds of false ideologies and religious idea. There's only one water that gives life and that's the water of Jesus Christ, the testimony of Christ.

That's the pure water of God's Word that comes and gives a man clear thinking. It gives him hope again for the future and washes away his sins and destroys his enemies. It was the pure water of God that destroyed the armies of Pharaoh that were pursuing the armies of Israel who were heading into that place of promise.

That was a type and shadow of what the water of God will do when a sinner comes out of darkness and turns from his or her sin and says, Lord Jesus, touch my life, touch my heart. Turn me away from the things that I once used to do. There is a pure stream of water and that pure stream of water is the Word of Almighty God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No man can come to the Father, Jesus said, except through me. John 7, he said, if any man believes in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

I will change that man. I'll give him hope. I'll give him a new life.

I'll put my spirit within him. I'll cleanse him from the things that he used to be and I'll make him new. But young people today looking for truth are running into all kinds of... the devil is casting them into false water, false ideologies, false religions, false religious ideas, false concepts of humanity, of where we've come from, where we are and where we're going.

We're seeing a rise in mystic religions now throughout North America that is unprecedented. Young people are... time and again now I'm reading in the paper of celebrities and people that are well known that are now turning to Islam and they're turning to all kinds of Eastern religions. False water.

A flood of false water is being sent out now. At first it was against the church. As the Scripture says in the book of Revelation, the serpent cast a flood out against the woman and against the seed of the woman.

The false theologies and the false doctrines of Christ. But now there's a false ideology being cast out into the land to scoop up anybody that can still want to hear or scoop up anybody and everybody that wants to find the truth and to walk with God. The Bible in Proverbs chapter 7 talks about these false ideologies, these false religions that allure those that are young and unsuspecting and standing on the street corners.

Solomon said she comes out of her house. She's loud and stubborn in heart and calls this young man into the house and he goes as a lamb to the slaughter. He doesn't realize what he's doing.

He doesn't know that her house is the way to hell. Going down, the Scripture says, to the chambers of death. And in verse 18, the father says to Jesus, he said, and I spoke to your disciples that they should cast him out.

Here's the devil leading my son by the nose all these years and destroying him. And here, we are disciples. These are the men that represent you.

And I thought there'd be such hope in them. And so I came to them and asked that they could do something. And they couldn't do anything.

Their words were empty. It's possible that the disciples, no doubt, had many words. They had approaches.

They had theories. But one thing is certain. They had no word of authority.

No matter what they said, no matter how loud they cried, no matter whether or not they asked the demonic powers to identify themselves, no matter what they did, nothing happened. The young man was still possessed of the devil. His father was still broken-hearted.

Just like in the sons of Sceva in Acts chapter 19. These were men who were sons of an unrighteous person who thought that they would go and cast out devils, just like the apostle Paul was doing. And when they went to a person who was demon-possessed and they said, I adjure thee in the name of Jesus, whom Paul preaches, that you come out.

And the demon-possessed man turned to them and the devil spoke and said, Jesus I know and Paul I know, but who are you? And they fled naked and wounded before this man who was possessed of the devil. And it's sad to say that I believe that much of modern-day Christianity has fled naked and wounded before the powers of darkness. We have the message of eternal life.

We have a message of power. We have a message to bring to people that Christ has triumphed over the power of hell and the power of the grave and the power of darkness. And yet somehow in the midst of all of the religious conversation and all of the conferences and all of the things that go on in the supposed kingdom of God, somewhere down the line that message has been lost and people wander around afflicted to the devil, lost in darkness, deaf and dumb.

And I believe that Jesus tells us the reason why much of this happened, especially with His disciples. In verse 28 it says, When He was come into the house, His disciples asked Him privately, and they said, Why could we not cast Him out? And He said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, not by conferences, not by fancy preaching, not by wonderful worship, by nothing but by prayer and fasting. You see, the disciples at this point in their walk with God had not yet paid the price in prayer or personal devotion to the Lord.

And in fasting, which really represents a denial of themselves, they were enamored. They were taken up with the presence of Christ. They were enamored with the fact that this indeed was the Messiah, the Son of God.

They were enamored with the fact that He could feed 5,000 with just a few loaves and a few fishes. They saw the miracles. They saw the wind and the waves stopped.

But they themselves yet had not been willing to pay the price. They had not come to that place. Peter was yet to forsake Jesus and curse His name and say that he'd never known Him.

John was going to run. The whole group was going to flee Him. But there was a day coming when God was going to give them of His Holy Spirit.

And even though they not yet were paying the price, they were going to come to a place of understanding what it was to pay the price of following Christ. Jesus said, if any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. Many, many, many people who call themselves by the name of Christ in North America today have not been willing to pay the price of discipleship.

We are living in a prayerless church age of self-indulgence, especially in America, that's not been able to bring true freedom of Christ to this generation. They talk about freedom, but the Apostle Peter says many themselves are the servants of corruption. They've become enemies of the cross.

Their God is their own belly. And all they've got is theories and all they have is conventions and all they have is nice little platitudes to bring to the people. But there are so very few that can operate today in the true and genuine power of the risen Savior Jesus Christ and bring Him to this generation.

It's simply because they have not been willing to pay the price of prayer and fasting and wholehearted dedication to God. That's what prayer and fasting is all about. It's going to God with all of your heart and dedicating your life to Him and calling out to Him and saying, Lord Jesus, bring deliverance to this people.

And oh God, use my life if you want to use my life. Fasting is an indication that there's a willingness at all costs to lay aside the comforts of this flesh to lay aside the conveniences of this life and say, Lord, I will deprive myself. I am willing to be denied, oh God, that Your power might be made manifest once again in this generation and that You may deliver people who are captivated by the powers of darkness and bring them to that place of deliverance.

Bring them to that place of life and liberty in Christ Jesus. The same liberty You gave to me, oh God. Oh Lord, I dedicate my life to You that God, You would take that liberty through my life and bring it to those people who are dying all around me in this generation.

The prophet Isaiah cries out against the religious condition of his age. In Isaiah chapter 58, let me just read it to you. He says in verse 4, he said, These people were fasting to some degree, but he said, you're fasting for the wrong reasons.

You fast for strife and debate. You fast to smite with the fist of wickedness. In other words, you fast to be able to point the finger at those that are not as spiritual as you are.

You fast to make your voice to be heard on high. Jesus is saying, it's not to make my voice heard. You fast to make your voice heard.

You fast so that people will stand up and notice you. You fast so that they will be able to look at you and say, what a holy woman of God. What a holy man of God.

What a holy church. What a holy denomination. He said, that's why you fast.

And that's why, earlier on in Isaiah 58, they said, how come Lord, we fast so often and you don't seem to be hearing our cries? He says, you're doing it simply for religious reasons. You're not doing it because you want to share my heart and lay your life down as a living sacrifice for my purposes. You've not yet understood what it is to pay the price to see the power of God released through your life into the lives of others who are bound by the powers of darkness.

And later on in verse 6, he says, is not this the fast that I have chosen? Is it not to loose the bands of wickedness? To undo heavy burdens? To let the oppressed go free and that you break every yoke? In other words, what he's saying, is it not to share in faith the heart of Jesus for the oppressed? Is the fast that I've not called for you to call out to me to fill you and to virtually consume every essence of your being? That you would call out denying yourself and say, God, I lay my life out that I may see your power go forth and deliver these people who are deaf and dumb in our society, who haven't heard anything and have no answers and nowhere to go. These people that are being oppressed to the devil and cast down and led into various fires and trials and difficulties. The Lord says to Isaiah, is this not the fast that I've chosen? That you cry out to me and that you ask me to work at all costs, even if it's the cost of your own life.

We see such illustrations of fasting and the power of God being released. Look at the book of Deuteronomy, please. The third book of the old Deuteronomy chapter 9. We see Moses now, having led the people out of the bondage of Egypt going up into the mountain where he was meeting with God.

You know the story. He comes down and finds the people dancing around a golden calf. Only 40 days had passed since he had gone and now they were worshipping an idol of their own making.

And in verse 9, Deuteronomy chapter 9, verse 9, Moses now speaking to the people and he says, When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the Lord made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights. I neither did eat bread nor drink water. You see, Moses fasted before the Lord.

And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God. And on them was written according to all the words which the Lord spake with you in the mount of the midst of the fire and the day of the assembly. And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights the Lord gave me two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant.

The Lord said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly. From hence, for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves. They are turned aside out of the way which I commanded them and they have made a molten image.

Furthermore, the Lord spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. In verse fourteen, he says, Let me alone that I may destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven. And I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they.

Now go to verse eighteen. And I fell down before the Lord as at the first. In other words, the second time, Moses says, I fell down on my face before God.

And forty days and forty nights I did neither eat bread nor drink water because of all your sins which you sinned in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord to provoke Him to anger. And you see, Moses, the man after God's heart, is up simply to receive the commandments of the Lord and he fasts for forty days and forty nights. And then he comes down and he sees the people corrupting themselves with a false image that they had made.

And then he goes back up into the mountain again and he fasts another forty days and forty nights. And there was something about this man Moses that caused God, who had determined in Exodus 9, 13, He had determined to slay the people. And in verse 14, but at the beginning of verse 14, God says something that I consider absolutely phenomenal to say to a man.

God says to Moses, Let me alone. Moses, don't even think of speaking to me. Moses, don't bother me.

Moses, Moses, leave me alone. I've determined to do something in my heart. The absolute humility of God that He would tell a man to leave me alone.

And so Moses just ignores that and he falls back on his face again and begins to pray and to fast and beseeches God not to destroy the people of Israel. He says, Lord, I know there are stiff-necked people but remember for your own holy name's sake. And Moses begins to cry out to God.

And Moses fasted and he prayed. You see, there's something about prayer and fasting. This kind does not come out but by prayer and fasting, Jesus said.

And Moses began to fast before the Lord and he prayed. And I can see God shaking His head. There was something about a man who's wholeheartedly given to God who knows what it is to pay the price of prayer and fasting.

And God changed His mind and spared the people of Israel that day because Moses prayed and Moses fasted. And I believe with all my heart that if God can find people in this generation who are willing to deny themselves and come before the Lord with strong crying and fasting, calling to Him with all of their heart again, and saying, Lord, what we have not been able to do. Like Nehemiah, Nehemiah's day.

He was in the king's house as a cupbearer. Turn there please with me. Nehemiah, chapter 1. Hallelujah.

Now, Nehemiah has it made, really. He's a cupbearer in the king's palace. He's comfortable.

He has position. He has authority. And he inquires one day, what are left of the people that he left behind? His own people.

And in Nehemiah, chapter 1, verse 3, he gets his response. And he says, And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach. The wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.

And it came to pass when I heard these words that I sat down and wept and mourned certain days and did what? Fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. And I said, I beseech Thee, O Lord God of heaven, the great and terrible God that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love Him and observe His commandments. Let Thine ear now be attentive and Thine eyes open that Thou mayest hear the prayer of Thy servant which I pray before Thee now day and night for the children of Israel, Thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we, interesting he didn't say they, but which we have sinned against Thee, both I and my father's house have sinned.

We have dealt very corruptly against Thee and have not kept the commandments nor the statutes nor the judgments which Thou commendedst Thy servants Moses. And so here's an impossible situation. The remnant are poor.

The walls are down. The gates are burnt with fire. And this one man, Nehemiah, hears about it and sits down and weeps and mourns certain days and fasts and prays before the God of heaven and begins to confess his sin and begins to confess the sins of the people and cries out to God that God would grant mercy.

And then God certainly did grant mercy. First, God opened His own heart to Nehemiah and to the cry of Nehemiah. Don't ever estimate what God will do when one man or woman, somebody somewhere, begins to cry out to the Lord and says, God, not only am I praying, but I'm putting my life in with my prayers.

Lord, bring deliverance. Bring it by anybody, by somebody. God, if you want to, you can do it by me.

Nehemiah was not a warrior. He was not a soldier. He was a servant, a cupbearer in the king's palace.

But he fasted and he prayed and his sincerity before God moved the heart of God. God's kingdom moves through prayer when God's people begin to pray. What did he say in 2 Chronicles 7, 14? If my people,

who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, forgive their sin, and I will heal their land.

And God sent Nehemiah into Jerusalem. He moved the heart of the king. And the king gave letters.

And the king gave provision to Nehemiah. And Nehemiah went back into Jerusalem. And the hand of God was upon him.

And even in the face of all opposition, the kingdom was restored. Jerusalem was rebuilt. And then under Ezra, a glorious revival came.

A beautiful time when the Scriptures were opened. The people then began to understand the Scriptures again and where they had sinned against the Lord. And what a day of glorious weeping and confessing and joy was heard.

And it all began with one man who got a report who heard something that there was a whole group of people that were deaf and dumb out in the streets and the devil was kicking them around. And he sat down and began to pray and he began to fast and said, God, do something about it. God, do something about it.

We see also in the book of Esther. You know the story of Esther. We've heard it so many times.

She was the queen. And there was a wicked plot established by a man called Haman against her people. And Esther called the people to a three-day fast for the plight of her people.

Three days and three nights. She said, call the people. She told her uncle Mordecai, call the people, all the people that are called by God's name, and have them fast three days and three nights.

You see, it was death to go in unannounced into the king in those days. And Esther said, after three days and three nights, I'm going to go into the king and if I perish, I perish. In other words, I'm putting my life in with my prayers.

You see that consistently throughout the Scripture. And if I die, I die. And so at the end of three days, Esther threw her life in with her prayers and went into the king.

And the king moved his scepter towards her. And the whole plot of the enemy was turned around. All of the wicked devices of the devil to destroy a whole race of people were destroyed because one woman somewhere fasted and prayed for three days and called the people to fast and pray.

And then threw her life at the mercy of God. You see, that's what the Lord has been looking for in His church for so many years. That's why the church is so powerless in the face of the opposition of darkness that we're having in North America in this hour.

Because there are so few people that are willing to fast and pray and count the cost of following Christ. There are so few in this society that are willing to cast their lives in with their prayers and say, Lord God, if I die, I die. But I would rather die serving You.

I'd rather die going and ministering the Gospel of Christ than to live in ease and complacency than to try to hide in the king's palace at a time like this when there are so many people... When the enemy has formed such a plot against so many people and he's crushing and destroying and plans to slay virtually all of

society. And who can forget the story of Jonah? The man who tried to get away from God. And God sent him back to Nineveh.

And we see that when Jonah walked into that town, bleached and full of seaweed, began preaching the Kingdom of God, he said, in 40 days the whole place is going to be destroyed. Repent. And the king heard the message and called the people to a fast.

And he put sackcloth and ashes on him. And he said, who knows, but that God will be merciful and turn around and not do this thing to us. And he called the people and the people all put on sackcloth and they all put on ashes and they called a fast.

The king called a fast. And the people fasted and prayed and didn't eat nor drink and implored the God of heaven that He would not do this thing that He had sworn to do through the voice of Jonah. And we know the story that the Lord turned His hand away and instead of a curse, sent a blessing.

And a great revival came into that city of Nineveh and many, many people were won to God because the people turned in prayer and in fasting. Now go to the book of Joel, please, chapter 2. Go ahead to Joel. Joel chapter 2. You all know the book of Joel talks about a great day, a great shaking coming upon the earth.

A great time of calamity. In chapter 2, verse 2, the prophet Joel calls it a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness as the morning spread upon the mountains. A day of calamity.

Verse 3, a fire devours before them and behind them a flame burns. The lands of the Garden of Eden before them and behind them a desolate wilderness and nothing shall escape them. Then in verse 12, chapter 2, verse 12, the commandment that the Lord gave to Joel to give to the people, He says, Therefore, also now saith the Lord, Turn ye even to Me with all your heart, with fasting and with weeping and with mourning, and rend your heart and not your garments.

And turn to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. Who knows if He will return and repent and leave a blessing behind them, even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God. Blow the trumpet in Zion.

Sanctify a fast. Call a solemn assembly. Gather the people.

Sanctify the congregation. Assemble the elders. Gather the children and those that suck the breasts.

And let the bridegroom go forth out of his chamber and the bride out of her closet. In other words, he's saying, I want a face-to-face meeting with my people. The Lord says, I'm looking for a people.

In other words, in this generation, I'm looking for a people that will come out of the places of hiding. I'm looking for a people that will gather together and begin to fast and begin to rend their hearts and not their garments. I'm looking for a people who will gather together and allow the Word of God to begin to sanctify them.

In other words, set them apart for the purposes of God. To call them out of friendship with the world. To call them out of a life of ease in the palaces.

To call them to a place where they say, call a fast. There's a great need in the land. At the end of a certain time, God, I surrender my life to You.

And if I die, I die. But I choose rather now to die living for You than to live enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season. Verse 17, he says, Let the priests and ministers of the Lord weep between the porch and the altar.

And let them say, Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not Thine heritage to reproach that the heathen should rule over them. Wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? Wherefore should they say, Where is their God? Are we living in a day that there should be a cry heard now in the house of God? Brothers and sisters, are we living in a day when there should be a cry? And shouldn't that cry be coming from the house of God? Aren't we living in a time when it's no longer time to trust in our conventions and trust in all the things that are so churchy in this generation but to begin to cry now to the heart of God? That's what's been happening in Times Square Church. There are many people now, we have over a thousand people coming out to prayer meeting now on Friday night, crying out to God.

There's a deep cry coming within the hearts of many people and we're beginning to see a trickle of rain now. That's why in our services people are coming forward and getting saved before the Word is ever preached. Hearts wide open, pricked by the Holy Ghost.

A few weeks ago I was downstairs with a group of 30 or 40 people that were all weeping and had never even heard the Word of God. Didn't even know what it was to be saved. Hadn't sat under the Word but were wide open by the Holy Ghost to hear what it was that needed to happen to have them saved.

In Mark 9, if you go back there, in the midst of all this religious activity, in the midst of the discussion, there's a big discussion going on about what's been happening here. All kinds of people have had ideas and been trying to deliver this young man but nothing is working. And all of a sudden, out of the midst of all of the discussion, all of the talk that's going on, this poor father steps out and he turns to Jesus out of this crowd of discussers and he steps and he begins to petition the Lord all for himself.

In other words, he says, I'm not looking to anybody else anymore. I'm not looking to disciples. I'm not looking to any religious establishment or any great person.

But I'm stepping out of the crowd because Jesus is here and I'm looking to Him all for myself. And out of the multitude, in verse 17, it says, they answered one and it says, Master, I have brought to Thee my Son which has a dumb spirit. Now here's a man.

He steps out. And he says, Oh God, I'm coming to You all for myself. And in verse 22, he says, Oftentimes it casts Him into the fire and into the water to destroy Him.

Oh Lord, if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us. And Jesus said unto him, if you can believe, and that's the word to us tonight, to everyone who's come into this house, if you can believe, if you can believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway, the father of the child cried out and said with tears, Lord, I believe.

Help Thou my unbelief. Oh God, I believe as much as I can right now. I believe as much as the limitations of my natural body and mind will allow me.

Lord, I'm trusting You to help my unbelief. Whatever it is in my life that stops You from working in my Son, God, I'm now crying out to You all by myself. And we see now, when this father begins to cry out for his son, a terrible conflict begins to take place within this young man.

Oh, moms and dads that have wayward children in this house tonight, don't give up ever. Don't be looking to organizations and other things or hoping that some mighty man or woman of God crosses the path of your son. Jesus Christ is able to deliver your son or daughter all by Himself.

There's a call now. Step out of the crowd. Step out of all the voices.

Step out of all the theories. The how-to people. Step out of all of this.

And grab ahold of the hem of His garment all by yourself. And call out. If you've got a struggle or trial in your life, call out to Him all by yourself.

If there's somebody that you love and is dear to you, call out to Him. And say, Lord God, my son is oppressed to the devil. My daughter is oppressed to the devil.

If You can help me, oh God, then Lord, move Your hand. It's a season we're living in now for strong crying out to the Lord and prayer and fasting and saying, God, I believe with all of my heart. I will thrust my life into my prayers.

And if You call me to somebody else's son and daughter, God, I will go. But God, touch my son and touch my daughter and set them free. And in verse 26, the spirit cried and rend Him sore.

You see, Jesus was now on the scene. And the Father was dealing directly with Jesus. And came out of Him.

And He was as one dead in so much that they said He is dead. You see the crowd now gathering around. Here's Jesus working in miracle-delivering power.

And here's the religious crowd. All gathered around. The scribes were there.

The disciples were there. The curious onlookers were there. The religious of the day were there.

And they're looking at God's delivering power touching this young man. But you see, they were not moving in the realm of the Spirit. They didn't understand what faith is all about.

And they looked down at this young man and they said, well, he's dead. There's no hope. It's gone too far.

Nothing can be done. You hear those voices every once in a while. It's gone too far, our society.

Nothing can be done anymore. My brother, my sister, as long as Jesus Christ is still alive, there is never any situation that's gone too far from God to be made alive again and to be healed. I hear the people at the tomb after Calvary in the garden.

Well, he's dead. He's dead. He's gone too far.

Too bad. Nothing can be done anymore. And how many walked away? How many of his disciples walked away? How many of those that said they knew him walked away? How many of those that once believed on him walked away? How many of those that he had touched walked away? And said this situation is beyond hope.

Too bad. He was such a nice guy. Too bad he had to die.

But the third day, an angel came and rolled away that stone. Hallelujah! The power of God touched him. I am the resurrection and the life, Jesus said.

If a man believe in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. Though he were dead in trespasses and sins. Though all of society should write him off.

God says I still can touch his life if somebody would just ask me to touch him. I can touch him and bring him back to life again. We're living in a time in church history when we've got to throw away all of our formulas and all of our theories and begin to cry out to God with one heart and one voice again.

Lord Jesus! All of the dead men that are walking the streets of our cities and our towns and our country. All of the dead theologies and all of the dead ideologies. All of the dead situations, Lord, that everybody else is writing off and saying it's gone too far.

But God, it's not too far for Your hand. Lord, You can touch them once again. You can deliver.

You can set free. You can open prison doors. Your Word is still truth.

Lord God, You still sit at the right hand of the Father and every name that is named is in subjection to You. Hallelujah! It's time to turn away from all of the theories and all of the philosophies and begin to fast and pray. Good old-fashioned prayer meetings are what's in order in the house of God once again.

Calling out to the Lord to do what reasoning power is never going to do. What formulas and theories are never going to do. Formulas and theories will never cast the devil out of a young man.

It is only the power of the risen Christ. It's Jesus. All of the people are gathering around in verse 26 and it says He's dead.

He's dead. There's no hope. There's no use.

But in verse 27, the Scripture says, But Jesus took Him by the hand and lifted Him up, and He arose. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! You might not think you're much here tonight and other people may have written you off. People may have turned away from you and said, He's a dead man.

He's been on drugs so long, forget it. He's a dead man. He's been afflicted by this thing for so long or she's been afflicted, there's no hope.

And people have turned and walked away from you. But the good news of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ has never turned from you. He has never walked away from you.

He has never forsaken you. He has never left you. And if you're able to cry out for yourself tonight, if you're able to reach out to Him, no matter if the world considers you dead, Jesus will reach down and pick you up by the hand and give you life and transform you and give you hope.

There are moms and dads here tonight that you've got sons and daughters and you've got relatives and family and the situation looks just so hopeless. It looks so terrible. But if you will break out of that crowd of unbelievers and lay a hold of Him and begin to fast and begin to pray, begin to deny yourself and begin to cry out to the Lord and say, Lord Jesus, I believe, help Thou my unbelief, that God, You can touch my family because Your Word says so.

Your Word says so. If I cry out to You, God, You're going to hear my prayer. If I ask anything according to Your will, if I'm not asking it to consume upon my lust, Lord God, Your Word says You will do it.

Your Word says You will do it. Your hand is not shortened that it cannot save. Lord God, Your power is not abated.

You're still the Son of God. You're still the one that triumphed over the powers of hell and the devil. You're still the one that rose from the dead on the third day.

God, You can do it. You can give life to my situation. It's crying out to God.

And once you begin to see the faithfulness of God in your own life, and once you begin to see the faithfulness of God in your own family and among your friends and in your own situation, then your faith begins to expand and you begin to see the faithfulness of God to a nation. That God can turn the hearts of a city in a moment if somebody will cry out to Him. God can touch hearts.

And God can change them. If we will find a people somewhere that are willing to fast and pay the price of true prayer and true intercession in the Kingdom of God, a people like Esther, and a people like Nehemiah, and a people like Isaiah, that are willing to pour their lives in with their prayers. And it's not God send somebody else, but here I am, oh God, send me whatever you've got for my life.

God, send me that I may bring life to somebody, some poor soul out there who's dying in the street. And Lord, God, use my voice. Use my life.

Use my talents. Use my lack of talent, God. Use it all for Your glory that souls may be saved.

It's then when we begin to cry out to God in desperation, the Kingdom of God begins to move. The Kingdom of God doesn't move through fancy speeches. The Kingdom of God doesn't move through shining personalities.

The Kingdom of God doesn't move through all of our talents and abilities. The Kingdom of God moves through the resurrected Christ acting on behalf of the prayers, the hearts of those that are crying out to His name. That's where the Kingdom of God begins to move.

It's individuals like you and me that will cry out to the Lord and say, God, do something about this situation. Lord, I'm not letting go until I have the answer. I'm not letting go.

I'm pressing through the crowd. And I'm going through the whole field of discussers of why things work and why things don't work in this generation. I'm bypassing those that say the situation is over and finished and dead.

I'm leaving all of them behind. And I'm going to lay hold of the hem of your garment all by myself. I'm going to grab a hold of you, Jesus.

And I'm not letting go until you bless me. Just like Jacob said, I'm not letting go. I'm going to wrestle with you, God, and I'm not letting go until you give me that thing that I've asked for.

It would be to God that the Lord Jesus would have to say to more people in New York City, leave me alone. The same God that is one day going to send judgment on this city, that there would be people found all throughout the city that would be so crying out to the Lord that God would have to say, leave me

alone. Leave me alone.

And all of a sudden, God, the mercy of God, His heart, inside of Him is a floodgate. It's a reservoir of mercy. And it's prayer.

It's the fasting. It's the intensity of the saints that unlocks that heart. And the mercy, God can't help Himself.

When somebody's crying out to Him, the mercy of God just begins to pour out of His heart. And a river of life comes into the streets. And a river of life comes into the situation.

It comes into the home. And all of a sudden, people are delivered out of poison water and darkened water. And life and freedom and liberty in Christ begins to come into their lives.

Souls are saved. Homes are transformed. Nations can be turned to God.

If there are people somewhere that will take seriously the commission of prayer and fasting, why could we not cast Him out? Jesus just said it simply. This kind does not come out, but by prayer and fasting. He was saying to the disciples, I'm going to lead you to a place where you're going to understand what it is that unlocks the power of God.

It's a surrendered life, evidenced by the fact that you have surrendered yourself to Me and you're calling out to Me to do what you know you can't do. Humanly speaking, it's impossible to save a soul. It's only the Holy Spirit that can draw to Jesus Christ.

And there's awareness then. Lord, my talent can do nothing, my preaching can do nothing, my messages can do nothing, my life can do nothing unless You anoint me. Unless it's Your Spirit.

Because Your kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. It cannot go forward in the power of the flesh. But by prayer and by fasting, denying this flesh, denying the cravings, the longing, we live in a generation when so many of God's people have sold off the true treasures of the kingdom of God for momentary pleasures of this world, for momentary ease in Zion, not being of concern for the affliction of their brothers and sisters that are held in captivity wandering the streets with no hope and no life.

But God is calling to a people in this last generation. He's calling to me. He calls me every day.

He's speaking to my heart every moment. I never get away from Him. I don't ever want to get away from Him.

He's talking to me. He's leading me. He's guiding me.

He's beginning to share His heart with me. I share with my wife when she came home, I spent three of the most difficult days I think of my life in ministry last week on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday when the Lord just revealed the ache in His heart to me towards His church for His bride. How He felt about those that had fallen away from Him.

And how He longed to have them back and return to Him. And it was awful. I couldn't sleep at night.

I would wake up crying. In the middle of the night. And groaning.

And I would get up. In the daytime, it just wouldn't lift off me. It wouldn't go away.

And the Lord just began to reveal His heart. And that's what intercession is all about. People want to be intercessors, but they don't want the heart of Christ.

He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. There's a burden. There's a yearning in the heart of God.

And once we begin to share His heart, there's like a fire that arises up inside and says, enough of this! The devil doesn't have a right to these people. He doesn't have a right to these kids in the schools. The devil doesn't have a right to my family.

He doesn't have a right to my wife. He doesn't have a right to my husband. He doesn't have a right to these things.

I'm bypassing all of the theories and I'm bypassing all of the philosophers and I'm coming right to You, Jesus. I believe as much as I can. And God, if I'm lacking, help thou mine unbelief.

Help me, Lord God. Help me to get to a place where believing You is as natural as breathing. Where believing You is as natural as opening His book and knowing so many bumper stickers.

I read one today that says, Christ said it, I believe it, that settles it. But it's so untrue in so many people's lives. There's so many people who, He said it, but they don't believe it.

We say, oh God, take me to a place where I believe it. You felt so strongly about it, oh God, that You left heaven and became a man and died on Calvary to bring people to freedom. I believe with all my heart, and I know Pastor David believes, that God wants to move in sovereign power upon New York City.

And He has moved us as a church to begin to pray. No schemes. No dropping pamphlets from balloons.

No high-priced publicity. No personalities being brought in. No self-promotion.

But good old-fashioned prayer and fasting again in the house of God. And saying, Lord, do what men cannot do. Move in a way that schemes and plans and things of the natural mind cannot do.

While everybody stands around with their theories, oh God, I'm stepping out of the crowd and saying, Lord Jesus, I'm turning to You. God, do what I'm asking You to do. Would You stand please? Hallelujah.

There are people here tonight, my brother, my sister, my friend, you have been in a life and death struggle. People have written you off and you've even written yourself off in your own heart. You've looked for help.

You've listened. You've gone to people. And they couldn't do anything for you.

But now tonight the Lord is calling you to step out of wherever you are and come to this altar and just meet with Jesus. You're not coming to people anymore. You're coming to Him.

He's the author and the finisher of your faith. He'll save you tonight. I'm believing God.

God has spoken to my heart that He's going to open prison doors at this altar and He's going to open them. Open them. Sovereignly.

Because you're coming not to meet with a pastor. You're coming not to meet with a church. You're coming to meet with Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The One who died and gave Himself for you. I have an assurance in my heart tonight that He's going to set you free. There are others here tonight that you need strength to pray and fast for some situation.

That you want to see the victory. But God wants to impart to you now His heart and give you strength. I'm going to encourage you to step out of your place in the balcony.

You can go to either exit. Downstairs you can come into the aisles. And you say, Lord God, I have a hard situation.

I've looked here and I've looked there. I've looked in the north, the south, the east and the west. But now I'm going to look to You.

And Lord, You're going to give me the strength to pray and to fast. And like this Father, I'm stepping out of the crowd and I'm coming to You. I'm turning to You, Lord.

Face to face. Just You and me and I'm going to believe You, God. That You're going to set me free.

You're going to set my family free. You're going to turn this situation around. Lord, because You are God.

You are God. The Son of God. And there's others tonight that would say, Pastor, I've heard the message tonight.

I want to give my life to Christ in its fullness. I want the burden of Jesus. I want to be one of those that's called out from the crowd.

All of the discussers and all of the ones who are wondering why God's power is not working anymore. And I want to step out from among that crowd. And Lord God, I want You to put upon me a burden of intercession.

Share Your heart with me. Teach me what it is to pray and fast. Teach me what it is to present my body as a living sacrifice before You.

Give me courage and give me faith like Elijah or Esther. I'm willing to throw my life in with my prayers. God, I come to You tonight.

I want to pray and I want to fast. I want my life to change. I want to see victory in New York City.

My home, my family, my friends. God, touch my life. God, touch my life.

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