

Your Calling To Preach In The Last Days

by Carter Conlon

This sermon emphasizes the calling of individuals to preach the gospel in the last days, highlighting the need for personal surrender to God's transformative power. It discusses the signs of the end times as described in Matthew 24, focusing on spiritual deception, wars, persecution of believers, and the importance of enduring in faith. The message encourages individuals to recognize their inadequacies and allow God to use them as vessels to bring glory to His name, showcasing His power to transform the weakest and most unlikely individuals into powerful testimonies of His grace.

Scripture: Matthew 24:3, 1 Corinthians 1:26, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 2 Corinthians 3:17, Isaiah 6:8, Psalm 51:10, Romans 8:28, Ephesians 2:10

Topics: "Calling to Preach", "Endurance in Faith"

Description

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Transcript

I want to talk tonight about your calling to preach in the last days. Not somebody else's calling, your calling to preach the gospel in the last days. Father, I thank you, God, for the touch of heaven in this service tonight.

I thank you, God, for the spark of hope that you're planting in every heart. I thank you for the incredible doors that you are opening, the unity that you're bringing about in the body of Jesus Christ. I thank you, God, that you're not going to leave out any hungry soul in any college or university or high school or middle school or kindergarten, God, all through the nation.

Thank you, Lord, that when the enemy comes in like a flood, you say the spirit of the Lord raises up a standard against it. So God, we thank you, Lord, that you're going to raise your church in this last hour that we're now living in. We thank you, God, that you're going to do things that are so far beyond us that truly it will be a year or a season of signs and wonders.

Would you grant me the anointing of your Holy Spirit tonight? Would you give me the ability, God, to say this word that you put on my heart in a way that all who are listening can hear it? Would you help those tonight online who are addicted, afflicted, oppressed, living in discouragement, depression, living in deep regret or a sense of unworthiness or loathing of themselves, God? Would you help everybody who's hearing tonight to be able to hear what you are speaking, God, to your people at this time or to those who potentially could be your people if they would open their hearts and receive you as Lord and Savior? Father, thank you, God. Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you for your faithfulness. In Jesus' name, amen and amen.

Pastor Teresa and I are just back from a little area outside of Mexico City. We had an opportunity to share in a conference in the daytime, and Nikki Cruz preached in a stadium at night the gospel of Jesus Christ, and what an event that was. I think the highlight of...other than the events at the evening where we saw over 1,500 people come to Christ, but during the daytime to see young people literally flood an altar by the hundreds, pressing in to touch the hem of His garment one more time, just saying, God, is it possible that you could use my life for your glory in this environment? It's a very difficult environment in some areas of Mexico right now, and it was just wonderful to be there to see God move upon these young people in the way that He did, and it's something that's beginning to happen, I think, on a global basis.

Matthew chapter 24, it begins by Jesus Christ making a statement that there's going to be a time of destruction, coming to things that...the disciples looked at the stones in the temple and they were marveling at the size of these stones. If you've ever been to Israel as I have, you've seen these foundation stones, how absolutely huge they are, and there would be in their hearts a sense of permanence about this particular testimony. But He said, surely I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another that shall not be thrown down.

And we're living in a season like that in the world today, where the economies we trusted in, the societies we've built, the futures that we conjured up in our own hearts and minds are, no matter how grand they might have seemed to us, they're coming down, they're starting to crash all around us. He said on the Mount of Olives in Matthew 24 verse 3, the disciples came to Him privately and said, when will these things be? What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age? So they're saying if everything's coming down, what's it going to look like when this world in a sense comes to an end? When humankind has launched its final rebellion against the lordship of Jesus Christ and everything that they have built in this world that's unlike God is literally going to...it doesn't matter how big the foundation stones are, there won't be one left upon another. Everything that can be shaken will soon, if not already, start to be shaken.

And Jesus answered and said to them, take heed that no one deceives you, for many will come in my name saying, I am the Christ and will deceive many. So he starts out by saying there'll be spiritual deception will be everywhere, it will be rampant. There will be people that claim that obviously the ones who claim to be Christ will be easy to spot, but there'll be others that are saying this is what Christ looks like.

I am a disciple of Jesus Christ, but they won't be true disciples and the Christ that's being exuded from their lives is not the real Christ after all. You'll hear of wars and rumors of wars and in many places throughout the world we don't, you know, these people, this scripture is probably more real to them right now than it is to us. We'll be in Ukraine very shortly, Pastor Teresa and I will be in both Kiev and Lviv in the Ukraine, and this scripture will be very real to those people in that part of the world right now.

See that you're not troubled, all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. Nation will rise against nation, kingdom against kingdom, there'll be famines, there's a lot of discussion about food shortages coming soon to this world as it is today, there'll be pestilences, in other words there'll be new diseases, and that's not unfamiliar to us at this time. Earthquakes in various places, and all these are the beginning of sorrows.

Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, you'll be hated of all nations for my namesake. We're living in a season right now where there's a, David Wilkerson called it, the rise of the Jesus revulsion throughout the world, and it's starting to happen, where people who hold to biblical worldviews are now become haters in a sense and unwanted, facing cancellation. The firings at work for just even posting something online that says, I believe marriage is between one man and one woman, and people are losing their jobs over just taking a biblical stand.

There's a loathing happening in this world and its system towards those who belong to Jesus Christ. And then many will be offended and betray one another and will hate one another. Paul the Apostle tells us in Thessalonians that there'll be a great falling away in the last days.

There'll be many people who say, hey, I didn't sign up for this, I didn't sign up to be hated, I didn't sign up to be persecuted, I was told by some preacher somewhere that to come to Christ I was always going to be healthy, happy, and wealthy, and I was going to be loved, and I was going to be the head, not the tail, all the rest of this stuff, and now all of a sudden I'm hated, now all of a sudden I'm losing my job, now all of a sudden I'm being vilified by this society. And many people will just turn away and betray the true Christian because they say, we didn't sign up for this, we came to a smooth message, we came in a smooth place, and we thought Jesus was just to make us happy, but yet we're finding out that difficulty has come our way. And then many more false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold, the love of many for just the work of God, even in the house of God. There'll be more of a desire in people's hearts to see people judged than saved. You remember the disciples said, shall we call down fire upon them? We brought them the word of life, and they've rejected you, Jesus, shall we call down fire? And He said, you don't know what spirit you are of.

The Son of Man did not come to destroy people, but Christ came that all men, all women, all children might find their way to eternal life through His shed blood on the cross. But the love of many will grow cold, the love of many for the work of God. People will begin to withdraw and say, because they'll be so tired of the incivility, the lying, the cursing, the immorality, the obvious in our time, debauchery, that's literally on the increase day after day after day.

But in the midst of all of this, there will be an endurance, but He endures to the end. God will grant an endurance to His people. God will grant you and I the ability to weather the storm, as the Apostle Paul did on that trip in Acts chapter 27.

God will give us supernatural ability. There will be a sign and a wonder in our own hearts. We'll find ourselves carried by the love of God for the lost.

We'll find ourselves carried by the mission of Christ through this world. And we'll find we'll be able to withstand this onslaught of hell and fear that wants to touch the whole world as every stone that was built upon another begins to crash to the ground. And then verse 14 is where I want to focus on.

Jesus said, this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations and then the end will come. And so the question is, how will it be preached and who will preach it? But this gospel will be preached as a witness unto all nations. Now I want you to go to 1 Corinthians chapter 1, we're going to go here and we're going to look at verse 26 and down to the end of the chapter.

Where Paul, the apostle says to the people of his time, for you see your calling, brethren. So the message is your calling to preach in the last days that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. Now some, some who are called are wise, some are mighty and some are noble, but not many.

But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise. In other words, God says, I'm not choosing you because you're smart. I'm choosing you because you know you're not.

I'm choosing you because you know, you don't know it all. You know, without me, you don't know anything. And I'm choosing you to do something in you that will put to shame the wisdom of this world.

The wisdom of this world has limitations. It can only take people so high and so far. I'm going to do something through you in your lack of wisdom that will put the wisdom of this world and its achievements to shame.

That's an amazing statement. And God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty. The Lord says, I'm not choosing you because you're strong.

I'm choosing you because you're weak and I'm going to do something through you that's going to be stronger than the strength that this world can produce with its own human efforts, its own ingenuities, all of the things that it can muster together. I'm going to take you in your foolishness. I'm going to take you in your weakness.

And just in case you think that you're lower than this, he says, I'm going to take the base things of the world. In other words, the things that are at the very bottom. Have you ever felt that way about yourself? You feel like the least likely candidate in the universe that God would ever choose to preach the gospel in the last days.

But God says, because you feel that way, I have chosen you. Things that are at the bottom of this world. In other words, you feel like nobody would ever want to be like me.

I'm right at the bottom. And the things which are despised, the things that the rest of the world looks at and says, I wouldn't want to be like you either. God has chosen and things which are nothing.

In case you think you can't go any lower, you can't go lower than nothing. Absolutely nothing. What are you doing? Nothing.

What do you have to bring to the table? Nothing. What do you have to say? Nothing. Nothing.

What have you achieved? Nothing. Where do you think you're going? Nowhere. What do you think is going to happen at the end of your days? Nothing.

What's going to be written on your tombstone? Here's nothing. Did nothing. Went nowhere.

That's the way I feel about myself. But God has chosen you. Isn't it amazing? God has chosen you to bring to nothing things that stand in their own strength, stand in their own wisdom, stand in their own ingenuity, built by their own reasonings.

God says, you are the one that I chose to preach the gospel that no flesh should glory in his presence. Because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom, the wisdom from God and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, as it is written, he who glories, let him glory in the Lord. And so the question arises, how will I preach the gospel? You know, realistically, I love this.

I love the scale of being used by God starts at foolish and ends at nothing. And so if you're anywhere between those two points, you qualify now to be used of God in these last days. And I know there's people online, there's people in the sanctuary say, hey, you're talking about me.

That's me. That's my life. I'm at best foolish and I'm at worst nothing.

I'm somewhere between those two points that God says, I choose. I choose to preach. I choose you.

It's not that you choose me, I choose you. I come to you. I move upon your heart.

I, I want to do something in you and through you that will bring glory to my name. So the question is how then God, how, how I, you know, my story years ago, I came to an altar at 24, 28 years of age, I, I was in a church and an altar call was given to give your all to God and for the future. And I felt like the person in the church, the least qualified to ever be used by God.

I felt like I had nothing. I remember I, I've told you before my prayer, I went to my knees at the altar and I said, God, if I have nothing to give you nothing, nothing, I'm not a speaker. I'm not a good husband.

I'm not a good father. And I hate people. If you can use somebody like that, well, Lord, I give you nothing because I remember telling him, I said, I've got nothing.

But if you can use nothing, I didn't know the scripture back then. I said, if you can use nothing, you can have my life. And so he took nothing and he made something of nothing.

That's what God does. That's how God works. That's how God's kingdom advances.

I have absolutely no claim to any self-righteousness, to any ability, to everything that I have. Everything that my family, everything that any one of us have has come from God and from God alone. You see, how do we preach the gospel? Well, it's really simple.

Second Corinthians chapter five and verse 17 is my verse. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. All things have passed away and behold, all things have become new.

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation in spite of the fact that he was on the scale between foolish to nothing. He becomes or she becomes a new creation. The old things that governed your life, the old things that dictated your future, the old things that ground your face in your failures have passed away.

And because Christ is in you now, all things have become new. The Bible calls it born again by the spirit of God. Born again, born better than you were born the first time, born into an eternal family, born into the life of God, born into the very essence of what God created you to be through Christ Jesus.

Everything becomes new. And so here's how the gospel is going to be preached in these last days. God himself will testify about his grace and power through you because you will be his illustrated sermon to this last generation.

You're an illustrated sermon. God will preach the gospel through you by transforming you from the inside out and making a declaration to this generation of who he is, of what he has done on the cross, what he's able to do to any heart that surrenders to him. All that is required of you and I is that we open our hearts to him and let him save us and change us and let him begin to lead us forward.

For those that are listening online tonight, all you have to do is just say, God, is this true? Is what this man telling me tonight that these people have prayed on this platform, what they have declared is, is this true? Do you really call the nobodies and nothings of this world? Those that are entrapped in all kinds of behaviors that I know are not good and I know I'm incapable of changing myself, is it true that I could have a new life? I remember when this police officer that led me to Christ, I remember when he began to share with me this verse, 2 Corinthians 5, verse 17, I remember thinking, God, is that possible? Can a person change? Could I have a different life? I mean, I had a reasonable life, I guess, getting by, but I hated myself and more every day for what I was becoming, I could get through just like everybody else, I suppose. But I didn't like what I was, I didn't like where I was going, I didn't like what I was thinking, how I was living and how I was behaving. I didn't like the selfishness in my own heart, but seemed to be incapable of escaping it in my own strength.

And this Royal Canadian Mounted Police, I was in Ottawa City Policeman, he told me, he said, Carter, he said, I used to be a drunk and a gambler and a womanizer, and I'm looking at the guy and he looks like he was raised next to a piano singing Amazing Grace. I remember thinking, how is that possible? How can a person change like that? I've tried to change, I know that many listening online tonight, you've tried to change. I made New Year's resolutions just like many others have made and lasted about 10 minutes, you know, I'm going to be a better person, I'm going to be a better husband, I'm going to be a better father, I'm going to drink less, I'm going to do all this stuff.

And, you know, about 10 after 12, it was all over and I was just back to my, you know, you had a real good feeling, we sang O Lying Sign, it was just wonderful, everybody embraces and then you're just back to yourself, because it's not possible to change. And it really wasn't so much the reality, I guess, that Christ died for my sin that really drew me, it was the thought that I could have a new life. And it was the visual illustration before me of a man who had been given that new life.

You see, Christ preached the gospel through him to me. I don't think he could have won me with an argument, I wasn't open to it. I don't think he could have won me by preaching a bag and load of scripture to me, I wasn't really interested.

But I was interested in seeing Christ in him, the hope of glory. You know, the apostle in 2 Corinthians chapter 3, he says, where the spirit of the Lord is, there's liberty. In other words, another word for the word liberty is generosity, where the spirit of God is, there's this incredible generosity of God, abilities and giftings and transformations and a new way of thinking.

The Old Testament tells us the promise of God is a new heart, a new mind, a new spirit, new life, a new future, something supernatural, something that only God can do. But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. As we simply behold this victory of Christ, something gets a hold of our hearts,

faith starts to germinate inside of us, we begin to read the promises of God, we begin to believe what God says, and by the power of God's Holy Spirit within us, we begin to change from image to image and glory to glory.

We start taking on, in a sense, the image of Christ within us. We start becoming the person that God has destined us to be. And ultimately, we start our lives, through our lives, God starts to bring glory to his own name.

That is how the gospel is going to be preached in this Matthew chapter 24 generation. Now, if we're not actually in those days, we're in days that look very close to those days right now. And that's how the gospel will be preached.

As the world spirals downward, the church starts to be lifted heavenward. We start, as the world gets more degenerate, as immoral and insane people try to force their agenda on this generation, the church of Jesus Christ starts to rise up with the transformation of Christ within their hearts, the glory of God on their lips, the light of heaven in their eyes, the passion of God in their hearts, a hope and a future for this generation. We're living in a time when people are looking for hope.

They're looking for reality. They don't want an argument. They don't need it.

They need a visual demonstration of who God is. And that's who we are called. That's the calling on our lives in these last days, to stand as a testimony of who God is, what God can do, what God has done, what God will do, to stand and have a testimony of saying, this is what my life used to be.

This is what it is today. And it's not just speech. They can see it.

Jesus Christ within us, preaching his own message to a generation. I love this. The thought came to me today that we are simply his sermon illustration.

Let me show you who I am. Let me show you what I can do. Let me show you that I can take the nothings, the nobodies, the base things, the zeros of this world, and I can transform you and I can take you where no man can go in his own strength.

I can give you what no person could ever possess it with any, any amount of inheritance that this world wants to give them. I can take you where no one in his own strength or her own strength could ever go. And I could make you into something that brings glory to my name.

I'll close with a story. I was a police officer, and something happened, and they needed to put somebody they said was morally clean into public relations. That's how I ended up getting into public relations.

There was a scandal, and the chief said, get somebody out there quickly who's clean. So I went from zero to hero in about a day. They called me in, and they said, Carter, are you afraid of speaking publicly? Now, I used to suffer panic attacks if I was single out in the crowd.

You understand? I went through nine years of hell. You read it in, I don't know, one of the books. You could read it in one of them.

It's in there somewhere. And I'm standing in front of this supervisor, and he says, he asked me, he says, are you afraid of speaking publicly? I couldn't speak to two people. If you put the words on a board, I couldn't read it.

And before I even had a chance to think, I said no, and I'm standing there thinking, what are you saying? But God was leading me to a place where I would bring, he would bring glory to his name through my life. Long story short, I went to police college to be trained to speak publicly. And everyone there was seasoned speakers except for me.

They were all just honing their skills. I'd never spoken anywhere to anybody at any time. So all these guys are down in the bar, and they're all drinking on the night before they're supposed to give these speeches.

We had to give a three-minute, a five-minute, a 12-minute, a 15-minute, a 20-minute, and finish with a 30-minute speech. And I would, I would be on my face in my room. I still remember the carpet.

It was kind of like a beige-y thing. And my face, and then I'd say, Jesus, I can't do this. God Almighty, I've never spoken anywhere in my whole life.

How am I going to do this? And so I would get up the next day, and I would start by, I always chose a biblical topic, and I would get up, and the Holy Spirit would come upon me. I was more stunned than anybody else in the room. My first message was on the coming demise of North America.

I mean, so at the end, you have to do a 30-minute presentation. And they called me in, and they said, Carter, this is not an evangelical association. We are a police department.

In order to pass the course, you have to preach a police topic. You have to speak a police topic. You can't preach anymore, because that's all I knew how to do.

And so the next night, I'm in my room. Oh, God, I have to do a 30-minute presentation. And if there's no anointing, I can't do this.

And so the Lord gave me something to say. So I got up the next day. This is my exam.

And I said, okay, gentlemen, ladies and gentlemen, I'm going to speak on a police topic today. And everybody thought that was really funny, because I was the preacher in the room. And I said, I'm going to speak to you about the Bible.

I said, because we go into a court of law. Every week or so, and we put our right hand on a book, and we say, I swear that the evidence I'm about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So help me, God.

And based on the content of this book, the courtroom is supposed to believe my testimony. I said, do you not think it should be important to know what we're putting our hand on and what we're saying we believe? And everyone in the room went, yeah, yeah, okay. So I started in Genesis, and I went to Revelation, and I started in Eden.

And I finished with, He's King of kings and Lord of lords, and He's coming back again to rule and reign on the earth. And then I stopped, and I said, that, gentlemen, is what you're saying you believe when you put your hand on the Bible. And then I thanked them.

And when it was done, they're supposed to grade me. They're supposed to grade me for, like, voice intonation, eye contact, hand gestures, all that stuff. Nobody graded me in the whole room.

I went around the room, and every man said, oh, Lord, I've never heard anything like that in my whole life. Another guy said, wow, you're ever giving me something to think about. You know, when I put my hand on that book, nobody graded my presentation.

And when it was all over, they called me in, and they said, we would like to ask the department if they would release you so you could become an instructor in this police college. From not being able to speak. See, that's what God does.

That's who God is. That's how the gospel is going to be preached in the last days. It's just regular, ordinary people, the nobodies and nothings of this world.

Listen to me online tonight. You're sitting at home. You're on your couch.

You're depressed. You're trying to get off of drugs. You're trying to escape pornography.

You're trying to be a better person. You're trying to grab ahold of whatever's left or whatever relationships you've got in your life. You feel like the last person in the world that God would ever use.

How stunning it is tonight to realize that you qualify to be used in the kingdom of God. And God will take you if you will open your heart and he'll transform your life and make you into a person that he actually destined you to be before sin got ahold of your life. And your life will become a standing mirror.

You'll be, as Dr. Collins said tonight, you'll be one of the signs and wonders of this particular time and season that we're now living in. A sign and a wonder of what God can do through a surrendered heart. And all you have to do is just open your heart.

Admit you need him. Admit you can't save yourself. You can't build your own house.

It's not going to stand. You can't find your own way. There's no shame in it.

The only shame is when you can't admit it. You just say, Jesus, I can't do this. I need you in my life.

I need you to be my Lord and my savior. I understand that you died on a cross in my place so that I can be forgiven and so that the power of this death in me can be broken and I can be given a new life. It's really that simple.

Don't make it complicated. So we're going to pray with you here from this sanctuary at our Bible school tonight. Wherever you are, if you're on a park bench, listening on your phone or you're in your car, whatever country or in whatever culture you're part of, it's the same Christ, the same savior for all of humankind.

So pray this simple prayer with me if you would. If you want Jesus Christ to be the Lord of your life, if you want to be forgiven your sin, you want to be reconnected to God and find God's ultimate purpose for your life and be a person through whom Jesus Christ preaches about his own glory in this last generation. Pray this with me right now.

Lord Jesus Christ, I open my heart to you and I invite you into my life to be my Lord and to be my savior. I believe that you will forgive me as I pray and that you will set my feet on a new path and you will give me the life that you've always longed for me to have. Give me the grace to believe you, the courage to follow you, and the desire to bring glory to your name.

I surrender my life, Jesus, into your hands. Take me now and thank you for saving me in Jesus name. If you just prayed that prayer, I want you to do something right now.

Just text the word DECIDED to 51,000. Just go ahead and just do it. Your first act of faith, you'll never regret it.

The word DECIDED on your phone to 51,000. And you'll get a video from Times Square Church that will help you get started on this new walk with God. And then we want you to text us one day at this prayer meeting and tell us about this night.

Tell us about what God's beginning to do in your life.

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