

From Coronation to Desertion

by Lamar Vest

Jesus is not just a figure to be used for personal gain, but a true King who calls people to follow him and make a commitment to change their lives.

Duration: 48:52

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 6:1-69

Topics: "Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the events in John chapter 6, where Jesus feeds the 5,000 and talks about his body and blood. The people struggle to understand his message and many of them walk away. The preacher emphasizes the importance of truly knowing and embracing Jesus, rather than just seeking miracles or worldly gains. He encourages the listeners to make the choice to stay with Jesus, even when they don't fully understand, citing personal experiences of trusting in Jesus during difficult times.

Transcript

I live for this moment to stand behind this pulpit and share God's Word. I can tell you that I've had a lot of exciting opportunities and experiences in my life, but nothing, nothing so far comes near being able to come to Times Square Church and to share God's Word with you. What a privilege.

As we all know, we are approaching the Easter season, and the thing that I've always noted in being in New York for the last several years, that there's always a media blitz right before Easter about this man, Jesus. And the interesting thing is that he is described in all kinds of ways. So much so that when I hear and see so much of what is being said about Jesus, I am prone to say, will the real Jesus please stand up? But what I really appreciate about Times Square Church is that you've got it right.

You know who Jesus Christ is, and you're not ashamed to express that. And thank you, choir, for lifting him up this morning. Amen.

I want you to open your Bibles to John chapter 6, and I can assure you that I'm not going to be able to cover all of the 71 verses in John chapter 6. I've been reading this chapter all of my life, but for the last several weeks, in fact since I last spoke at Times Square, the Lord laid this message on my heart. And I have read it, chapter 6, read it, reread it. It's almost like I've been standing at the foot of a mountain saying, I'm not sure that I can climb to the top of this one.

But I want you to know that it's so rich and full about Jesus and about who he really is. And this morning while I was praying, I was reminded of several years ago when I was a much younger preacher. Someone could not remember my name, and they were trying to remember who I was, and somebody spoke up and said, oh, you know, he's that Jesus preacher.

I think the greatest compliment I ever had placed on me, the Jesus preacher. And some time back, several years ago, during the beginning of the so-called Jesus Seminar, and when people were trying to describe Jesus in all different kinds of ways, I did some writing and some speaking about the real authentic Jesus. Someone suggested that I actually talked too much about Jesus.

Well, my response to that was, I'll tell you what, when we see him, why don't we ask him? I don't think you can talk too much about Jesus, because without Jesus Christ and him crucified, raised from the dead, everything that's gone on here this morning is nothing but a performance, nothing but a show. But John really digs deep into trying to explain to us who this person Jesus is. Let's pray together before I attempt to bring this message.

Father, our hearts are hungry, not just to know about Jesus, but to know him, to be able to embrace him for everything that he is. And God, you sent him into this world, that he would die for us. And I pray that as we look into your word, that you would open up the passages from John's gospel, that we can clearly understand that God became flesh and dwelt among us, that we might have everlasting life.

Forgive us of our sins and forgive us, Lord, for sometimes trying to turn Jesus into something other than what he really is. Please anoint me this morning to bring a message, not from my heart, but from the word of the Lord, that it might speak deeply into the hearts of every person here. In Jesus' name I pray, amen and amen.

The message that I want to bring to you this morning is a message that I have entitled From Coronation to Desertion. From Coronation to Desertion. And as we get into this passage of Scripture, I think you will see more clearly why I have chosen that title.

Before I read a few selected verses from John chapter 6, let me just sort of give you a broad overview of what's taking place in this chapter. In this chapter, the Bible tells us about Jesus feeding the 5,000. Now we are told in other places of the Scripture that these were 5,000 men.

They did not even include the women and the children in that council. We don't know exactly how many they were, but we know there was a great multitude. And from feeding 5,000 plus with a little boy's lunch, the next view we have of Jesus Christ is walking on the water, walking on the sea.

And then John moves from there to talk about the great sermon that Jesus delivered on the bread from heaven, the bread of life. And then the very next thing that you see in this passage of Scripture is that many of his disciples desert him. They turn and walk away.

And in the very closing of those verses, you see Jesus turning to his own 12 apostles and asking them point blank, are you going to leave me also? You can sense the pathos in his voice. When he sees the multitude walking away and his 12 disciples standing there, I'm sure with puzzled looks on their faces, Jesus says, will the time come when the going is going to get so tough, so rough, that you are going to leave me also? Now with that said, let me focus your attention on just a few verses of Scripture in John chapter 6. First of all, in verses 14 and 15. John chapter 6, 14 and 15.

Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, this is truly the prophet who is to come into the world. Therefore, when Jesus perceived, now listen clearly, that they were about to come and take him by force, to make him king, he departed again to the mountain by himself alone. And then I want you to look down in verses 66 through 69, toward the end of that chapter, beginning with verse 66.

From that time, many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, do you also want to go away? But Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Now I want you to see the drastic transformation, the change that's taking place.

When they wanted to make Jesus king, he slipped away. When he wanted to make them disciples, they slipped away. So you can see this big gap that exists between this, let's make him king, and let's be his disciples.

There's a long way between those two points. Now this raises for us two very significant questions. Why would he not be their king? And the second question that it raises is why, after they were so impressed with him, did they abandon him? Now the reason Jesus would not be their king is very simple.

Let me just give you a little bit of background into this. They literally wanted to take him by force and to acknowledge him as king, but Jesus knew their hearts. He knew that they were trying to use him for their own purposes.

They were tired of being under Roman oppression. They were tired of the famines that they were having in Israel. They were tired of their religion being pushed aside, and all of a sudden they saw the miracles that he performed, and they said, yes, that would be good.

Let's make him king, and when we're hungry, he can feed us. When we are oppressed by the Romans, he can deliver us. Let's make him king.

But Jesus knew that in their hearts they were not accepting him for who he was. Not as the king of kings, not as Messiah, as a prince perhaps, as a temporary ruler. Yes, the Jews had prayed for centuries for Messiah to come, but they didn't recognize him when he came, because he didn't come like they expected him to come.

And they began to even say, he is a prophet. In fact, they are undoubtedly making reference in this passage of Scripture when they say, he's a prophet. Look at what he's doing.

He's the prophet. They are no doubt referring to Deuteronomy 18 and 15, where Moses said, the Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me, from you, from among you, from your midst, from your brethren, and you shall hear him. Now, the interesting thing about it is that while they were listening to Jesus speak, they were forming in their own minds what they wanted him to be.

And when they heard what he said, they said, wait, this is not the one we've been waiting for. It's interesting that they said to Jesus, show us a sign so we can believe you. Show us a sign.

He's just fed 5,000 people plus with a little boy's lunch. He just walked on the water. What more do you want? Show us a sign so we can believe in you.

Ah, but they got it in their minds. Here's what we can do. We can make him king, and he can do all kinds of miracles.

But let me tell you this, putting a person on a throne by force or enslaving someone to serve on a pedestal is enslaving them to the people's conquest. In other words, Jesus said, if I let you take me and make me king, I am going to be subservient to you. But I did not come to serve you in that way.

Already, he has his eyes focused on a hill not far away, a hill we call Calvary. They called it a garbage heap, Golgotha. And he recognizes that he is going to have to give his life on that cross to save his people from their sins.

But now they're coming to him saying, show us a sign. Now Jesus goes into this great discourse on the bread from heaven, and this infuriates them even more. Because they are making comparisons between the bread that God provided, or they didn't even say God, they said that Moses provided for our fathers in the wilderness.

And Jesus very clearly said to them, no, it wasn't Moses that provided that bread for your fathers, it was God, my Father, who provided the manna. Now you've got to understand that he's setting this up for a great point, a great message. Because you know by the end of the scripture, these people are going to be so offended by what he says until they leave him.

Offended by the gospel? Yeah, let me just put this in as a parathetical expression. Someone said recently to me, some of the things you say may be offensive to people. Now listen, I don't want to offend anybody, but if I preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and it offends you, then I have no apology to make.

No apology to make. And I think we sometimes in the church have gotten so afraid we're going to offend somebody, until we've gotten so politically correct until we don't know what's up, and we don't know what's down, and we don't know what's right, and we don't know what's wrong. So if the gospel offends you, I will not apologize for that.

Jesus said it was not Moses who fed the children of Israel, it was God, my Father. Now what's the parallel here? He's just fed them with bread, a little boy's lunch, and fishes. Now I could go in a lot of different directions on how did he multiply it, but here's the deal.

He literally had to create it on the spot. I mean you just, I don't know exactly how it happened, but I don't think he just snapped his fingers and a pile of bread showed up, or that a lot of fishes showed up, but I think that the apostles came to him with their baskets and they're saying already, Philip is saying, how in the world is so little going to feed so many? Jesus said, don't worry, just do what I say, and he gives them their, and they start handing it out, and when they come back there's more. When it gets empty, they come back and there's more.

You know why? Because Jesus is creating it on the spot, creating bread. So Jesus is saying to them, you are saying I am a prophet like Moses? No! Moses didn't create the bread, so am I more like God or more like Moses? And go ahead, I tell you, when I think of when I think of this moment, give God glory, give him praise. So am I more like God or am I more like Moses? Well, that's really offensive to them, but here's the point.

Then he said to them, you've got to take my body, you've got to eat my flesh, you have to take my blood, you have to drink my blood. Nothing could have been more offensive to these Jews. I mean, actually by

saying this, he is sending the religious authorities into convulsions.

I mean, here are people that can't touch a dead man. They can't even eat shrimp or pork. And if they come anywhere around somebody that's terribly ill, they've got to be cleansed.

And here is this man, Jesus saying, take my body and eat it. Take my blood and drink it. How offensive could that be? I mean, if you're Jesus' public relations manager, you're going into a tizzy right now.

I mean, you're saying, come on, Jesus, isn't there a better way than this? I mean, can't you kind of soften this down a little bit, but Jesus knows what's in their heart. He knows they want him to be useful, but not to be their master and not to be their king. And you know what? Unfortunately, I have found that there's so many people in this world that want to make Jesus useful.

Lord, when I'm in trouble, I need you. But right now, Lord, everything's going okay, so I don't really need you in my life. I'll come back to the altar, God, when I need you.

But in the meanwhile, I think everything's going to be okay. I think we've got it all under control. I'm telling you, Jesus Christ is not going to be useful.

You're not going to walk down here and meet him on Sunday morning and then leave him in the church. He's going to go with you. He's with you every step of the way, every inch of the way.

I will go with you all the way, he said, even to the end of the age. So he said, you've got to take me. You've got to eat my flesh.

You've got to drink my blood. Now what he's not talking about cannibalism, but he's doing this as a symbolism to show that he is going to be inside us. He is going to occupy us.

He's going to live within us. But when he began to talk about this, they just couldn't take that. That was too much for them.

Now that's why you don't hear the gospel preached in a lot of churches anymore, let me tell you. It's because people are wanting something just to give me something to feel good. Let me just tell you, Jesus didn't come to bring you gifts.

He is the gift. Praise God forevermore. He didn't come just to always be handing out things.

He came to say, this is a journey I'm going to take with you. I'm going to be with you in the mountain. I'm going to be with you in the valley.

I'm going to be with you in life. I'm going to be with you in death. I'm going to be with you in sickness.

I'm going to be with you in health. I will never, never, never leave you. But that has to be internal.

It's not like you take him by the hand. It's like you take him inside. You are absorbed by him.

Praise God forevermore. Well, you know they never, I mean a lot of times Jesus spoke things like this that the people just didn't always get it. In fact John, John is full of occasions where Jesus is trying to teach a spiritual example by using earthly means and the people just get it all wrong.

You may remember on one occasion he said to the religious leaders, you destroy this temple and in three days I'll build it back. And they take a strange look at him and they said to him, I know you're from Nazareth, but you know it took us 46 years to build this temple and you're going to rebuild it and they didn't get it. They didn't get it.

Or remember when he was talking to the woman at the well and he said, I'm going to give you water to drink and if you drink of this water you will never thirst again. She said, let me see if I've got this right. You're going to give me water to drink and you don't even have a bucket.

She didn't get it. But what about Nicodemus when Jesus said you must be born again. Whoa.

Tell me how I'm going to get back in my mother's womb. He didn't get it. Or when Jesus was about ready to feed this 5,000 plus with little boys lunch, Philip said, you know Lord, what is so, I mean how are we going to feed this crowd with so little? The Bible said that Jesus was doing this to test him because he already knew what he was going to do.

You know sometimes the Lord gives us these things and we just don't get it. And that's what happened on this occasion. He's telling them about his body and his blood, but they don't get it.

So they understand. They don't understand what he's saying, so what do they do when they hear the hard straight truth of the gospel? That he's not just going to be there to give them things and to do miracles and to do all of these kinds of things. They walk away.

Remember just a few minutes ago they were wanting to make him king and he slipped away because he said you want to make me your king for the wrong reasons and I won't play your game. So he said to them, do you really want to be my disciples? Then here's what you've got to do. And when they heard what he said, they walked away.

So much so that Jesus turned to his own disciples. Now I don't know, you can't tell from the text, but I get the sense that there's a great puzzled look on the face of the disciples because they don't understand what's happening. I mean here he has thousands of people following him and he offends them.

He even says to his disciples, does this offend you? And I don't know, there must have been a puzzled look on their face. Peter, Peter is there. Peter didn't always get it right.

Peter was one of those guys who had hoof and mouth disease. He usually ended up with his foot in his mouth when he spoke. But Peter, Peter didn't always get it.

But Peter said, Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. In other words, Peter had already looked at the situation and he'd realized that there was no way he was ever going to find complete satisfaction without following Jesus Christ. In John chapter 6 and verse 61, the words that John uses here for the word offend is the word scandalize in English.

It would be the same word we would use to scandalize. It was such a scandal that they could not accept it. They could not receive it.

Now here's the deal. Wherever I go, I find lots of people who say, I love Jesus, but I'm not exactly which Jesus they're talking about. Whether they're talking about the Jesus of Scripture or the Jesus of culture.

The Jesus of culture says, come to me and I'll make you rich. I'll give you success. The Jesus of Scripture says, come to me if you're willing to take up a cross and follow me.

He's literally saying, come and follow me if you're willing to die for me. He didn't say that. He said, take up the cross.

But let me ask you a question. Why would anybody pick up a cross if you didn't intend to die on it? Sacrifice. The Christ of culture not only talks about success, but the Christ of culture legitimates the world.

The Christ of culture says, I love you. You can do whatever you want to do. Just say, now I lay me down to sleep before you go to bed and everything will be.

Don't worry about where you go. Don't worry about what you say because I love you with an everlasting love. That's not the Christ of Scripture.

The Christ of Scripture talks about changing your life. Listen, let me tell you something. Jesus Christ did not come into the world.

Listen to this carefully. Jesus Christ did not come into the world to satisfy your natural desires or your natural appetite. Jesus came to give you a new appetite.

He came to transform you. To make you a new creature. Praise God forevermore.

Wow, I tell you, I just feel the presence of the Lord just flooding over my soul. Would you just give the Lord praise? Wow. The Christ of culture says, follow me and I'll give you comfort.

But the Christ of Scripture says, follow me if you're willing to make a commitment. So someone recently asked in an article, why can't you Christians just become more tolerant and stop all of this division between God's people? After all, we're all God's children and we're just all trying to please God. So Jesus is being marketed in many venues.

There are those who will tell you that Jesus has many names. Buddha, Krishna, you fill in the blank. They tell us that we're coming to a state to where we have to accept a pantheistic Jesus, but I'm telling you, there's only one.

Only one. Only one. And his name is Jesus.

Say it with me. Jesus. Jesus.

Jesus. Now give the Lord praise. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. I know the pastor mentioned it this morning, but I was thinking about it last night, and even this morning as I was praying about walking down in Times Square during the holidays and seeing the large billboard, which was really disturbing. Above the billboard it said, keep the Mary, dump the myth.

And it featured a jolly image of Santa Claus and a solemn wooden figure of a crucified Christ. They said, and I'm quoting this because I don't want to misquote, David Silverman, president of the American Atheist, we know that a large population of Christians are actually atheists who feel trapped in their family's religion. If you know that God is a myth, you don't have to lie and call yourself a Christian.

In order to have a festive holiday season, you can be Mary without the myth, and indeed you should. The myth. Thank God for Times Square.

Every time I came through Lincoln Tunnel and saw that sign, he's alive. Thank God he's not a myth. Thank God.

And every time I think of how God put this church right here in the middle, folks, we are not here by accident. This is God's plan and God's design. The question is, what are we going to do with it? And by God's grace, we are going to reach this city, all of the boroughs, all of the state, and around the nation and around the world with the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

Amen and amen. Praise God. It was G. J. Chesterton who said, the problem with Christianity is not that it has been tried and found wanting, but that it has been found difficult and left untried.

This morning, you may have your doubts, you may have your own fears, you may have your own questions, but you know the important thing is that Jesus is always there to say, come and bring your fears, bring your doubts, bring your questions to me. I will not turn you aside. But if you make an effort to come to Jesus, please make up your mind to stay.

It's not just a day journey, it's a lifetime journey. Walk with him. He will give you meaning for your life.

So now you've heard the message as they heard the message. Each one of them were given two choices. Choice A, as shown in verse 66, you can say, no, this is too difficult.

I don't think I can handle that. And you can walk away. Or choice B is to do what his disciples did.

It's to say, Lord, we don't understand it all. We don't yet get it, but we don't know where else to go. And so we're going to stay with you, Lord Jesus.

I have to tell you that I'm so happy that I stayed with him because there've been times in my life, there've been times in my life when I didn't feel like he came through for me like I wanted him to. There've been times in my life when I stood by the little bed of my dying child. And I said, Jesus healed my child, but my child died.

And I walked away saying, why am I serving you? You didn't come when I needed you. But I'm going to tell you that he brought me through that with the greatest revelation of who he is in all of my life. I can tell you that he will be with you wherever.

You'll never go anywhere, that he will not be there to be by your side. I'm so tired, so tired of wanting and hearing people talking about, I want to know more about Jesus. Look, I don't want just to know more about Jesus.

I want to know Jesus more. I want to know him. I don't want just to know about him.

So I felt it. And I tell you, I didn't just feel it this morning. I didn't feel it last night.

I felt it since the last time I walked out of this pulpit and the last time I preached that today was going to be a red letter day in somebody's life. You're going to begin a journey today with Jesus Christ that's going to transform your life. If we walk away from Jesus Christ, you walk away from eternal riches.

And I can tell you that the cost of non-discipleship is more expensive than discipleship. For when we abandon the trinkets of this world and respond to the radical demands of Jesus, we discover the infinite treasures that he has stored up for us. Jesus didn't come to satisfy your natural appetite.

He came to give you a new appetite. He didn't come to satisfy the old man or the old woman. He came to turn you into a new creature.

He said, I'm not here to give you bread. I'm here to be your bread. I didn't come here just to meet you at this altar, but I came here to walk with you through every problem, every step that you're going.

Pursue him. Get to know him. He is the satisfaction, not his gifts.

I tell you, when you come to that place in your life, when you can truly say, Jesus is enough. He's all that I need. That's when you can really embrace him and you can live for him in the way he's chosen for you to do so.

So they wanted to make him king, but he said, I will not be your king because you are not coming to me for the right reasons. And so they walked away. Now the choice is up to us.

Are we going to follow him or are we going to follow the things of the world? I want our musicians to get ready and I'll tell you what I want. I prayed about this and I know that God is going to speak specifically to people's hearts right here in this main sanctuary and in the overflow and in New Rochelle, or if you're looking at this over the web, wherever it is, you may have your doubts. You may have your fears.

You may not have all of the questions about Jesus answered, but all he's saying to you is just come and give me a chance. And I'm saying to you, there's nowhere else you can turn. He has the words of eternal life.

Now, Father, I preach the message that you've laid on my heart. And if I could, God, I would walk back in this auditorium. I would reach out to the overflow and I would reach into these places where people are watching by the web.

And I would put my arms around them and say, Jesus loves you, but I don't have to do that, Lord, because you've already extended your arms and you were already embracing them. And they are already beginning to feel an urge to get to know you better. And I pray God, as I give this altar invitation, that you will draw only those, God, who are ready to follow you into discipleship.

Touch them, God, if there's a man or a woman here, Lord, that is still wavering. I pray that you would just draw them to this altar so that we can pray for them that they might receive full understanding of who Jesus Christ is. In Jesus' name, I pray.

I want you to stand with me. I want our musicians to get ready. And here's what I'm going to ask you to do.

Praise God. Pastor, I just feel an incredible presence of the Lord in this place today. I feel such an incredible, incredible drawing of the Holy Spirit.

Please listen to me carefully. Some of you have been to the altar before, but I'm asking you to come and let this be a permanent decision for you that I'm going to follow Jesus. Some of you have never come.

Some of you have your doubts. Some of you don't know. Some of you question.

And all I'm asking you to do is to give him a chance. Let him speak into your life. Let him speak into your heart.

Let the people gather around you to pray. And day by day, he will give you clear understanding. He loves you.

He died for you. He gives us his body, his flesh on a cross that we could have everlasting life. As our musicians start to play and you feel the inclination of the Holy Spirit to move to this altar, start coming right now.

Come from the balcony in the overflow room. If you'll just go to the center of the screens, if you'll, if you'll just go to the center, somebody will pray with you. Just come.

If you feel the Holy Spirit drawing you, give us a song. Now, if you will just keep coming, keep coming. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Let's pray together. Father God, you've seen everyone that's made their way down to this altar.

You know every heart. You know the desires of every heart. You know, God, those that have come seeking to find hope.

Lord, those who are near despair. And I'm asking God that you will do a work in their hearts this morning that they will never, never forget. Lord, let the transforming power of your blood, the transforming power of your Holy Spirit change us, God.

Take away those binding habits, break those fetters that have us bound. God, there's nothing too big for you to do. There's nothing too great, nothing too challenging for you.

Lord, you're able to heal us of all of our lusts and of all of our evil sins and desires. Take away all of those things, God, that keep us from living in harmony with you. Lord, we know that we're living in perilous times.

We don't know how much longer we have. But Lord, however long it may be, let us live the rest of the days of our life in complete devotion to you. We love you, Jesus.

We serve you, Lord. We give you our lives. We entrust you, God, with our families.

Lord, heal us. Where there is brokenness, let there be healing. God, where there is unforgiveness, let there be forgiveness.

Where there is hatred, let there be love. God, I pray that you would bind broken relationships that are people here today, God, who've lost their relationships with their children, with their spouses. I pray that you would heal those relationships.

God, you came to bring us healing. You came to bring us life. You came to bring us fulfillment.

And we put our trust in you today, Lord. You are the Lord of lords and the King of kings. And Lord, that crowd in John chapter 6 who wanted to take you by force and make you king, thank you that you slipped away from them, because that was not the kind of king you were made to be.

But one day, one day, not long from now, every one of us in this auditorium and everyone listening, everyone, God, in this whole universe will stand before you and see you crowned Lord of lords and King of

kings. And every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that you are Lord to the glory of God the Father. Jesus, we love you with all of our hearts.

Give him glory and praise. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Let me pray for you, please, along the lines of what you've heard today. Lord, you are the one who has promised to be our supply.

We come to you, Lord, for life, for cleansing, for strength, and for health. And we believe that you are a miracle-working God. And so, Lord, create in us that which needs to be created.

Breathe on us where we're dead and call us back to life. God, be Christ in us and through us, and use each of us, Lord, to bring this world to an understanding that you are God, that you are alive, that you did die for all who will come to you to find you in a saving relationship. Lord Jesus Christ, take us in our weakness and make us strong.

Lord, we thank you that you have borne the testimony of Scripture, that it's not the powerful, it's not the knowledgeable, but it's the weak things of this world, Lord, that you take to confound those things that are strong in themselves. And so, Lord, we present ourselves to you and ask you to be our strength, be our life. Multiply in us like you multiplied the loaves and fishes.

Your presence, your life, your word, God, the mission that you've given to us. Lord God, I'm asking that evangelists be born at this altar this day, missionaries, pastors, godly men and women who will make a difference in the workplace. Give us words of knowledge, Lord, that are not our own.

Give us the ability to reach out beyond our own resources. Give us wisdom and compassion, O God, that can only come from your heart. Lord Jesus Christ, be Jesus in us and through us, Lord, to this generation.

We ask you to take us and confound this generation that stand in their own wisdom and their own strength and show them that there is a God. And Father, we thank you for this with all our hearts. Thank you, Lord, that we'll not leave this altar disappointed.

We've heard that you are the bread of life. We know that you long to be Christ in us, Lord, so we do make that decision. We do live by every word that you have spoken to us.

We do walk in the cleansing of your blood. We do take these things to heart, Lord. And we thank you, God, that as we commit to you, you've committed already to us.

Lord, thank you that we will walk together and make a difference in this darkened generation. Thank you, Lord God. Father, we ask from this sanctuary today, life would pour forth like crystal water into the streets of New York City.

Everywhere we go, it would be life, life, begetting life, begetting life, begetting life. Give us a heart, Lord, for the children of this generation and for people around us who need to know who you are. Give us a depth in your word to be able to lead them to a saving relationship with Christ and teach them what that means.

And Father, we thank you for this, God, with all our hearts. We will not go out of this age defeated. We're going out in glory.

We're going out in strength. We're going out in the victory of our Christ. And God, we thank you for it in the mighty and unmatched name of Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

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

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