

Bless the Earth, Oh My Soul!

by Carter Conlon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of hearing God's word and following Christ, rather than developing a false religious system that operates outside of God's truth.

Duration: 43:21

Scripture: Genesis 1:1-3, Proverbs 3:1-5, Matthew 6:33, Luke 10:25, Luke 10:29, John 3:16, Hebrews 1:10-12

Topics: "Christian Living"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by asking God for the power to convey His word to those gathered who hunger for truth. The sermon is based on Luke chapter 10, where a lawyer tempts Jesus by asking how to inherit eternal life. The preacher emphasizes that the cross was not just for individual redemption, but also to release the power of God in our lives so that we can be a blessing and a testimony to others. The sermon encourages listeners to turn from their sins and walk in the supernatural, admitting their need for God and seeking His truth.

Transcript

Luke chapter 10, please, in the New Testament, if you'll go there with me, in your Bibles. Bless the earth, O my soul. Now, in case you think I'm misquoting Scripture, that's the title of my message, that's not a verse of Scripture.

Bless the earth, O my soul. Father, thank you, Lord God, for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Oh, Jesus, I just praise you with all my heart.

God, that never, never do any of us have to stand here alone with our own reasoning and our own strength. God, what a dismal thing that would be. We thank you for the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, for the strength that you give, the expanding of our minds, God, the enlarging of our hearts.

Everything, Lord, that we have has come from your hand. God, would you give me the power to convey this word that you put on my heart today to those that have gathered here who hunger for truth. God, let your kingdom come, Jesus.

Let us grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Savior. Father, we thank you for this, God. Give me the grace to speak this.

Give us the grace to hear it. In Jesus' mighty name. Amen.

Luke chapter 10. Bless the earth, O my soul. Beginning at verse 25.

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? Now, he's tempting Christ because he really does believe that he knows all there needs to be known of truth. He wants to really test Jesus and see if he's as smart as he is. And he said to him, what is written in the law? How readest thou? And he answered, he said, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself.

And he said unto him, thou hast answered right. This do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, and who is my neighbor? That's an amazing thing.

You know, he asks Jesus, what is the most important commandment? Another gospel says he came and said, what is the most important commandment? Luke records it as, what must I do to inherit eternal life? So Jesus looks at the man and says, well, you've been studying the scriptures, you're a teacher of the law, how do you read it? What does it say to you? Do you know what it says? And so immediately, he's caught really in his own snare then, because he really does know the truth. And he says, you love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, your strength, and your mind, and your neighbor as yourself. So Jesus said to him, you've answered right.

Do this, and you will live. That was his question. What must I do to inherit eternal life? Do this, and you'll be caused to live, actually is what it says in the original translation.

And so this lawyer was theologically correct, but wrong in practice. Do you know you can be theologically correct and wrong in practice? Do you know that it's possible in the church of Jesus Christ to know the truth, but not walk in it? To know where it's leading, but not live in it? It's completely possible. This man covers his deficiency with something in his own mind that is a reasonable question.

And who is my neighbor? Now, I suppose he thought that was a very tricky question, because there were some people, of course, in Jewish history that were considered unclean, and untouchable, and under the wrath of God, etc., according to the histories, he knew it. But he thought, well, as long as I'm studying this, I don't really have to apply it to my life. If I ever figure this one out, if I ever get to the bottom of this answer, then, Lord, you can certainly count me in.

But in reality, it's his own fallen nature, trying to... Remember the temptation in the Garden of Eden, when Satan came to Adam and Eve, he said, if you partake of the tree, the fruit of this tree, the knowledge of good and evil, you're going to become as God. You're going to know what is good, and you're going to know what is evil. So this man, in his own fallen nature, is trying to be as God.

Trying to declare something that is clearly wrong to be right. Folks, it's a trap that I think many people have fallen into in this generation. I was told this morning, a letter came in from a pastor in the south of this country, who's beside himself.

He's been watching these services live. He's been live streaming. And he says, it's amazing.

He said, you have a congregation as large as you have. And he said, I'm stunned at the diversity, the racial diversity that's in your congregation. He said, where I live, I pastor a church that's all white.

And he said, if a black family or a Hispanic family tries to come into my congregation, the congregation rises up against me. And folks, I don't know what these people are studying. I don't know what Bible

they're reading.

I don't know how they feel that their religious practice is going to get them into heaven. Were they singing the songs that we're singing this morning when we all get to heaven? Folks, but I don't think heaven is the reality of many of these people. For Jesus said, John said, if you say you love God and hate your brother, you're a liar.

And the truth is not in you. I don't see how you get around that. How do we get to a place of such religious deception in people's minds that something that is so clearly wrong becomes right? And see, that's exactly what the temptation was.

When you become your own God, you call good evil. And you call evil good. Somehow, in the people's minds, it's a good thing that the church is all white.

And it's an evil thing if a black or hispanic person tries to come in and be part of the congregation. How do people get so utterly twisted in their thinking while singing the songs of Zion? Opening the same Bible as you and I have. And obviously, in this case, having a pastor that's trying to bring truth to this congregation that is very resistant to receive this truth.

You see, if this system, this false belief system is left unchecked, an entire religious system can develop that studies truth, but operates completely outside of it. Let me give you a sample of this in John chapter 8. Go to John chapter 8, please, with me, just for a moment. Now, you remember that the scripture says in John about Jesus, He came to His own, but His own would not receive Him.

They had developed a religious system. And they had shut God, literally, out of the system of religion they had developed. He couldn't get into it.

He came to it, and it rejected Him. John chapter 8, verse 39. They answered and said to Him, Abraham is our father.

Now, consider this for a moment. Abraham is the man that God called to go into the earth, and He said, I'm going to bless you, and through you, the whole world is going to be blessed. Do you remember that? And so, these people are supposed to be blessing the earth.

If they truly are the children of Abraham, there should be a blessing of God flowing through them to all people in this earth. Jesus said to them, if you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. If you were Abraham's children, the world would be blessed through you.

Blessing would be flowing through you. Folks, if you're a son or daughter of God, if you're a child of God, blessing is flowing through you. There's kindness coming from your lips.

There's charity coming from your hands. There's compassion coming from your heart. If you truly are, and I truly am, a son or daughter of God, blessing is coming.

Everywhere you go, there's a blessing. There's supposed to be a savor of God that is radiating as it is through your life. As you pass through, the scripture says, passing through the valley of weeping, you make it a place of blessing.

Because the presence of God is in you. And where God is, there has to be life. There has to be freedom.

There has to be another spirit than the spirit of this world. He said in verse 40, But now you seek to kill me, a man which has told you the truth, which I heard of God, and this did not Abraham. In other words, I'm bringing you the truth, but you've developed such a system in your own heart, such a belief system, that you'd rather have me dead than ever submit to the Lordship of God.

You do the deeds of your father. And they said to him, We be not born of fornication, we have one father, even God. And Jesus said unto them, If God were your father, you would love me.

For I proceeded forth and came from God, neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do you not understand my speech? Even because you cannot hear my word. Verse 47, He that is of God hears God's words.

You therefore hear them not, because you are not of God. The folks, that says it clearly, doesn't it? Hearing is more than just a mental agreement. It's more than just me making a sound with my mouth and you acknowledging, yes, I do hear you.

No, there's an inner hearing of the word of God. There's a yielding. There's an embracing.

There's something in the heart that says, God, your word is right. By your word, the heavens were created of old. By your words, light separated from darkness.

By your words, the boundaries of all things have been established. By your words, the heavens are one day going to be folded up as an old garment and be recreated. By your words, mankind has been redeemed.

Oh God, oh God, oh God, open my heart and let me hear your word. That was the cry of my heart as a young Christian. I remember, I wrote out Proverbs, chapter 3, verses 1 to 5, on a huge bristle board and tacked it to the wall in my kitchen at home.

And I said, oh God, I want your words to come into my heart. I want them more than silver or gold. I want understanding.

I want to know the ways of God. I want to walk in those ways of God. God, I want what you have for me.

I want my inheritance, but not to use it for myself. I want my inheritance so that I might know what it means to walk with God in the earth. Now you and I are created by God with the power of thought and reason.

We're the only thing in God's creation that can say no to God. Did you know that? The sun can't decide one day not to come up in the morning. Birds can't decide they're not going to fly south in the winter time.

Everything is programmed. It's programmed by God to operate the way it does. The only thing that can stand up and say no is you and I. We've been given this power of thought and reason.

Because of this, we have the ability to act outside of the purpose for which we've been placed on the earth. In the book of Genesis, it's very clearly declared that the earth was to be blessed by the presence of man on it. In Genesis 1, 28, God told Adam and Eve, He said, go and occupy the earth as it is.

One of the words He uses in the text is replenish the earth. In the original text, it means fill up something that was empty. It's also used, it's also translated into the word consecrate.

Consecrate the earth. Fill it up. In other words, I believe the glory of the Lord was to be seen in the earth through man's care of it.

You and I, before Adam sinned, of course, would be in this earth and the earth was to be a declaration of the glory of God and how we interact in it. Now we know that that was marred when Adam and Eve sinned against God. Because there was a tree in the midst of the garden that God told them, you must not touch it.

And it was the tree of the power to know good and evil. It is the temptation of Satan when he came to Adam and Eve. He said, now God knows in the day that you touch this tree that your eyes will be opened and you will become as gods to know good and evil.

You are, your fallen nature and mine has within it that temptation. That's the seed of Satan that was thrown as it is in the human race. That we can be our own gods.

That we can determine what is good and what is evil. We really have, and folks, it's deeper than you think. That's how churches become so theologically off track and practically off track.

Because that's not challenged in many of the people who come in. They're living and laboring under this guise of approaching unto God but deep in the heart saying, no, I will decide what is good for my life and I will decide what is evil. I'll pick and choose under the word of God what I want.

I'll reject the rest and I'll create this euphoric salvation. I'll sing the songs of Zion. When it's all over, I'm going to go to heaven to live for eternity.

Beloved, I say this with a loving heart, but what a shock for so many. What a shock it's going to be for people. What a shock for these people that Jesus was speaking to in the scriptures to finally end up before the throne of God.

To find out they're on the wrong side of the judgment folks. To find out that having been in an ocean of truth they'd rejected it. They'd chosen to be governed by a fallen nature that says, I don't care what the word says.

I can be as God. I don't care if the word says that if you hate your brother you're a liar. We're a white church and we're going to stay a white church.

They say. And we're not going to open our doors. Thank God that spirit is not here.

Thank God to move in any direction our own heart desires and say it's good and to call what is really good evil. And who is my neighbor, he says. He saw what was good.

He actually knew what the word of God said. But in his heart, this lawyer is already calling it evil. And not willing to overtly say that, he now relegates himself to study.

There's a lot of people studying. They study a lot. They attend a lot of conferences.

They go to seminaries. They study. And they miss the simplicity of the gospel in all of it.

Because their own hearts formulate theories about God. Formulate things about the character of God. Always looking for some new thing about God.

That you see them walk down the street with their briefcase full of words and ideas. And they pass by the new Christian who's giving half his sandwich to a homeless man. And they condescendingly look at that man and say oh if that young man only knew what I knew.

What a great place this world would be. It's interesting that the first people created for fellowship with God and the last of the seven churches spoken to by Christ in Revelation both had a wrong view of the tree that gives eternal life. Isn't that amazing? The way it began is in a sense the way it ends.

For many. Adam and Eve had a wrong view of the tree. And at the end you have a church called Laodicea who had a wrong view of the cross.

In Genesis 3.6 it talks about Eve approaching the tree and it says when she saw that it was good for food. Paul says in Philippians chapter 3 verses 18 and 19 for many walk of whom I've told you often and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ whose end is destruction whose God is their belly whose glory is in their shame and who mind earthly things. Paul said I say it to you weeping.

It's not that these people don't know the scriptures but they've approached the tree as it is of salvation with the wrong reasonings in their heart. They're looking at the cross and saying wow this is going to really prosper my life. Boy I'm going to I'm really going to get some good things come to me because of this.

They're completely blinded to the reality that we're called to follow Christ and be given for a fallen world. No, but they approach the tree and they say well we see what is right and we understand what should come into our lives because of the cross and they see that it's good for food. When she saw Genesis 3.6 that it was pleasant to the eyes.

2 Peter chapter 2 verses 13 and 14 Peter talks about people who are in the church he said they're spots and blemishes. They sport themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you having eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sin. Pleasant to the eyes.

Looking upon the tree with the wrong heart and saying oh this tree could make me great. This tree could give me power, influence, authority in the world. This tree could give me mastery over other people's lives.

Oh so much could come into my life because of this tree. These are people who are drawn to the world and in the case of preachers Peter says they draw others with themselves back into captivity of the things of this world. They promise liberty but they themselves Peter says are the slaves of corruption.

They have a moment of freedom from these things but they go back to it. Just like a dog Peter says goes back to its own vomit and a pig that was washed goes back to wallowing in the mire. They are momentarily free but they have a wrong view of the tree.

Do you remember the Laodicean church? They said we are rich, we are increased with goods and we have need of nothing. And Jesus said you don't understand that you're naked and blind and wretched and miserable and you're poor. You've lost something.

You have no understanding of really what it means to walk with God, with a holy God. And Genesis 3.6 says about Eve and it was a tree desired to make one wise. Paul says in 2nd Timothy chapter 3 the last days there will be a people who are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

And who is my neighbor? Ever learning. Paul says in verse 5 they have a form of godliness but there's no power in it. There's nothing of God in it.

It's just a form. It puts a suit on a man or woman, causes us to carry a bible. We stop cursing, drinking and smoking.

Come to the house of God but there's no power in it. There's nothing of God's heart in it. There's nothing of God's life in it.

The supernatural life of God is not seen in it. It doesn't really change the character of a man or woman. It just changes the exterior but the interior is absolutely the same.

Essentially the same. The person walks in and out of the house of God picking and choosing from the word of God what they want to hear saying this is good this is evil, this is right, this is wrong. It really doesn't matter what it says.

The main difference between Adam and the Laodicean church is that Adam had the knowledge and the courage to admit his spiritual bankruptcy. When God came and called him and said Adam where are you? Adam had the courage to say I heard your voice and I was naked and I hid myself. He had the courage at least to be honest with God.

I wonder today I wonder, I wonder. I'm an optimist by nature so I hope for the best but I wonder in America today I'm speaking just to the church in America do we have the courage to admit what we have become? Does the church in America have the courage to admit that the church is just a reflection of a culture that is perishing all around us. A culture that focused on itself a culture that trampled on other people for its own gain.

A culture that's all about me. Do we have the courage? Do the people in this particular southern town do they have the courage to admit what they've become? I don't know. I would hope so.

I would hope so as we see our nation beginning to go into ever increasing turmoil I would hope so and in my heart there's a pleading. Do we have the courage to say God I hear your voice I've been hiding because I'm not covered I'm not empowered I haven't really been honestly walking with you. I'm all about myself I've used the cross for myself I've really not cared about other people.

You can't tell me that church in the south cares anything about people. And if there is anything in their literature about caring it's a facade. It isn't true.

The evidence is in how we care obviously about other people. In Genesis Adam and Eve were sent out of the garden and in Revelation Jesus Christ is trying to get back into the church in the last church in the book of Revelation He's standing at the door and he's knocking and the door opens at the point that you and I agree with God. There's I'm not afraid of much.

I have to be honest I don't really, I don't have a I just don't. I'm not afraid of much but I am afraid of this one thing. That there ever come a time in my heart when I can't hear God anymore.

When he's trying to speak and I'm no longer listening I have formed a view about something I'm entrenched in that view. Whether it's a self view or it's a view of practice and not even God's word can speak to me anymore. Personally speaking that's the most fearful place that you and I could ever be.

And by God's grace I'd rather die than ever go to that place. And I've prayed that prayer. I said Lord if I'm ever going to go there please just take my life and take me home.

I don't want to go there. I want to stay open to the word of God. I want to the grave, to the final days of my life.

I want to be open to this book. This book has the right to examine me. It has the right to examine my heart and my practices and my thinking and my mind.

It has the right. My life belongs to Jesus. You and I are called to obey God and to be given for others and to be a blessing to this world.

That's, remember they said we are the children of Abraham. And he said if you were you'd be doing the works of Abraham. Abraham set out not knowing where he was going but knowing that the promise of God was in him that his life would be a blessing.

And through him all the world was going to be blessed. That's what Abraham had. That's what Abraham knew.

My life belongs to God and your life belongs to God. And if you have truly come to the cross and if you've fully understood what redemption is about. If you've understood what it means to walk with God in this earth.

You and I are called to be a blessing to this earth. The earth in measure. I mean we know the earth is going to disintegrate in a sense and it's going to be dissolved according to the Apostle Peter.

But till that day we are called to do what Adam should have done in the first place. We are called to be a people who bring healing where there's brokenness. Freedom where there's captivity.

Order where there's chaos. Truth where there's lies. Right practice where wrong practice has become the norm.

I know it's going to cost some of you. I know how hard it is. I hear the stories of so many secretaries here of being instructed to falsify the books and put in bogus appointments and submit bills for services that have never happened.

I know how hard it is. But it's not impossible to do right. Better to do right.

A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches. I know it's not easy for the teachers in schools when you see the needs of the kids all around you. And yet you're being threatened with your future.

You're being threatened with your employment should you even dare to mention the name of God in the school system. I know how hard it is to obey God under these circumstances. It's so difficult for so many.

So hard to be civil in an uncivil time where it's become the norm now in society to be divided, to be bitter, to choose one side or the other. So difficult to stay neutral and just speak for God. But it's not impossible to be in those places.

It's not impossible folks. And you and I have got to make some choices, some very deep choices. That we're either going to walk in the ways of the world or we're going to walk in the ways of God.

Because this is a desperate and a dark hour folks. And there has to be an inner embracing of truth or you're not going to make it through. Nation is about to rise against nation.

Culture is rising against culture. Bitter division is going to be the order of the day. An outbreak and baptism of unspeakable filth and evil is about to touch the world.

So you've got to make the choices now folks. You can't leave it for tomorrow. You can't leave it for next week.

You've got to choose to walk in the truth now. You've got to open your heart. If Jesus is knocking at the door, call him in.

Invite him in. He says, I stand at the door and knock. The cross hasn't been just about you.

The cross was for you to bring you and I to redemption. To release into our lives the power of God so that we can become the people in the earth that God's called us to be. But ultimately the power of God flowed through us to be a blessing and a living testimony of the reality of God even to the end of the age.

Jesus said, I will be with you even to the end of the world. Praise God. We're coming into an hour folks.

It's going to be hard to stand but not impossible. In this world you shall have tribulation but be of good cheer for I have overcome this world. In the Christian life, no task should be too great and no person should be too small.

I thank God that he's opening our hearts in this church to the least of the least of the least in this city and throughout the world because ultimately folks, that's where the power of God is. The Pharisees thought it was in knowledge. They thought it was in position.

They thought it was in power. They thought it was in influence in the temple. But Jesus was showing them where the power of God is when he touched the leper and let the woman caught in adultery go and called the blind man to himself and touched them and healed them.

That's where the power of God is. He was clearly showing us the way to the power of God. But the religious heart doesn't want to see it.

The religious heart wants to use the tree for its own advantage. The religious heart wants to be as God and saying power is good. Humility is evil.

Self consumption is good. Self denial is evil. That's what the human heart wants to do.

To be as God and recreate truth as it is in itself. I had some people in my office once years ago that were going off track theologically and I remember I was trying to reach them and so I opened three times the bible in my office because they were taking their children to this place and the pastor that they were I knew was a wolf. I knew he was a wolf.

And they were bringing their family under this leadership. So I opened the word of God. I read the first portion.

They looked me right in the eye and they said well we know what it says but we believe. I wasn't saying anything. I turned to another portion of scripture.

I read the portion of scripture and they looked at me and said well that's your opinion but we believe. So I turned to a third portion of scripture and I read it and then again they said to me well that's your opinion but we believe. So they knew what it said.

Clearly understood what the scripture said but somehow it relegated it to an opinion when I was reading the word of God. And who is my neighbor? The man said who is? I know what it says but who is my neighbor? And so they left. Went to that church and he took them for every dime they had.

I knew that's what was going to happen and then left town as he had always done. Could not be stopped. They had become God to themselves.

They had become the guardians of their own created truth. And they were now on a pathway to destruction and nobody could stop them. Not even the word of God.

But you and I are wise if we make the choice to obey God as Christ obeyed his father. If we too choose to be given for others. If we understand that Jesus Christ is the only source of lasting and true strength in life for us.

If we invite the strength of God to flow through us for others. If we make in our heart the choice that we will not be our own God. Jesus Christ is the Lord of my life.

Now obedience starts with obedience. That's where it starts. I know that there are people here today you already know what to do.

You know what to do. You know what the word of God says. There are people here who are living with other people and I'm talking men with women and you're not married.

And you know what the word of God says. So what do you do now? Do you obey God? Or do you become your own God? And call this evil good? I know that some people are not honest in their finances. How are you justifying it? Have you become God? Are you calling this evil practice good? I know some people even your testimony is a lie.

But you've added a few things to it to try to make it more attractive thinking this is honoring God but yet it's a lie. What now do you do with this? And I could go on and on. See the reality is most people know what to do.

But the question is what will you do now? Will you and I stop calling evil good? That's the key. How many here are racist? We had a fellow that attended this church that wanted to donate a project that he had done to child cry. And he said as long as you don't feed the kids of this particular culture I'm willing to give this project.

Calling evil good. Stop looking for a reason to justify this practice. Stop asking the question who is my neighbor? Understand that the cross is not to be used to enhance your own life plan.

You and I are bought with a price. And we're called to glorify God in these bodies. We're called to be a blessing to the earth.

A blessing to all people. All races. All cultures.

Every political persuasion. We're called to pray for our leaders and not curse them. We're called to do good.

Speak good. Act good. We're called to do all of this by the power of the Holy Spirit that God is willing to give to those who are His.

God is willing to give you and I the power. But you and I have a free will. We make the choice of how we're going to live.

He gives us the power to do what we can't do in ourselves. That's how it works. If we make the wrong choice there's no power with it.

But if we make the right choice praise be to God. Times Square Church I implore you in Christ's name be a blessing to this city. Be a blessing to your neighborhood.

Be a blessing to your family. Be a blessing to the people in your apartment building. Be a blessing in the workplace.

Get away from the gossipers around the water fountain. Stop yelling at your children. Go into the prayer closet and say God I want to do right.

Your word says I'm not to provoke my children to wrath and I'm provoking my children to wrath. God almighty I commend to your presence wanting to do right and I'm trusting you for the power. I'm naked God in this area of my life.

You'll find the Lord is willing to cover you. He's willing to empower you. He's willing to give you grace.

Some would say God I don't know how I can do right in the workplace. Everything around me is going wrong. The evil speaking is so out of hand.

There's so much going on that seems to be evil and there's so much pressure for me to conform and I'm conforming at every turn but if you go in the prayer closet and say Lord I'm naked. I'm naked. I hear your voice but God I don't have the power and the Lord will come to you and say but I'm willing.

If you open the door, what did he say? I'll come in and my father and I'll come in. We'll sit down. We'll sup with you.

He said I'll open this banquet. See there's your strength. I'll open this banquet of truth to you.

I'll show you where the power is. I'll put in your heart a total other value system. I'll give you the power to love people.

It will cast away the fear of man out of your heart. I'll put such a desire to do truth that you'll be afraid to do evil. I'll plant in you the fear of the Lord.

If you don't have a fear of God, God says I'll give it to you because it's a gift that you and I need. If you and I ever lose the fear of the Lord, we become our own God. We begin to do our own thing.

No, no, no. God says no. I'll put in your life what you need.

I'll sit down. I'll open it to you. If you'll open your mouth wide, I will fill it.

If you'll open your heart, I'll renew it. If you'll open your mind, I'll cleanse it. If you'll open your hands, I'll purify them.

If you'll open the door to your house, I'll come in. I'll touch your family. I'll put faith in your heart.

Folks, you and I've got to walk in the supernatural now. We've got to know God now. We've got to walk in truth now.

There's no longer any time to play any games. Many, many, many people are going to be swallowed in the culture of this time, but if you want to walk above it and rise above it, you and I have got to admit our need. We've got to turn from what we know is wrong and begin to do right.

Bless be God. The old time preachers of the gospel called it repent. Turn from your sin.

Turn from what you know is wrong. Don't justify it. Turn from it.

And that's where you and I begin to find the power to walk with God. Turn when God speaks. Turn.

Don't ask questions. Turn. Don't develop theologies.

Turn. Don't go to another channel on the television. Turn from your sin.

Turn to God. Turn to God. You'll find God turning to you.

You'll find strength and help and hope in the coming days. And we're not, you and I are not just going to squeak through until Christ comes. No, we're going through as a victorious army.

We're going through with a song. We're going through with a voice. We're going through as a blessing.

As God promised Abraham, through my life and yours, this earth is going to be blessed. New York City is going to be blessed because there are people of truth in it walking at every step of this society. There are people of truth walking in New York City.

New York will be blessed in the coming days. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

My choice. Do what I know. As the light of Scripture is shined on my path, then start walking in it.

That's my choice. That's what I have to do. That's my responsibility.

God's part is to give me strength. Cleanse me of my sin. Empower me with the Holy Spirit so that the two of us start walking together as one.

I begin to know the supernatural life of God. And everywhere I go, the blessing of God's love and power flows through you, through me, into this generation. That's why the Scripture says today, if you can hear His voice, harden not your heart.

How many times did God try to speak to His people through the years? I've been reading Ezekiel, Jeremiah, lately, the prophets of old, Ezra, how broken-hearted these men were because the religion of the day had become so hard-hearted that people had so become their own gods that there was no truth that could reach them anymore. It got to the place in Ezekiel's life where the Lord virtually had him stop speaking and just start taking stuff, digging a hole with his hands under the wall and just start removing it

in the sight of everybody because there's no other way they could listen anymore. And it was a type of God saying to that society, you're going into captivity because you wouldn't listen.

And folks, people going to captivity because they won't listen. It's not that God ever wanted that. Today, do you have the courage? Do you have the courage to approach the cross with an honest heart? Do you have the courage to say, God, my practice is wrong and I'm going to stop justifying it.

I'm going to stop it today. But I need your power. God, I need your power.

God, I need your power. And the Lord says, if you open your heart, I'll come to you. And I'll give you the power to walk in newness of life.

I'm going to give an altar call this morning, and it's a sober one, for this sanctuary and the education annex. For everybody here who can say, Lord, you have spoken to me today. I hear your voice, and I need your covering in this area of my life.

I have no power. I'm found without strength. I've justified this practice, but oh God, from this day forward, I'm turning away from this because I know what your word says, and I'm going to do what is right.

If that's in your heart today, as we stand, we're going to worship for about 10 minutes or so, and as we stand, I'm going to ask you just to come forward, and we're going to believe God for freedom today. Let's stand together. In the balcony, you can go to either exit and make your way down here.

Main sanctuary, just slip out of wherever you are. Make your way. Folks, unashamedly, this is not the time to be running to the parking lot.

Unashamedly, Jesus, I need you. God Almighty, I'm going to turn from what I know is wrong, and I'm going to turn to what I know is right. And if you've got something in your heart you can't get out, you bring it to the Lord, and you trust Him now for the strength to get it out.

He'll help you. He'll help you. If you have a wrong attitude towards another type of person, bring that to the Lord today.

Bring it to the Lord. You and I are not going to be partakers of the bitter divisions that are going to swallow much of our present world. Let's take time to worship Him.

Thank you, Lord. The moment that you and I deal honestly with God, this revelation of His greatness comes into the heart. As soon as Adam and Eve agreed with God, first thing that happened is that He made coverings for them, then He headed to the cross.

Folks, when you and I agree with God, you'll find your sin is covered, your failing is covered, and the power of the cross is coming right your way. The power of your redemption is going to be made known to you. Nobody will have to tell you that God is.

You will know that God is. He'll become to you strength in that area of weakness. That place that you felt you could never go, you will go.

That thing you felt you could never do, you'll start to do. The testimony of God will so explode within your heart that this moment you're experiencing right now will be part of your day now. It'll be not just a Sunday morning thing.

It'll be part of your day. You'll be on the subway how great is our God. You'll be coming home at night singing how great is our God in your heart.

You'll be putting your feet up in your bed at night and the song will be how great is our God. Oh, Jesus, I thank you, Lord. God, I praise you.

I bless you, Lord. Father, these people have heard your word and they know God. And they've come to you to turn from something, Lord, that is giving them weakness and sending them in a powerless direction.

But God, as we turn to you, you promise to turn to us. And, Lord, you will have a church, Lord. You will have a people, God, in this last hour.

We ask you, Lord, that as you did with Abraham, would you make us a blessing, God, everywhere we go, Lord. Would you bless us that we might be a blessing to this world that we live in, God, to our own homes and families and our friends, Father. We thank you for it.

God, thank you for opening our hearts to your greatness at this altar. Thank you, God. What a day this is going to be.

This is a brand new beginning for many people, Lord. We thank you for it, Father. We bless you.

We praise you in Jesus' mighty name. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Could you give God a shout of glory in this house? Thank you, Lord. Thank you, God. Thank you, God.

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

Thank you. Victory, victory shall be mine. Victory is yours.

Victory is yours. Victory is yours. It's yours.

If you reach out and take it, it's yours. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Glory. We got to rejoice one more time.

We just got to rejoice in this house today. We got to give God praise. We got to give him glory.

Hallelujah. Let's do that.

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