

The Last Day Return to Discernment Part 1

by Carter Conlon

The sermon emphasizes the importance of returning to God and hearing His voice in order to discern between right and wrong, and to show mercy and provision to the fatherless and the widow.

Duration: 45:32

Scripture: Hosea 14:1, Malachi 3:7-8, Malachi 3:14

Topics: "Last Days"

Description

In the video, Brother Tom Larkin shares his experience in Zambia, where he witnessed the transformation of children living in desperate conditions. These children were once hopeless, living in sewers and sniffing glue, but through the help of Brother Larkin and the church, they were clothed, educated, and provided for. The capacity to worship God was evident in these children, as they expressed their gratitude and praise. The video emphasizes the importance of the church being a source of provision and compassion for those in need, as it reflects the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Transcript

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This will be part one this morning, and I'm not quite sure when part two and three will be spoken. That will be up to the Holy Spirit. But I'm going to be speaking this morning on The Last Day Returned to Discernment.

And the next message will be on The Danger of Discernment Without the Heart of God. If you'll turn to the book of Malachi, please, last book of the Old Testament, second to last chapter, chapter three. And I'm going to begin reading at verse seven.

The Last Day Returned to Discernment. Now, Father, I thank you for the anointing of the Holy Spirit. God, I praise you with all my heart this morning that you have always, always, always touched this pulpit with your presence.

God, you answer that you dissolve doubts in those whose minds are confused, and you give strength to those that are weary. And you open the doorway to God's grace to those that are living outside of the kingdom of God. I thank you, Lord, that you will multiply this little bit that I have.

God, you will cause it to bear fruit that your name might be honored. All I ask, Lord, is that your kingdom come and your will be done. God, Jesus, you be glorified in this house and in every heart and in every mind.

Lord, the things you've given me to preach, I ask you for the grace and the strength to live them. And, Father, I give you all the praise and all the glory for everything that will happen in this house today. I thank you in Jesus' mighty name.

Malachi chapter three, beginning at verse seven. Even from the days of your fathers you are gone away from mine ordinances, and you've not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.

But you said, wherein shall we return? Will a man rob God? Yet you've robbed me. But you say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. We are cursed with a curse, for you have robbed me, even this whole nation.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts. If I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, there be not room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground, neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts.

And all nations shall call you blessed, for you shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts. Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet you say, wherein have we spoken so much against thee? You have said it is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we walk mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy.

Yea, they that work wickedness are set up, and yea, they that tempt God are even delivered. Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it. And a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels, and I will spare them, as a man spares his own son that serves him. Then shall you return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. That is really the definition of discernment.

Discernment is an inner knowledge given by God. It's an inner knowledge that shows us first our own hearts, the area of our hearts where we are surrendered to God and the area of our hearts where we are not surrendered to God. A man must and a woman must discern our own hearts before we ever, ever ask God for the gift of discernment to discern others.

We must first discern ourselves or we'll end up picking specks out of everyone's eye around us and be unaware of the log that is quickly growing in our own. As Jesus said, discernment is the ability to know who serves God and who does not serve him. It's the ability to know today if what I'm speaking is from the Holy Ghost or I've imagined it out of my own heart.

Discernment gives that ability to you. And if ever there was a time when the church of Jesus Christ needs discernment, it's in this generation. Because there are so many voices, there are so many theories now about God, who God is, what God does, how he operates in his church, what a living relationship is with God.

It's only really with discernment that you can know what is of God and what is not of God. Now, in chapter 3, beginning at verse 7, the Lord invites the people of this time back into right relationship with him. Now, of course, that's something he's doing all the time.

He's doing it today. If you are in some measure diverted from what it means to be a true follower of Jesus Christ, if I'm standing under the unction of the Holy Spirit today, you will be moved upon by the Spirit of God to come back into right relationship. In totality, in some cases, and only in part of your service to God and others.

But you will be moved upon if the Holy Spirit is speaking to you. And in verse 7, he says, Return to me, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts. But you say, wherein shall we return? Now, this is God's invitation to the people of that time.

And they asked, he said to them, come back to me in full measure as it is, and I'll come back to you. We'll walk together. You'll know me in intimacy as I already know you.

And they said to the voice of God through Malachi, wherein shall we return? And this is really the meaning of it. It's how shall we return? What shall we return to? And tell us why should we return? It's the who, where, what and why that word wherein encompasses all of those terms. And so it's a general question.

Tell us how. Tell us what to return to. Tell us why should we return? Now, it's obvious, I think, that these people, they once belonged to God, but they're not aware of how far they'd fallen from a living relationship with him.

Now, folks, that happens all through history. It happens. It can happen to me.

It can happen to you. You can be in a church as alive as this one, and this can be exactly what's happening to you because it's an issue of the heart. Having walked with God, having known God, having experienced his blessing, there is a dullness that's always wanted to creep into the human heart and put God in certain parameters that we can fully understand him and then just go away and live our own life, feeling that we can come back to him any moment and everything is just going to be fine.

Now, technically, this was the last invitation of the Old Testament to many who had a reputation or at least were reputed to be God's representatives on the earth. These were his people. This is the second last chapter of the Old Testament before 400 years of silence.

There was coming a period now between Malachi and John the Baptist of 400 years where there is no record of the voice of God ever being heard by these people again. If his voice was heard, there is no record of it. Historians believe that it's a period where God was silent.

Can you think about this for a moment? These people who are listening to this prophet Malachi who's speaking to God, think of those who refused the invitation. Now, the only way they're going to hear from this point onward is if they're willing to hear what God is saying at this point in their lives. He's saying, come back to me and I'll walk with you.

I'll speak to you. I'll be the voice that guides you. You will know me.

You'll discern. You'll know who's speaking for God and who's living for God and who's not. But think about those who would refuse this invitation and they would never again hear his voice in this world, never again to hear his voice.

Think about the people who say, well, that's interesting. Malachi, you've got some great concepts about God, but that's not for me. I'm quite happy with where I'm walking.

You're telling me that God wants me to come back to something. I don't understand it. I don't agree with it.

And so I'm just going to keep on going the way I'm going. I want you to think about this for a moment. They would never hear the voice of God again.

Never. In 400 years of silence, and you can just imagine these people at this time where God is speaking so very clearly to them, walking away from the word of God. The only time I guess they're ever going to hear his voice is one more time as they stand before the judgment seat.

Can you imagine? God having wooed, God having spoken, God having invited us. Talk about audacity to have the king of the universe invite you into his presence and we choose to decline. Because we just don't like the way he does things.

We already feel like we've been enough in his presence. We really don't need him speaking to us. And so we refuse the invitation only to one more time stand before the throne and hear his voice.

And it's in judgment, it's not in mercy. Is it possible, as we ask ourselves a question today one more time, is it possible in this final generation that history is repeating itself? Is it possible that he's calling many back into true relationship? If it's true, if it's so, that's something the Holy Spirit will have to bear witness in your heart today. I personally believe that he is calling a generation.

I do believe it with all my heart. I believe that Jesus Christ is standing in our generation as he did in so many generations past. And he's calling again a people in a very perilous time to walk with him, to stand for him, to honor him in the earth.

He's calling a people, he's calling you, he's calling me, that our lives are not to be lived just on self-consumption. But there's a plan that God has had from the moment we came to him of how he will be glorified if we will allow him to truly be our Lord as well as Savior. We will allow his grace and his goodness to flow through our lives and allow our hands as it is to be his hands in this world and our voices to be his voice.

Is it possible he's calling many back into true relationship? If it's so, can you imagine today never hearing his voice again? Can you imagine if this is the last time in your life that you're going to hear his voice? And it will happen to some. There is a point where people choose not to hear the voice of God. I don't want to hear this.

I didn't come for this. I came to have my agenda undergirded. I came to be told things that I want to hear.

I have formed in my mind a concept of God. And if this preacher is unwilling to build my self-esteem in this concept of God that I have formed, then I'm not interested in hearing what he's got to say. Even if the man or woman is speaking for God, there are many throughout history that have turned their hearts and turned their ears away.

How do you think that whole denominations backslide if somebody along the line didn't make that initial choice to turn away from God? How do families walk away from God? Families with a history of generosity and missions and accomplishing great things in their lineage. But you look at some today and there's no evidence hardly that God was ever in that lineage. Somebody somewhere chose to turn off God's voice.

He said we're not coming back to this thing that God is speaking to us. Can you imagine never hearing the voice of the one who creates and has created all things? Never hearing the voice of the one who offers not only temporary but everlasting comfort? Never hearing again the voice of the one who surrounds and reassures all those that are his? That there is a purpose, there's a plan, even in sorrow as we sang today, even in the wilderness places, there's a purpose that God has for those that are called by his name. Can you imagine never hearing that voice again? I may have feared a lot of things before I came to Christ.

And if there is a fear in my heart left today, it would be this one. It's not hearing his voice again. Left to my own resources, having to figure things out.

Going to places where they're inventing thoughts that they share from God and not hearing his voice. Not having the ability to discern who is living for God and who is not. And so many today are running around so confused.

Even idiocy in the last 20 years has risen up in the name of God. And I'm shocked at the number of people who are confused and they don't know. They have no inner knowledge of who is speaking for God.

Is this the Holy Spirit? Is this another spirit? They don't know because they're not walking in proximity with God. If they were walking with him, they would know. You would know.

You'd never have to ask the question. You know immediately. You know.

Even when somebody walks up to you and says, I've got a word for you. You know immediately if this is the Holy Spirit speaking, if you are walking with him. You know.

There's a voice that overrides every other voice that will ever come, even falsely representing the voice of God. You will have a knowledge in your heart when God is speaking to you. Now the people said, where in shall we return in verse 7? Now, how are we going to get back? And to what do we need to get back to? And that is strange because in verse 8 they've asked the question.

Now in verse 8 the answer begins to come. And the answer in verses 8 to 10 is, will a man rob God? Yet you've robbed me. But you say, how have we robbed you? In tithes and offerings.

You're cursed with a curse. You've robbed me. Even this whole nation.

Bring all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in my house and prove me now. Herewith saith the Lord of hosts, if I'll not open to you the windows of blessing, and pour out a blessing, and there not be room enough to receive it. Now, when you look at it in the context of how it's written, and if this is

just about tithing, you'd say, God, is that all you're after? Are you no bigger than this? Is that what you're after? A greater percentage of our income? And folks, I don't know about you, but I've heard it preached that way a lot of times throughout my Christian experience.

Is that really what you're after? Think about it for a moment. How can you rob God? How do you rob the man who owns everything and created everything? Think it through just for a moment. If you went out today, God forbid you should, but if you went out to a bank and you took out some money out of the Chase Bank, out of one branch and then you put it in another, have you robbed Chase Bank? Well, folks, think it through.

How are you going to rob God? He owns everything. How do you take from a man? You can't put it somewhere that it doesn't belong to him. So what is the point? Is it just that God wants another 2 percent, 3 percent of your income, and then everything's going to be fine? Is this the message? Is this the final message before 400 years of silence? God's saying, just give me now, I require 6 more percent of your income, and then everything will be fine.

I'll walk with you, you'll walk with me, and you'll know my voice. No, no, no, no. No.

He said, bring in that there might be meat in my house. You see, God has desired and He has chosen to show His mercy and His provision towards fallen man, particularly the poor, through His people, the church. Now, folks, we rob God, firstly, of the glory that is due His name.

When the stranger, the widow, the fatherless, and the poor do not find the refuge and provision that He longs to give them through His hands on this earth, which is the church, when the church turns inward, when the church becomes greedy, when the church all becomes about itself and we lose the very mission of God. He came to save sinners, Paul said, of whom I am chief. God so loved the world, He gave His own life, that no one should perish but all should come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

We're not robbing God of money, we rob God of the glory that is due His name when we close our bowels of compassion and become a selfish people. When people come into the house of God or outside of the house of God, find no provision through the church of Jesus Christ. The widow goes on in her struggle without oil.

The fatherless goes on in his struggle or her struggle without somebody to put a kind hand on their shoulder and tell them things will be fine and to help them through this life. The stranger finds no relief for his temporary difficulty. Hosea the prophet cried out in chapter 14, he said, Oh Israel, return to the Lord thy God.

You've fallen by your iniquity. Take words and turn back to the Lord and say to Him, take away all iniquity and receive us graciously. So we will render the calves, that means the praise of our lips to you.

Asherah will not save us, we will not ride upon horses. In other words, we will not look for some other direction but the direction that God has given us. Neither will we say anymore to the work of our hands or that which we have created even in God's name.

You are our gods. And Hosea concludes with this statement, for in thee the fatherless find mercy. He was saying to Israel in his time, come back to God.

And this is what God wants of His people, that the fatherless through His church find mercy. They find help, they find the provision they need in this generation. Psalm 146 verse 9 says, the Lord preserves the stranger, He relieves the fatherless and the widow.

James 127 in the New Testament, James says, pure religion and undefiled before God. And the father is this, to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction. This is pure religion.

This is the work of God. This is how God desires to be honored in the earth. We rob God when we take away the deepest desire of His heart.

And the deepest desire of God's heart is to see every wayward son and daughter come home to all that is found in His house. And when they come and they find the things in His house are not representative of Him. Remember in Luke chapter 15 when the prodigal son came home, the father was there to greet him.

And how did he greet him? Technically speaking, I'm not going to go into the symbolism, let's just look at the practical for a moment. He greeted him with a robe. Obviously his clothing was in tatters and had the smell of where he had been living on him.

But he greeted him with a brand new robe. He greeted him with a ring. He gave him things that he could never hope to possess.

He had lost really everything and the father began to give back to him the things that he lost. He put shoes on his feet, very practical. He'd come home obviously barefoot.

He'd lost everything. He'd lost his dignity. He'd lost his direction.

He'd come home in a sense with nothing but shame. He gives him a robe. He gives him a ring.

He gives him shoes. Then he gives him food. He tells his servants, go and kill the fatted calf.

This provision as it is that's been saved and prepared for this special occasion. And he brings this boy into the house and they have a great banquet. Can you imagine this boy that is so messed up and he's trying to come back to his concept of what maybe God should be to find out that as he's coming down the road before he even gets to the house, he's got new clothes.

He's got things on his hands he could never hope to achieve. He's got shoes on his feet and he walks into provision, food. Folks, it's really not that complicated.

One day we stand before Jesus and he's going to say, blessed are you. I was hungry and you fed me. I was naked and you clothed me.

I was in prison and you visited me. I was sick and you came to me. And the church will say, when? You see, it just became an extension.

We didn't have a program. This was no program. I don't recall a program that did this.

And God said it never was a program. You see, I was in you. I was walking with you.

And I was ministering through you. And you had a heart that became intertwined with my heart. You knew instinctively who was walking with God and who was not walking with God.

You knew what areas of your heart needed to be changed because I was in you and I was speaking to you. I was touching through you. I was ministering to you.

I was providing through you. There was a great, great rejoicing going on. Malachi, again, he says, not only is he robbed of the glory that's due to his name, he's robbed of the desire that's in his heart to see his sons and daughters provided for.

And lastly, he's robbed of worship. Luke 15, 25, of the prodigal son. Remember when the older brother came and says, there was music and dancing in the house.

This boy had come home and he found a place of provision, simply said. And there was music and dancing. And when the church ceases to be the church in the earth, God is robbed of worship.

I want you to think back to the video we saw a week ago. If you were here of Brother Tom Larkin in Zambia and these kids that were living in sewers and sniffing glue, hopeless, being abused and abusing out in the streets, begging to try to survive. And you see them now clothed.

You see them farming the fields not only to have something for themselves, but having something to give their friends and to provide for the churches in the area. You see these children now in a school uniform going to school. And you saw them worshiping God.

And the one thing Brother Larkin said, he said, the capacity to worship God is incredible. They've lived all their lives in the streets, abandoned. They have an ability to lay hold of God.

They have an ability to believe God. Folks, when we are not where we should be, God is robbed of this worship. He looks down and sees these thousands and tens of thousands of children that could know Him as their Heavenly Father, but because His own people have moved away from the heart of God, He is robbed.

His name is robbed of its glory. His heart is robbed of its deep desire. And He is robbed of the worship of so many throughout the world in our generation that could and should be calling Him Heavenly Father.

Oh God, help us in New York City to lay hold of these things. God, help us to understand that we have a divine call in this hour. We are to reach these children.

I don't care how we do it, we're just simply to do it. We're to reach them. We're to feed them.

We're to see clothes put on their backs. We are simply to do it. We don't have to have a program.

We do it. And God will direct us as we choose to obey Him. Verse 14, He says, But you said, it's vain to serve God.

And what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance and we walk mournfully before the Lord of hosts? Now, there are times and seasons of the Church of Jesus Christ throughout history where people get to the place of saying, hey, it's of no profit, no personal profit to us that we've once obeyed these things. We've shared the sorrow of God's heart for human suffering. We have the history of the Hudson Taylors and others who sacrificed family, life, limb and health to go to foreign fields throughout the world and gave their all for the kingdom of God.

We know these things. We've got books about it. We read about it.

We talk about it. But it's been no profit to us. You see, we never reached the world in that generation.

And they gave. And is it possible maybe that God has something different for us? You see, we've stood on the road with the Father. We've been in that place.

We stood there with Him longing for these sons and daughters to come home. We once went to prayer meetings where they were weeping and crying as it is, longing. The longing of God's heart was being expressed for fallen people who needed to come back to Him again.

But we didn't find any personal profit in that. We also saw the prodigal son heading down the road with a bag full of money to spend on himself. Now, we knew that the Father would take him back.

So we thought in our hearts, why not go with him? Why not go with the prodigal son? Why not go with a bag of money? Why not spend it on ourselves? God will be merciful. God will take us back. You see, they said it's vain to serve God.

And what profit is it that we've kept His ordinance and we've walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? So, you know, the theology rises then. They say, well, let's just go with the bag of money. Let's just go spend it on ourselves.

Oh, we'll talk about God along the way. We'll tell everybody along the way how wonderful our Father is. And back in His house, everyone is provided for.

Actually, we can even point the way back to His house. Now, we'll have a bag of money. We're going to hold it pretty tight ourselves.

But we can point the way. We know where the Father is. We're still His sons and daughters.

We'll be a testimony of sorts in our generation. And it goes on. And He says, and now, He says, you see, because this kind of religion needs a new theology.

It needs to revise its theology a little bit. And He says, well, we'll go down the road with a bag of money. Of course, we'll have to revise some of our theological concepts.

We're going to need to call the proud happy. Now, pride being that which exalts itself above the knowledge of God. In verse 15, we'll call those who work wickedness.

That means those whose lives are a denial of the ways and the true work of God. God calls it wickedness, folks. We may call it success.

But He may call it wickedness in the Scripture. Folks, I want to tell you something. There is a cross that the church is called to carry.

It's red letter. You can't get away from it. We're called to the poor.

We're called to walk with Christ. We are called to be the final extension of His mission on the earth. He was the one who redeemed.

But we're called to be His hands, bringing the power of that redemption to a fallen generation around us. But we call now, people who work wickedness are set up. Oh, they're set up in big houses.

They're set up with big cars. Oh, they're set up with big reputations. But God says, I may not see it the way that you see it.

And then the tempt God are even delivered. Now, they tempt the very mercy and the patience of God. Now, you see how theology changes.

When we're not willing to walk with God, our theology is going to begin to reflect that. We're going to be all. It's all going to be about being happy and set up and delivered now.

And God calls it proud, wicked, and tempting, His very limits of His mercy and grace. Verse 16 says, Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another, and the Lord heard it. And a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord and thought on His name.

Now, it's interesting. When you look up that phrase, thought on His name, especially the Knox translation, I love the way that particular translation says it. It's all that prized His renown.

Isn't that amazing? It's not about people who just start thinking about Jesus. No, it's beyond that. It's everyone who prizes His renown.

Who says, God, it's not right that Your name is not honored in the earth. It's not right that society is snubbing its nose at a church today that may, in some cases. Now, please be careful.

I'm not indicting the body of Christ. I'm talking about a fragment of perhaps the body that claims to represent Him but really doesn't. That fragment can be in my own heart too.

It's important if we're going to discern, we begin here. With the heart of God. But all that prized His renown.

All that prized the reputation of the name of Jesus Christ. Everyone who sits back and thinks, oh God, it isn't right. It isn't right that men walk by Your house without trembling.

It isn't right that preachers are looked upon as bags of wind in our generation. It isn't right, oh God, that we have moved inside of ourselves. And somehow lost the heart of God for this generation.

It isn't right. God, You're not glorified with the greedy people. You are glorified, Jesus, when Your body is stretching Her hands out throughout the world.

The fatherless are finding mercy. The stranger is finding help. The naked are finding clothing.

The hungry are getting fed. This is how Your name is glorified. It's amazing, you know, we can have, I don't know how many people meet in the churches today in America.

Let's take all of North America, let's include Canada in this. How many people do you think are meeting in the churches today? Hundreds of thousands, I would assume. All over the continent.

And yet, it seems to be declined. We're being called now a post-Christian society. We're having so little effect on our society today.

And the renown of the name of Jesus. But then you find one little lady, years ago, a Catholic lady. Now, I'm not going to argue the theology with you, so please don't go there in your mind.

But she just did this. Denied herself and went out and began to be hands to the poor, comfort to the dying, hope to the hopeless. And the whole world stood up and applauded the name of Jesus Christ.

Could it be, could it be, that we need to return again? And discern something that we've forgotten in our generation. The Lord says, if you do this, if you bring meat into my house again. That is not talking about us as a people getting wealthier.

It's talking about there's provision for the poor in my house. He said, if you bring it into my house again, prove me with this, says the Lord of hosts. I'll open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing.

There'll not be room enough to receive it. I'll rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground. Neither shall your vine cast your fruit before the time in the field, says the Lord God.

And all nations shall call you blessed, for you shall be a delightsome land, says the Lord of hosts. God says, if you do this thing, and there's meat found again in my house. There's mercy and provision.

You have a heart to reach out to the fallen and the struggling and the downtrodden throughout the world. You move away from all of the theology that is not really involved in serving God. It's involved in serving self.

And you begin to move towards this. He said, I will give you an automatic reputation, because my name will be brought back to good report again. The desires of my heart will be fulfilled.

And there will be true worship. There will be true praise. There will be music and dancing.

You'll not be able to contain it. The glory of God will be in your midst. He said in Isaiah 58, if you will reach out to the oppressed, if you will go to those that have nobody to help them, then you will call upon me, and I will say, here I am.

I will go before you, and my glory will be behind you and protect you and carry you, and I'll be lifting you up into the very heart of who I am. There will be a glory in your midst. Folks, everyone, it is undeniable that in this church there is a manifested presence of Jesus Christ.

It's undeniable. And it's not just in service time. You can come into this place Wednesday when nobody is here, and you will feel the lingering presence of God.

Do you want to know why that is? That's because the man that God sent here in 1987 to found this church is a man through whom the hungry, the addicted, the afflicted, the homeless, and the despairing, it has been the focus and the direction of his life and all of his life. And because of it, thousands upon thousands upon thousands have been touched. The name of Jesus Christ has been glorified all over the country and now all over the world.

Now God has given Brother David an audience all over the world. In every country of the world they want to hear from a man of God who reached out in a courtroom to young men charged with a horrendous murder and then began to reach out to gangs in New York City and began to offer help and hope to those that were hopeless. Folks, that is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! That's the gospel. That's why I am personally compelled to go to Africa. I'm going to keep going to Africa.

I believe in God that there is going to be a mighty revival because when the whole world turns its back on a continent, God turns His face towards those who cry out to Him. Then shall you return and discern between the righteous and the wicked and between him that serves God and him that serves Him not. You will return and you will discern.

There is a need, folks. There is a last day call going out to return to discern one more time. Do you want to know how you get discernment? Start giving to the poor.

Your discernment will come back. As surely as I stand here, you will immediately find your discernment coming back to you. God will bring it to you.

Just start giving to the poor. And that creates an immediate dividing line. You'll immediately know those who are ministering in God's name and they have no heart for the poor whatsoever.

You'll know they don't serve God, they serve themselves. You'll know it immediately. Start giving.

Start giving. It's as simple as that. You see a need.

If it's in your power to do it, do something. Just do something to alleviate the need. You see a widow in your block with three children and you know they're short on groceries at the end of the month.

Buy them a box of groceries and give it to them. You won't get a tax receipt here, but you will get a reward in heaven, I assure you. You'll walk away from the widow's apartment.

You will know in your heart. You'll have a prayer time like you haven't had in years. You'll go back into your own apartment.

You'll be jumping and dancing. Why is that? Because something in the heart of God has been gladdened by the reality that you've chosen to let Him extend His hand of provision and love through your life. Folks, that's what it's all about.

Then you go and, God forbid, but if you do, turn on your television to one of the Christian stations and there's some guy selling holy water for \$100 a bottle. You'll know immediately. You'll know immediately.

That this man has nothing to do with God. He's outside of the kingdom of God. The confusion is all gone.

You've returned. You've discerned because you're starting to do the work of God. This is not a pitch for money for Times Square Church, folks.

This is a plea for you to give your all to the work of God. The totality of who you are. I'm not suggesting for a moment you should be poor.

There's no glory that God brought through that. I'm suggesting you should be open. I'm suggesting you should say, God, start ministering through me.

If Times Square Church goes to Zambia next year, I'm going. I'm not talking about me. I'm talking about you.

I'm going to go. I need to see this. I need to see the streets.

I need to see the kids in this home. I need to see the contrast. I need to understand something again in my heart.

I'm feeling God calling me to something that I've not yet fully surrendered to. If you don't have discernment, folks, in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus warned that there'd be men and women come to the stage soon that can even call down fire. They can do miracles.

If you don't have discernment, you won't know who is speaking for God. Father, thank you. Lord, did you love us enough to call us, speak to us? Thank you, Jesus.

Oh, God, I praise you. God, I pray that my own heart never grow cold to this truth. Oh, Jesus, help me to be generous.

I pray for this church, God. Truly, you have been delighted with this congregation. I feel your delight.

You're gladdened. Because you love us, you will speak to us. You will draw us to something deeper, fuller than we've ever known.

I pray, God, that out of this church be born ministries all over the world. People will hear your voice and respond. I ask you, Lord, that the poor be helped, that your heart be gladdened.

I ask, oh, God, for every wayward son and daughter that comes into this house, no matter what background or how they've even squandered your name, Lord, that there be mercy here. There be covering here. There be restoration here.

There be provision here. I pray, God, you give us your heart. Lord, if we have your eyes and not your heart, we're going to do great damage to your kingdom.

God, give us your heart for all men. I pray, Lord, for those that are hearing this word today, that you give us all the courage to be compassionate. I thank you for this.

You've given a great promise with this. You said everything we touch with our hands will prosper. We've seen it as a church.

Now help us to realize it individually. Father, I thank you for this with all my heart. In Jesus' name.

Now, all I can say today is if the Holy Spirit is drawing you, I'm going to invite you in the annex to step out of your seat and stand between the large screens in front of you and in the main sanctuary, the balcony. If you're among them and say, God, I'm willing. You've just got to help me get back.

You've got to help me to be compassionate and generous. And I want to be a discerning Christian in the last days. I want to know who is walking with God and who is not walking with God, beginning in my own heart.

God, I want to know this. I want to be a generous person, moved by compassion, not by compulsion, moved by God's heart operating within me. I want to be that kind of a person.

If that's the cry of your heart today, that doesn't mean you have to run out the door and start putting five bucks in every beggar's cup on the street. It's much, much deeper than that, folks. It's about a lifestyle for the rest of your life.

It's about a pattern of generosity that God will establish through you. If that's the cry of your heart as we stand, please come join these that are coming to the altar right now. Every backslider, you're welcome to come home to God.

If you're lost in your sin, this altar is open to you. Christ will receive you. Slip out wherever you are and join us and take this moment that we can worship together.

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry and you bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When you see the naked that you cover him and that you hide not yourself from your own flesh, then shall your light break forth as the morning and your health will spring forth speedily and your righteousness will go before you and the glory of the Lord shall be your reward. Then you will call and the Lord shall answer. You will cry and he will say, Here I am.

If you take away from the midst of you the yoke, the putting forth of the finger and speaking emptiness or vanity, and if you draw out your soul to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light will rise in obscurity and even your darkness will be as the noonday and the Lord will guide you continually and satisfy your soul in drought and make fat your bones and you will be like a watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters fail not and those that shall be of you shall build the old waste places and you will raise up the foundations of many generations and you will be called the repairer of the breach and the restorer of paths to dwell in. These are the things that God says he will do. He says, All I'm asking of my people is that you don't hide from humanity.

Don't hide. The things I've given you, start to give to them. I'll show you how to do this even.

You don't have to figure it out. I'll show you how to do it and then I will bless everything you put your hand to. God says, Once you and I understand the reason that God gives provision is that his name might be glorified in the earth.

I'm concerned about the glory of his name. And the last verse in the Old Testament says, Those that thought about, were concerned about the glory of his name began to get together and they began to speak with one another. They began to talk perhaps about ways that his name could be glorified.

What can we do that his name could be glorified? And God said, I'm going to walk with them. And the first thing that will happen is they will return to me and they will know who serves God and who does not serve God. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah to the Lamb of God. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Lord.

Lord, we bless your holy name today. God, we give you praise. Oh, thank you, Lord.

Thank you, God. I've seen these things fulfilled. I've watched you do these things.

I've seen it throughout the world, God. Oh, Jesus, thank you. Thank you, God.

Thank you, Lord, that you are going to bless those that you've drawn today in this house. Those that already are givers, then those that will become givers to those who have need. Father, thank you, God.

Thank you, you're going to draw us to yourself. Thank you, Lord, you're going to cause the work of our hands to increase and to prosper. God, we give you praise and honor and glory.

Thank you that through us, your name will be glorified in New York City and all through the earth. Glorify your name, oh God. Glorify your name.

Hallelujah. Can we sing that, Father? Glorify your name in all the earth. This is the conclusion of the message.

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