

The Parting of the Third Veil

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the significance of Jesus' birth in tearing down the barriers between humanity and God, calling believers to embrace their full relationship with Him and share His message with the world.

Duration: 34:31

Scripture: Isaiah 1:18, Matthew 27:50-53, Luke 2:8-20, John 16:13, Acts 2:1-4

Topics: "Revival Now", "Surrender To God"

Description

This sermon titled 'The Parting of the Third Veil' emphasizes the need for believers to break through barriers that hinder their testimony of God's love and power. It calls for a revival in the church to boldly demonstrate God's presence and point people to Jesus Christ, especially in a time of societal hopelessness and division. The message challenges individuals to surrender to God, agree with His truth, and be willing vessels for His work in this generation.

Transcript

Luke chapter two, please. If you go there, your Bible's with me. Luke chapter two.

I want to speak a message to you entitled the parting of the third veil. Parting of the third veil. Now, Father, I thank you, God, with all my heart for the touch of your Holy Spirit.

I thank you, Lord, that you are speaking to this generation. You are speaking to your people, to your church. You are calling us to something of yourself.

Lord, we implore you to be merciful to this generation, a generation who spiritually don't know their left hand from their right hand. And you've left this on the earth to be a testimony to them of who you are. And so, God, whatever hinders that testimony, whatever we have allowed to be a barrier between that testimony and our lives, we ask you for the power, Lord, to walk through that and away from it.

Lord Jesus Christ, we ask you to give us an eternal perspective on the reason we live here on this earth. Help us, oh God, each of us, Father. Thank you for it.

Thank you for helping me today to share this word as you've laid it on my heart. And I thank you for it in Jesus' name, amen. Luke chapter two, beginning at verse eight.

Now, there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which will be to all people.

For there was born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you. You will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts praising God and saying, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men. So it was when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us. And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger.

The day that God came to the earth in human form. Now you might say that it was a day that the heavens could once again be revealed to ordinary people on the earth. You sense the fall of humanity in Eden.

It appeared that only a select and elect few were ever given a glimpse of anything other than this lot and circumstance in life. And I think we're living at a point in history where that scenario is now repeating itself again. There's those who really understand God, that really understand his kingdom are few, but there's even fewer now in society who have any kind of a glimpse into what heaven really looks like.

Even people attending churches, sad to say, still don't know. To them, it's just an endless road, coming into the house of God, maybe looking for fire insurance one more time, trying to form some kind of a relationship with God. But heaven must have seemed for so many like a closed book, so far away as being a partaker of anything that it could offer in the here and now.

And so many people today find themselves locked out of who God is and what God offers and what he wants to do among men in this time, and as in any other time that has gone before us. For many people of that generation, God must have appeared to be angry, always needing to be appeased, and you and I seldom reaching up to the mark of his approval. There were so few left with optimism, even among God's people.

There were some like the prophet Joel who saw a day when God would interact again with all people, though many people probably saw him as a misguided optimist. For all know in that time that to see God, sometimes even just a reflection of God would mean to die. That's what it was like.

That's what God was viewed. If you stood in his presence because he was holy and sin cannot dwell in his presence, and we were sinful and we had a condition that we could not get rid of. Even the reflection of God on an angel would cause death to those who stood in that presence.

Even Gideon, when God called them to lead a small army into a momentous victory in the Old Testament in Judges chapter six, verse 22 and 23, the scripture says, now when Gideon perceived that the messenger had come to him was an angel of the Lord, Gideon said, alas, O Lord God, for I've seen the angel of the Lord face to face. In other words, he knew that to be in the presence of God meant immediate death. Then the Lord said to him, peace be with you.

Do not fear, you will not die. In most cases, if you and I in the Old Testament appeared in the presence of God without a covering and without mercy directed to us, we would die because sin cannot dwell in the

presence of a holy God. People who live in sin can never understand who God is, what God has done, what God is willing to do in their lives.

In most cases, you would die until God in the form of his son, Jesus Christ came into the world. Not only were common men allowed to look upon the face of God, but also the veil separating the heavens from the earth was opened. And the heavenly host who knew the heart of God burst into full view.

As we read in our opening text, Luke chapter two, verses 12 to 14. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill towards men. The veil, in other words, that separated humankind for thousands of days and years.

The veil was suddenly torn and heaven came into view. It's an amazing thing when you begin to realize it was just ordinary people, ordinary shepherds, people who just considered themselves locked out. Of course, the high priest was allowed behind the veil once a year.

And there were select and elect few like Elijah and others throughout history that had had the occasion to come into the presence of God and coming into his presence, they knew supernatural abilities that only God could give. They knew the story, but not for them. They were just ordinary people.

Very, very aware. They're not social climbers. They're not on the highest echelon academically or any other way.

They're shepherds. And they're looking after their flocks by night. But suddenly to them, that veil that separates heaven and earth, the heavens and the earth is open.

And angels and created beings burst into view. I don't know how many, it just says a multitude. Maybe as many as are in this room today and in the education annex and in New Jersey.

I don't know. But when it says a multitude, it means a multitude. Not just one or two or five or 10, but there was a multitude of angels and created heavenly beings who burst into view with a song in their heart.

Glory to God in the highest. See, they could come through the veil from heaven to earth because they knew the heart of God. They knew the momentous thing that was happening at this moment.

They knew it was something that came from a divine benevolence in the heart of God. They knew God was moving his hand to make peace with his own fallen creation, who through our efforts could not make peace with God. There was not a single person in the world that had the strength or the integrity of character to be as God requires us to be, to come back into his presence.

Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, goodwill towards men. I see in this passage of scripture, something like Jesus described in Luke chapter 15, where the prodigal son got up and he was just so far away from God and started heading home. And even though home was a dim view in his sight, yet the first thing he sees is his father coming running down the road to meet him, to embrace him and to kiss him.

And that's what this initial rending of the veil was all about. It was everything of heaven, understanding the heart of God. Amazing when you begin to see it.

It wasn't just a theatrical performance. It wasn't just heaven saying, well, how are we going to announce the birth of this child? I think heaven was pressing against that canopy and burst through the canopy and

into view and said, glory to God. Do you understand what's happening among you? Do you know that as a creation, you've been at war against God? Do you understand how alienated from God you really are? But now he is stretching out his hand towards you and you can come and look at him face to face and not die anymore.

Mercy has come. God is stretching out a hand of peace and goodwill towards all men. It's an amazing thing when you begin to see it.

You could look into the face of God in Christ Jesus. The word became flesh, John said, and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth. Can you imagine the shepherds coming into that manger and looking at the very face of God in his son, Jesus Christ, who was fully God and fully man and not perishing, looking at that face.

You imagine coming into that particular place and beginning to realize that the God who created the universe by the spoken words of his mouth, the God who lives in unapproachable light, the scripture says, the God who has a glory beyond anything that you and I can even begin to imagine, the God before whom one day we will stand and if we have such thing as a crown, we'll take it off our head and throw it at his feet for we will recognize on that day what he did 2,000 years ago when he came to the world as a child. The God, the God who created the universe by the word of his mouth comes as a baby and somebody has to change his diapers. Think about that for a moment.

Who could have come as a 15-foot angel? He could have come taller than this building. He could have come in his glory. He could have come with majesty, but instead he comes as a baby to prove to you and I that he is not afraid to encase himself in our frailty.

He is not offended by our weaknesses. He has come to be a partaker of what we struggle with and how we fight every day, even just for the basic things of life, but he is a God who can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities. Having walked with us for 33 years, having pleaded with us to understand his heart for us, and then finally after 33 years of this pleading for you and I to understand his heart, the son of God, this same child went to a cross and God opened the veil again.

Praise be to God. This time allowing not only the heavens to burst through to us, but allowing every one of us to burst through into the heavens, back into the presence of God without fear, having a living relationship with him. Praise be to God.

Matthew chapter 27 and verse 50 says, "Jesus cried out again with a loud voice "and yielded up his spirit. "Then behold, the veil of the temple "was torn in two from top to bottom "and the earth quaked and the rocks were split "and the graves were opened "and many bodies of the saints "who had fallen asleep were raised. "And coming out of the graves after his resurrection, "they went into the holy city and appeared to many." Oh, thanks be to God.

This time now, it's not the heavens bursting through that veil that separated the earth from heaven to us, but it's now God saying, you can come now through that veil into my presence. You can come as you are. You can come with your struggles.

You can come with your trials, come with your questions, come with your confusion, come with your difficulties, come in your weakness, come with your inabilities into my presence and I will cleanse you and I will give you a new heart. I'll give you a new mind. I'll give you a new spirit.

And you will be brought back into right and a living relationship with God. And you and I can approach him today without fear. Oh, thanks be to God.

Thanks be to God. We should be the ones out in society shouting glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and goodwill towards all men. But now there's a third veil.

You remember the first veil was heaven, the heavenly created beings coming through to the shepherds. The second veil is the veil that separated us from God. So heaven comes to us.

Now we go back to God. But there's a third veil that has to be removed, especially now. And it's a veil that separates you and I from the fullness of what is ours in Christ Jesus.

The fullness of what we're called to be. It's a veil that can fall in front of us even as believers in Christ when we won't deal with sin, when we refuse to agree with God. Remember the scripture says to the psalmist, if I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me, even when I pray.

There's a point where we have to get to, if we're going to know a spiritual awakening in our time, if we're gonna see our family saved, if we're gonna see our communities come to Christ, if we're going to be an example again, calling men and women back to a living relationship with God there's a point where we have to agree with God. We have to get back into reading the text of the New Testament and say, Holy Spirit, would you bring my life in line with this truth that is written here and help me to stop excusing things that I know are wrong. Help me to put away what needs to be put away that I may apprehend that which God has called me to.

Help me not to live in poverty when I am called into the treasure of the strength that God is willing to give me through Jesus Christ. Help me God Almighty not to live in weakness any longer, but to allow your strength to become my strength as I agree with you and start walking in the truth of what you have revealed to me. And this veil can stay also in front of us when we try to achieve what only God can do in our own strength.

It's the veil of religious practice, thinking that somehow we can gain favor with God by the depth of our own zeal when he did it all for us. And he stretches out his hand of generosity towards us and says, just come to me as you are. Just come to me and acknowledge, agree with me.

Come, let us agree together. Though your sins are as red as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. I will take the things that have besieged your life and I will throw them as far away from you as the East is from the West.

And you shall be recreated in the image of the one who redeemed you. And you will be a testimony of praise unto God in the earth, especially now in this last hour in which we're living. Praise be to God.

I'm telling you folks, we have to cast off the works of darkness. We have to cast off the works of the flesh. We have to cast off trying to build the kingdom of God with human strategy, human ingenuity, and human reasoning.

We have to get back into that inner sanctum to which we are invited by the spirit of God and let God begin to do what only God can do through our lives. Praise be to God. What he did for us on the cross, we can never do for ourselves.

And when you and I begin to contemplate again his victory and his promises to us, and when we long again to be partakers of all that he has called us to be, when you and I do that, Jesus said, when the spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears, he will speak and he will tell you things to come. In other words, if you open your heart to me, if you walk with me in a right relationship, I will show you things in your own life that are to come.

I will show you what you're going to be. You are called by one thing now, but I will call you by another thing for the days ahead. You might be a liar, but I'm gonna call you a man or woman of truth.

You might be selfish, but I'm gonna call you a loving person, an exceeding loving person. You might be shy, but I'm gonna give you a boldness that can only come from the Holy Spirit. You might be self-consumed, but I'm gonna give you a heart that becomes concerned about the needs of others.

I'm going to do something in you. I'm gonna show you things to come. Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, he will glorify me for we will take what is mine and declare it to you.

In other words, I want a victory that draws you out of all weakness and into everything that I inherited when I went to that cross and died for you, there was an inheritance given to me of my father. I became the ruler of all things. And you sit with me now in heavenly places at the right hand of God.

I am the head, you are my body. The Lord says, everything that is mine has now become yours. He will take what is mine and declare it to you.

All things the father has are mine. Therefore, I said, he will take of mine and he will declare it to you. Praise be to God.

That's exactly what happened. In the book of Acts chapter two, a group of people just like you and I went into an upper room and began to pray. They went in with their struggles.

They went in with their frailties. They went in that room with their trials, their difficulties, their self-loathing. They took it all with them because they had all failed and they all knew they were failures.

But there was a redemption now that had been given them that was not their own. There was strength that was available that is given by nothing they could achieve in themselves. And they went into that prayer room and they began to pray.

And the scripture says they were in one accord and in one place and all would to God, we would get back there again in this generation. Would to God, we would find ourselves in a place of surrender to the will of God again. Would to God, we would begin to pray, Lord, you told us that if we would tarry, that you would give us power.

And we would be witnesses in our case in New York City and all the five boroughs in Connecticut and New Jersey and every part of the world that you happen to be from today. We would be witnesses that cannot be denied. We'd be witnesses of some an event in history that cannot be put away.

It can be argued away. But when a living witness stands, who could argue away the angels when they burst through that canopy and into time? Who could say that didn't happen? Who could say the power of God is not involved in that? Who could say what they had to say is of no effect, maybe for somebody else, but not for us? No, no, no. When they burst through that canopy of heaven and into the world, when they

broke that initial veil, the shepherds who would have been considered locked out of all that society had to offer ran to see this thing.

And suddenly it's as if the lowest of the low of that society are now looking into the face of God with such hope. The scripture says they left there and they told abroad everyone who would listen, the things that had been told them and the things that they had seen. And that's exactly what happened on the day of Pentecost.

A group of people came out of a place of prayer in one accord with the purpose of God for their life and in one accord with one another. And when they burst out of that place of prayer, the very same thing that happened with the shepherds happened in Jerusalem. Suddenly people were stopped in their tracks.

People were trying to gain favor with God one way or the other. Others are just casual. They don't really care about the things of God at all.

But suddenly 120 people burst into view just as the multitude of heaven had done at the birth of Christ. And they are speaking of the wonderful things that God is going to do. They are speaking it with an initial evidence of his supernatural power that he's willing.

They hadn't achieved everything they were speaking, but they were speaking it with divine power and every observer knew it. Praise be to God. Can you imagine if you just had the courage to stand on your street corner this Christmas and begin to declare what God is speaking to your heart? Folks gather around, I wanna tell you something.

I've been in prayer. The spirit of God has come upon me and he's shown me what my life is gonna be. He's shown me the miraculous things that he's about to do.

And the initial evidence of that is that I am speaking to you right where you live, right in your circumstance, right on your street corner, right in the midst of where you sell drugs, right in the midst of your depression, right in the midst of where you're going home with your groceries, wondering how you're going to feed your children. I'm standing here by the spirit of almighty God. And that day, 3000 people looking at that when they saw all of their arguments against God, all of their self-effort to try to gain favor with him, it all melted into the ground.

I don't know who was the first person, but somebody said, what must we do to be saved? What do we need to have that kind of hope for the future? This message is more relevant now than it was 10 years ago. There's a hopelessness in society now. Have you noticed it lately? The division, the hopelessness, the scorn, the anger, the lack of direction, it's all around us now.

It's like the atmosphere that we breathe every day. How refreshing it is when somebody breaks through the canopy of heaven and says glory to God in the highest and on earth peace and goodwill towards men. How refreshing when somebody who knows God breaks through that canopy of fear, that canopy of secrecy, that canopy that hides this treasure that we have in these earthen vessels from people who live in darkness all around us, when somebody breaks through this veil of darkness covering this society and says glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and goodwill towards men.

Revival must begin in the house of God. We are praying for a spiritual awakening, but folks, it's not gonna come like dust out of heaven. Don't think for a moment that you and I don't have a part in this, we do have a part.

In the book of Acts, Jesus didn't say, just go about your business and one day feathers will fall out of the sky and you'll all be filled with power. No, there was something they had to do. They had to press in, they had to agree with God.

They had to let God come and touch their lives. And then they burst out of obscurity, which really that upper room was, it was like a veil. They burst out of that obscurity and they stepped into the marketplace.

And they were simply declaring, in the Greek, it says the megalios of God, which means that the anticipated outward manifestation of this new inward life and power of God. They were speaking about things to come. Remember, Jesus said, when the spirit comes, he will show you things to come.

They were speaking of these wondrous works that God himself was able to do and only God could do. They were speaking, I'm sure, about the wonderful salvation that had been given them in spite of their failure and their fears and their struggles and their trials. I guess the question that comes to my mind is who is willing to part the veil and bring heaven to earth in the sight of men? Who's willing to part the veil? Who's willing to stand out and say, God Almighty, I will not be ashamed of you in my generation.

I will not be covered down by the threats of those who are headed for an eternal hell. I will fight for them, not against them. I will fight for every man.

I'll fight for every woman, every child. And God Almighty, it is you that gives me the weaponry to fight this fight that's ahead of me. It is you that will empower me with a strength that is not my own.

You'll give me a mind that I don't possess. You'll give me abilities I don't have. You'll give me a heart that's not my own.

It is you that will fill this empty vessel because you are familiar with my struggles. You came and died that I may have not only everlasting life, but abundant life on this side of eternity. That's what the angels and the created beings did when they broke through the veil, they pointed them to Jesus.

And so we're finishing where we started. We might be the last generation before Christ comes. You know that.

It's a very real possibility. If Paul believed it in his time, how much more now for you and I? The question I'm asking you is, will we finish the way the church started? Will we have the courage to press in and press through? Will we have the courage to be a visible demonstration of God and point people to where that strength really is? That's the question that God is asking my heart. That's the question that God is asking you.

We have a very short window to be the church again in America. It's only a short season. We've been offered protection, but only for a short time.

We have a chance to press in and see Christ glorified again. We have a chance to see a spiritual awakening in our cities, our towns, our churches, but it must begin in the house of God. If we're not willing to be revived, why would the people outside these walls be willing to be partakers of what we're not experiencing? There has to be something inside of you and something inside of me that says, God, I'm gonna break through that veil.

Whatever that veil represents to me, I'm gonna break through, and in my mouth is going to be a song of glory to God. In my mouth is gonna be a song of God's willingness to be at peace with all people, and that he has extended his hand even towards those who hate him. That's going to be my life.

It's going to be my song. The mockers will mock, the scorners will scorn, but there will be people who bend their knee to almighty God through Jesus Christ. There will be shepherds who come into that manger scene again, and they will bend their knee, and they'll walk away.

But how will they know if we don't tell them? How will they know if we don't show them? How will we know there's power if we don't become a visible demonstration of the power of God? To them. And so that's my altar call this morning. Who is willing? Who's willing to part the veil that blinds this society, and like the angels did, to come through with that song and point people to Jesus Christ? Who is willing? There comes a point in everyone's life where you just say, I'm in or I'm not in.

There's no middle ground in this. We are now fighting for our own future, our children. We're fighting for our cities and for our very society.

You've had a chance to experience what godlessness is going to look like. Now we have a window, just a short time. But oh God, how glorious those days could be if we will have the courage to press in, you and I both, to press in and say, Lord, take my life.

Take it where you want it to go. Make it what you want it to be. Give me what I need to possess along the journey.

But oh God, put that song of praise in my heart that people can see your presence long before I even have to speak. Oh God, let it be. Father, I just thank you for the simplicity of what you're speaking to us.

Would you help us, Lord God Almighty, to respond to you? Would you help us, Lord Jesus Christ, to be willing as the angels were, as the first church was, would you help us in our generation to be willing to break through the veil that separates this society from you? God Almighty, I thank you for it with all my heart in Jesus' name. Elder Call is very simple today. In the annex, North Jersey, at home here in the main sanctuary, it's just folks that, you're here just like I am and you just say, I will.

I will, pastor, I will. I'm in. Count me in.

I don't have a lot of strength, but I'm gonna go. And I'm gonna let God be God in me and I'm not gonna be silent or hidden. I'm gonna let Christ be seen in me and through me.

And I'm gonna let him use my life to point people to him because ultimately that's all that matters in eternity. I'm gonna trust God to take the fear out of my heart, the fear of criticism and fear of rejection. I'm gonna trust him to take that all out of my heart and fill me with such love that perfect, that that fear is cast away.

God, I want to sing with the angels. I want to be part of that company, especially now, especially at Christmas. In Jesus' name.

We're gonna stand, if that's you, I'm gonna ask you just to get out of your seat in the balcony of main sanctuary, just make your way here. And we're gonna pray together in just a moment. Same thing in the annex, if you'd step between the screens, please.

Appreciate that very, very much. Praise God. Father, we, Lord God, we lift ourselves up to you, Lord.

And we thank you for loving us. Thank you, Lord, for forgiving us, inviting us into not just eternity, but into your strength while we live here in time, inviting us to come in with our struggles, our trials, our frailties. And yet your love overwhelms us, causes us to let go of our own weakness and to lay hold of your strength.

Lord, I ask you, God, for the power to come upon your church, Lord, to be delivered from self-focus and to become focused on the eternity of others. That's where the joy starts to come into our heart. That's where the courage to break the veil begins.

Father, I pray that this Christmas season, Lord, that none of us would be hidden, that our light would not be under a bushel or under a bed, but it would be set upon a hilltop so that all may see it. And it will give light to all who are in the house. I ask you, Lord, that our voices would be calling all men, all women, all young people everywhere to a living relationship with the Son of God.

I ask you, Lord, to give us such joy that it will be contagious all around us, Lord, joy that doesn't come from our circumstance. It comes from your inward presence, comes from knowing that we live in right relationship with the Holy God. Give us the kind of joy that will cause ordinary people to go and seek you and find you.

Lord Jesus Christ, we yield our bodies to you again in this generation that you might be known in this society. I ask you, Father, in Jesus' name, to bring your church, your people, out from behind the veil again and rend that veil, Lord, that separates your life within us from the darkened society around us. Deliver us, O God, from everything, Lord, that is false.

Deliver us, Lord, from everything that falls short of your glory. And give us the grace, Lord, to lay hold of the simplicity of the cross, the simplicity of the message, the simplicity of the life, and the greatness of your power. Give us that grace again, Father.

Lord, we thank you for it. Thank you for my brothers and sisters at this altar, Lord. Thank you for the miracles that will be done here through these just willing vessels, Lord.

That's all we are, just willing vessels. God, deliver us from gloominess and let the joy of the Lord become our strength. Lord, we thank you for it, God.

May our families see it, our friends, Lord, where we work, our coworkers, our neighbors. May they see the joy of the Lord all over us. God, give us that tenderness of heart to care about people who are sad.

The tenderness to care and the courage to speak and to show them where life is. Father, we thank you for this, Lord, with all of our heart. We praise you and bless you.

In Jesus' name, amen and amen. Praise God.

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