

Dear Friend,

My name is Kate, and I am the project director for OnCall: Medicine with a Mission, a ministry of Times Square Church. Every month OnCall sends doctors, nurses, and nonmedical volunteers to Haiti to serve in the tent cities around Port-au-Prince. I've never been to Haiti. I've never seen firsthand the devastation or looked into the eyes of people who have lost so much. My job is logistics—coordinating with hosts, booking flights, ground transportation... you know, the glamorous stuff.

I might not be the one holding a three-day-old baby in my arms, but I am the one who packed the formula in the humanitarian bags brought to Haiti that saved his life. I'm not the doctor that injected the IV fluid that saved a woman from dehydration, but I bought the Rubbermaid container that the IV kit traveled to Haiti in. I may never deliver a baby in the field, but I sent the prenatal vitamins given to the mother that gave her baby a healthy start.

I've learned that I don't have to go to Haiti in order to make a difference. I can make a difference right here. And so can you! From now until the end of 2011, you can go online and purchase vitamins that will go directly to Haiti with our teams. Our goal is to send 30,000 vitamins with each team—that's 300,000 vitamins by the end of this year! Be part of the team from right where you are.

To find out how to give, visit oncallynyc.org.

Sincerely,

Kate Hughes

PS – Enjoy the newsletter, it's a good one!

MARVELOUS KINDNESS IN A STRONG CITY

by Carter Conlon

If the Lord shows you a way out of your dilemma, are you willing to walk out—even if it is a simple solution? We often look for a complicated answer to our problems while God's solution is rather simple. Recall that in the midst of the storm, the disciples asked, "Do you not care that we are going to perish?" Jesus simply stood up and said, "Peace, be still" (Mark 4:38–39). That was the answer to the whole problem and all that seemed to oppose and overwhelm them suddenly came to an end. However, they had to be willing to let Jesus speak. Many people don't get to the end of their struggle simply because they are not willing to let Him speak.

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"Blessed be the Lord: for he hath shown me his marvellous kindness in a strong city. For I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes: nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee. O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud

doer. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord" (Psalms 31:21–24).

The psalmist David was anointed to be king. During this season of his life, however, he found himself in a strong city. By definition, this "strong city" was a place of distress—a place where he was hemmed in with a mountain of besiegers against him. It was a place well defended from both within and without. In other words, nobody could get in, but nobody could get out, either. David was essentially saying, "I am in a city enclosed by walls so thick and defenses so strong that I don't know how to escape. I am overwhelmed by my circumstances and surrounded by people who all seem to have the upper hand. I feel like I am in danger of losing everything that God once promised me." Have you ever been in such a place?

"Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble: mine eye is consumed with grief, yea, my soul and my belly" (Psalms 31:9). In other words, "All I see is hopelessness before me. I don't know how I am ever going to get through this. I don't have strength left to fight anymore."

"For life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing: my strength faileth because of mine iniquity, and my bones are consumed. I am a reproach among all mine enemies..." (Psalms 31:10–11). Have you ever reached a place where you begin to

regret what your life has become? Where you can just feel hell laughing? Your enemies mock you, saying, “Look at you! You are going to rule and reign with whom? Is the kingdom of God in such a deplorable condition that Jesus needs you to rule and reign with Him?”

You may actually be walking around with the strength of God in full measure and are simply not aware of it.

“...especially among my neighbors, and a fear to my acquaintance: they that did see me without fled from me” (Psalms 31:11). You have the inner thought that you are supposed to be an ambassador for Jesus Christ. You should be bringing the sweet savor of God everywhere you go, yet in reality it seems as if you have little effect on your neighbors. They don’t see anything in you that they would desire. In fact, people find so little of God that is attractive in your life that not only are they ignoring you, they are avoiding you.

Beloved, you must remember that all of this could merely be your perception, much of it having no basis in reality. You may actually be walking around with the strength of God in full measure and are simply not aware of it. Nevertheless, you have succumbed to an inner fear, to the voice of the enemy. Like the disciples, you find that your boat is suddenly full of water and the waves are overpowering you. Your human effort is not making headway because of the violent opposition against you. Have you

forgotten that Jesus has never left you? He appears to be asleep, but He is not, for God never sleeps—He is just at rest inside of you. The Lord is carrying you; He has never forsaken you.

■ DRAWN INTO DESPAIR

“For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life” (Psalms 31:13). This is the devil’s whole tactic—to get you to despair, to see no way out, to believe that your life is somehow a gross disappointment to the living God. He wants to get you to feel that there is no purpose to your life until the thought arises, “Why bother living?” Don’t be fooled into thinking that Christians are immune to this. As a matter of fact, you become a greater target once you know Christ than before. The devil hates Christ, and he hates everyone who has Christ within them. “What is the point of your life? Go to church, pray some prayers, go home to your apartment, sit there lonely—why bother living?” If this inner accusation that your life is of no value is not dealt with, it is not a far step to the conclusion, “I am better off dead than alive. There is no purpose in my living.” I know there are many people fighting thoughts of suicide even at this very moment—thoughts they never believed they would ever entertain.

We must remember, however, that we are not going through something unique. We have a tendency to think that the people of the Bible were supermen and superwomen who didn’t go through the struggles we face. But that is not the case, which is why God allowed people like King David to pen the words of Psalms 31.

Consider Paul’s reminder as well: *“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the*

way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13 NKJV). You are going through the very same thing that millions of people before you have. They made it through and are now part of that great balcony of witnesses in heaven who are looking down, saying, “Don’t give in to the lies and discouragement of the devil!” The devil will try to convince you that you are the only one struggling—that God has somehow turned His face from you. However, you must understand that when you came to Christ, you became a target of hell’s cannon. You are no longer fighting against flesh and blood—you are fighting spiritual wickedness in high places; principalities of the air. You are fighting in an entirely different arena from the one you were in before you came to the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

■ EVEN JESUS FACED TEMPTATION

How thankful we should be that we *“...have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin”* (Hebrews 4:15). Even Jesus experienced what we are going through. He was tested in all points like we are—with discouragement, temptations, doubts about being of any value to His heavenly Father, constant badgering by the powers of darkness. All this was to try to stop Him from going to the cross.

It seems almost blasphemous to think that Jesus was tempted to give up, but remember His prayer in Gethsemane: *“O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me”* (Matthew 26:39 NKJV). In fact, there were many points in His life that must have been potentially overwhelming. Consider when Jesus was left with twelve people at a table, one of whom was a devil, and the other eleven who would abandon Him in His hour of need. Or perhaps when society itself—His own creation that He had come to save—received Him not but

instead described Him as having “...no form nor comeliness...no beauty that we should desire him” (Isaiah 53:2). They looked at Him and thought, “There is nothing kingly, nothing royal, nothing noble about Him. There is nothing in Him that any of us desire. Our religion has not brought us to a point where this is the kind of Messiah we would want to embrace.”

It's not about your ability to make it through to the other side, it's about God's ability.

Even in the temptation in the wilderness, Satan tried to short-circuit God's whole redemptive purpose by presenting Jesus with the thought, “What is the point? These people don't appreciate it anyway. If all You want to do is rule and reign over them, why not just bow down to me and do it my way? Why not just be God without having to go through all the rejection, all the difficulty?”

■ IT'S ABOUT THE HONOR OF GOD

Undoubtedly Jesus was tested and tempted in all points as we are. How did He get through? *“In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness. Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me. For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me. Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength. Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth”* (Psalms 31:1–5). Verse 5 was the verse that Christ spoke in the last moments of His life on the cross.

“Into Your hand, O Lord—I must believe there is a divine purpose. I must believe that You will not leave Me in the grave. You will not allow My enemies to walk over the place of My death. You will not let hell itself sneer at My life.” This is what must come into your heart, saint of God. Remember that this is about the honor of God; about His life within you. He will not let your enemies triumph over the testimony of Christ. Your life is not going to be irrelevant. Even if you feel like you are going down to the grave, He will raise you up.

That is why Paul said, *“But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he who raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you”* (Romans 8:11). God will quicken your mortal body. It's not about your ability to make it through to the other side, it's about God's ability. If anybody's name suffers reproach in this, it's not your name, it's the name of Jesus Christ—and He will not allow His name to be triumphed over. Hallelujah!

Listen to what the prophet Isaiah said: *“Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins”* (Isaiah 40:2). The Lord told Isaiah, “Tell My people that I have won the victory. Her warfare is accomplished, the victory is not hers, it is Mine. I have pardoned her sin, and I have given her life in exchange for all of her sin and failure.”

“Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?” (Isaiah 40:27). Why do you say that God has forgotten you, that He is not fighting for you, that somehow He has turned from you? *“Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends*

of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding” (Isaiah 40: 28). Have you not heard, do you not know Who it is that you are serving? Do you not know what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit of Almighty God?

“He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint” (Isaiah 40: 29–31). The Lord will quicken those who wait upon Him—who turn away from their own strength and allow Him to be God within them.

Beloved, there comes a point when God simply says, “Quiet!” to every voice, every devil, every lie—everything that is coming against your life.

■ KEEP SILENCE

The next chapter in Isaiah begins with God speaking: *“Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength”* (Isaiah 41:1). Sometimes it is just that simple—keep silence before God! Remember that in the boat the disciples were essentially saying, “Do You not care that we are perishing? Our efforts have run out, our seamanship is not going to get us through. We know that You said we are going to the other side, but we don't see how we are going to get there.” I am so thankful that the

disciples finally stopped talking. Can you imagine if the Scripture recorded, “Then Jesus stood in the boat, and the disciples continued, ‘Well, we will row a little harder; we will do a little more.’” Imagine if they hadn’t had the sense to be quiet—if they had never allowed Jesus to stand up and say, “Peace, be still,” immediately calming the wind and the waves.

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Beloved, there comes a point when God simply says, “Quiet!” to every voice, every devil, every lie—everything that is coming against your life. It is that simple. Recall that after Jesus rose from the grave, He appeared to His fearful disciples gathered in the upper room. Although they all felt like abject failures at that point, Jesus walked right through the door, and the first word out of His mouth was “Peace.”

It was as if He was reminding them, “I know your hearts are troubled; I know you are afraid. In My Father’s house there are many mansions, and I go to prepare a place for you. Where I am you are coming also, but until that day, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Until that day, no weapon formed against you will prosper. Until that day, every tongue that rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. You have the right to stand against these things. You have a righteousness that is not your own, it is given to you by Almighty God Himself. You have a

strength, a cleanness, a power, a life that is not your own. It is all given to you by Jesus Christ. You have the right to stand against hell and say, ‘Be quiet! Be quiet, Satan, and get behind me!’”

“Keep silence before me, O islands; and let the people renew their strength” (Isaiah 41:1). Ever since the Lord put this word on my heart, I have been convinced that it is that simple. We may find ourselves in the midst of a strong city, but when we allow God to speak, He says, “Keep silence. I am never going to let My people go down.” To the wind, waves, airwaves—to everything that comes against us—the Lord simply says, “Be quiet and let My people renew their strength.” This is how He shows us His marvelous kindness in a strong city. As He silences all of these things, He also breaks the despair, the discouragement, the sense of worthlessness in our hearts. The Lord promises a new mind, a new spirit, a new life—and that is exactly what He will give us. The church of Jesus Christ is never going down. We are going over victoriously, in the strength of Almighty God! Hallelujah!

Carter Conlon
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CARTER CONLON

Carter Conlon is senior pastor of Times Square Church, where he has been on the pastoral staff since 1994.

TIMES SQUARE CHURCH

Times Square Church was founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of “The Cross and the Switchblade.” It is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City.

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WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

| | | | |
|----------|---------|----------------|--------|
| Sunday | 10:00AM | 3:00PM | 6:00PM |
| Tuesday | 7:00PM | Church Service | |
| Thursday | 7:00PM | Prayer Meeting | |
| Friday | 7:00PM | Church Service | |

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