

Dear Friend,

You are probably aware, as I am, that our generation is entering a time of peril for which many are unprepared. We are going to need strength, the kind that comes only to those who are willing to embrace truth as God has spoken it.

I have recently published a book, *The 180° Christian*, which thoroughly deals with this topic. It examines our present condition as a church age and shows the way to finding strength to make a difference in the coming days.

I am not a book salesman. This book is being offered without any personal profit for the sole purpose of seeing the church of Jesus Christ strengthened in this hour. I urge you to get a copy for yourself and also for someone who may need it.

We are living at a momentous time in history. Jesus is willing to give true resurrection life and power to all who want to have it for His purposes on this earth. As you will read in this newsletter, the glory of the latter house will exceed that of the former. I believe this with all of my heart.

May this truly be the happiest new year that you have ever known.

Yours, in Christ,

Carter Conlon
Senior Pastor

THE GLORY OF THE LATTER HOUSE

by Carter Conlon

In the days of Solomon, there existed a magnificent temple filled with the presence and glory of God—a place marked by divine order and beauty. However, the people were careless with this glory and were taken into captivity, which was the chastisement of God. It is true that God will chasten His people, but only out of love. Then He will call them to rebuild.

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The Lord put it on the heart of Cyrus, the king of Persia, to write a decree allowing the people of God to return to Jerusalem to rebuild this place of former glory. However, in their attempts to rebuild, this group of returning Israelites encountered serious opposition—much like you and I do once we are determined to make our lives count for God. They became discouraged, which caused them to turn inward and rely on their own reasoning, eventually bringing them into what I would call a lesser glory. It was now simply a natural people trying to build a natural kingdom. Ultimately they began to focus on their own houses rather than on the work of God.

When you and I lose the supernatural, we lose the heart of God. As soon as we lose the heart of God, which is the redemption of all humanity in the earth, our whole relationship with God begins to be centered around our own sense of well-being and building our own house. But, of course, the Lord does not leave His people there.

■ LIMITED VISION

"In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of the Lord by the prophet Haggai, saying, Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, and to the residue of the people, saying, Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?" (Haggai 2:1–3).

The Lord raised up the prophet Haggai to call the people back to the work of God. In hindsight, we know that they were about to build a temple that Jesus Christ Himself would walk into. The glory of that latter house, although it looked different from the first glory, would be greater than the glory in Solomon's day.

Similarly, just as there was a glory when Jesus visited this rebuilt temple and a glory on

the day of Pentecost—there will also be a glory in these last days in which we are living. There will be a greater glory in the temple of Almighty God, and that temple is you and me!

When I look in the Bible and then look at my life, it seems as if I fall so far short of what I am supposed to be.

Remember when you first read about the disciples in the Upper Room who burst forth into the marketplace, filled with the power and glory of God? You knew in your heart that the calling of every Christian was to be filled with God's glory, be brought into the supernatural, and make a difference in his or her generation. You had an image of "the temple." Even if only for a moment, you saw what it should look like in its glory. Yet, just as Haggai asked, how do you see it now?

Many people might say, "My life is nothing like I thought it was going to be in Christ. I had such aspirations; I believed that all things were possible in Christ. I truly wanted to glorify God in the earth. But now when I look in the Bible and then look at my life, it seems as if I fall so far short of what I am supposed to be."

You see, there is a weakness in each of our hearts, just as there was in the hearts of those in Haggai's day. It is this inability to believe beyond what we can see with our natural eyes that in turn opens the door to discouragement in our lives.

So how do we get beyond this limited vision? Is it through more Bible study? Attending church more frequently? Our natural tendency is to conclude that if we just read more, studied more, prayed more, and did more, somehow our lives would be an ambassadorship of glory to the Name of God—only to realize later that all we have done is studied more, read more, prayed more and done more. Those are good things, but they may not necessarily bring the glory of God in its full measure. It is only God who can get us beyond this limited vision. So how does He do it?

■ **MARY, MARTHA AND LAZARUS**

In John 11 we find the story of Mary, Martha and Lazarus—three people who had an intimate friendship with Jesus. He visited them frequently, sat at their table, spoke wondrous things. Martha served Him, Mary worshiped Him, and Lazarus loved Him and knew he was loved of Christ. What an amazing family, even down to devotions in their home with Jesus Himself! It couldn't get any better than that, could it? I am sure they enjoyed Jesus' visits to their house, just as you and I enjoy coming to the house of God today. It delights our hearts to come and worship the Lord, to serve Him, to hear from His Word.

However, despite all this, Jesus knew there was still a deficiency—there was still something in these three that could not fully bring glory to God. So what did Jesus do? Did He reprimand them? Did He cause Mary to sit at His feet longer, Martha to serve Him more and Lazarus to love Him more? No! Do you know what He did? He let sickness and death come into their house!

We see the same principle in Haggai—a picture of what the Lord had to do so that His people might truly bring Him glory. "Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow

upon it. why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house" (Haggai 1:9).

"You looked for much and it came to little." Think for a moment how similar it is today with all the aspirations that our church generation has had—all the strategies about how to bring people into the house of God. They came in, but they did not last. The Lord said, "You brought them in, but I blew them away because they were not truly converted."

"Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit" (Haggai 1:10). Because of this lack of true faith, heaven is brass and there is no fruit. We talk of harvest, but there is very little happening, especially within the borders of this country right now. So how does God deal with it?

You and I know the Scriptures. However, there comes a point where we simply must believe it.

"And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands" (Haggai 1:11). This is what God does: He calls for a famine, for a financial downturn, for unemployment! In other words, He takes away everything that has brought us into a false confidence—not in anger, but out of love for His people.

The Lord did the same thing with Mary, Martha and Lazarus, allowing sickness and death to enter their house in order to show them their powerlessness. He allowed them to be taken captive by their circumstances, confronting them with their unbelief. Then He came to them one more time to manifest His glory.

■ IT IS TIME TO BELIEVE

Today we find ourselves in the same position as Mary, Martha and Lazarus—a place where we are not going to see the glory of God in our own strength. When Jesus came to where Lazarus was lying four days dead in the tomb, Martha quoted many Scriptures to Him, but she really did not believe any of it. It had never taken root in her heart.

In the same way, you and I know the Scriptures. However, there comes a point where we simply must believe it. For example, do we truly believe it when the Lord says, *“Yet now be strong...all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts: According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not”* (Haggai 2:4–5). Do we believe that in spite of our failure, in spite of our careless handling of precious truth, in spite of our captivity, He is still with us—that He has not abandoned His church in this hour?

“For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts” (Haggai 2:6–7). In other words, the time has come to judge all nations. “But not you—I will fill you with My glory,” says the Lord. The word glory in the Hebrew text means weight, honor, esteem, glory, majesty, abundance and wealth. The Lord will fill us with what we could never have

on our own. It does not come from human effort but rather from simply believing God. That is why the Scripture says, *“The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts”* (Haggai 2:8). God possesses and will endow us with all that we need to rebuild this last temple for His glory.

The Lord promises to bring us out of our graves—out of every place of despair, hopelessness, powerlessness and captivity.

■ WRAPPED IN DEATH

So the question that remains is, “How exactly do I do this?” Perhaps, just like those who were called to rebuild in Haggai’s day, you have already concluded in your heart, “I tried, but it didn’t work. I just did not have the strength to stand against all the opposition. How do I go on?”

The answer is actually quite simple. In Ezekiel 37, what do you think the dry bones did? These were the children of Israel whose testimony was, “Our hope is lost; our strength is gone.” Throughout the generations, this is exactly where the people of God often have found themselves. The Lord instructed Ezekiel, *“...say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord”* (Ezekiel 37:4). That was all they could do. The bones were scattered, without the strength to bring themselves together, yet somehow God in His mercy gave them the ears to hear.

“...I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves...

and bring you into the land of Israel” (Ezekiel 37:12). In the same way, the Lord promises to bring us out of our graves—out of every place of despair, hopelessness, powerlessness and captivity. He essentially says, “I am doing it because I am God and you are My people—not for your sakes but for My Name’s sake. It will never be said in eternity that I brought you out and could not bring you in, or that I abandoned you because of your weakness and your failure” (see Ezekiel 36:32).

The devil loves to try to wrap up the church in death, captivity, and adverse circumstances. How he must have snickered on the hilltop as he saw Martha running around quoting Scriptures she no longer believed; Mary weeping because she felt God had failed her family; Lazarus dead behind a stone. It certainly looked like a hopeless situation, and the devil must have gleefully concluded, “Ah, just look at the church of Jesus Christ!”

Oh, yes, he had it all wrapped up—except for one thing! The God who spoke the universe into existence by the word of His mouth is still alive! He is the God who declared, “I will have a church! I will have a people in the earth who will glorify My Name.” Suddenly that voice stood on a mountaintop and called, “Lazarus, come forth!”

Ironically, there was really only one man who could hear His voice—the dead man! The man who knew he couldn’t do it—the man who tried to live but died. The only thing left was the voice of God. The One who had all power over sin and death was calling him, and it was crunch time. He had to decide: “Do I get up, or do I stay? Do I believe my circumstance, or do I believe the voice of God?”

Lazarus got up! He walked out of that grave in the little strength he had, and Jesus gave the command to loose

him or, in other words, to set him free and let him go. Where did he go? He went right back to the table with Jesus! However, now everything was different, for he was living in resurrected life. Many people came not just to see Jesus—they came to see the man who was raised from the dead (see John 12:9). Likewise, many people in our generation will come not only to see Jesus, but they will come because of you! They will come because you have been raised from the dead—brought out of captivity and given new life.

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■ A GREATER GLORY

“...I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee...and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts” (Haggai 2:21–23).

A signet is a sign of the authority of God. He was saying, “I will make you a sign to this generation, for I have chosen you—even in your captivity and despair.” It was not our choice but His! He is calling us to be ambassadors of the kingdom

of God in this last generation. God is calling His whole church—every place, every denomination, whether they are alive or they appear to be in the grave. Nothing is over until God says it’s over!

The only choice we have is whether or not we will hear His voice and respond to it. Either we believe that Jesus is the resurrection and the life—that He can bring us into freedom and do the miraculous through our lives—or we stay in the grave.

Remember, the Lord has promised: *“The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former...”* (Haggai 2:9). A greater glory! God longs to do more in your life than you have ever envisioned. A whole generation is dying in its sin, but now the voice of God has come once again, calling you to rebuild. He is calling you into a freedom and ability that can come only from Him. I implore you today in Christ’s name to step out of all bondage and captivity—whatever it is in your life that has convinced you that God will never use you. Leave that place behind! As you respond to His voice, the Lord will strengthen you, give you His Word, fill you with His Spirit, and cause you to be a demonstration of His resurrection life in this generation!

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.

Founding Pastor

David Wilkerson

Senior Pastor

Carter Conlon

Tel:

212-541-6300

Fax:

212-541-6415

Church Location:

237 West 51st Street
Between Broadway & 8th Avenue

Mailing Address:

1657 Broadway, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10019

e-mail:

info@timesquarechurch.org

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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This newsletter is an edited version of “THE GLORY OF THE LATTER HOUSE” a sermon given on **October 23, 2011** in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in New York City. Other sermons are available by visiting our website at tscnyc.org. You are welcome to make additional copies of this sermon for free distribution to friends. However, for all other forms of reproduction or electronic transmission existing copyright laws apply. This sermon cannot be posted on any website or webpage without permission from Times Square Church. Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references are from the King James Version.