

LETTER FROM CARTER CONLON

Dear friend,

There are times in life when we all feel we can identify with the words of King David: *"I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me [no one gives me a passing thought—NLT]: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul"* (Psalms 142:4, KJV).

Sometimes our own struggles, fears for tomorrow, or feelings of inadequacy become so intense that it seems nobody really understands. We fear for the future and wonder if we are of any value to the kingdom of God. Ironically, it is generally when we know we are too small in ourselves to do anything that Jesus is able to do great things through us. The miracle is that *He cares*. He cares about you and calls you and me to bring the little that we have to Him. It's then that the miracles begin to happen. Press on, my dear friend. You are closer to the supernatural power of God than you think. He loves you and *He cares*.

P.S. There are 42 short-term missions trips going out from Times Square Church in 2011. Would you consider bringing the little you have and coming with us? That's where the miracles begin! For more information, visit tscnyc.org/missions.

Yours, in Christ,



Carter Conlon
Senior Pastor

JESUS CARES by Carter Conlon

"What is the greatest truth you have ever learned? What has given you the most comfort, the greatest revelation of God?" If you asked me those questions today, I could boil down my answer to two words: Jesus cares. It is a great comfort to know that no matter where we are or what we're going through, the eyes of God are always on us, and His compassion never fails. His eyes observe us constantly throughout the day, and I am strengthened personally by knowing that Jesus cares, as evidenced throughout the Scriptures.

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■ EXAMINING OUR OWN RESOURCES

Consider the miracle of provision recounted in John, chapter 6. There were five thousand men, plus women and children, so possibly at least ten thousand gathered on the mountain with Jesus and His disciples. At the end of the day, Jesus did not want to send the people away hungry because He had compassion on them. So He turned to Philip and

asked, *"Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"* (John 6:5). He said this to test Philip, since He already knew what He was going to do.

It seems we never fully know the miracles of God's compassion until we have run out of our resources. However, the disciples still had resources at this point, so the first thing Philip did, probably in conference with some of the other disciples, was to check the money bag and conclude that two hundred pennyworth of bread was insufficient to feed everyone in a crowd of this size (John 6:7). And even if they did have enough money, what bakery would have ten or fifteen thousand loaves of bread on hand? In the natural it was impossible. The crowd was too big, the need was too great! But...Jesus cares!

■ FAITH OF A CHILD

All of a sudden a little boy ran out of the crowd. Andrew took him to Jesus and said, *"There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?"* (John 6:9). This boy had probably been close enough to hear Jesus saying, "The people are hungry, we have to feed them." And so he looked down at the little lunch basket in his hand. I can imagine him turning to his mother and father saying, "Is it okay if I give these to Jesus?" And the mother and father were probably thinking, "Well, isn't this cute? He wants to take his lunch

and give it to Jesus. Well, Jesus is probably hungry since He's been preaching to the people all day. He might appreciate these few loaves and a couple of fish for Himself." So they gave him permission.

This little boy came up to where the disciples were—all the big players in the Kingdom of God who were willing to fight to the death and go to Jerusalem. The boy tapped Andrew on the leg, lifted his basket toward him, and said, "Here!" In his heart he may have thought, "What a day this is going to be—Jesus and I are going to feed this crowd!" Now Jesus knew what He was going to do, but the Bible says that He does not operate outside of faith. There must be somebody in the crowd who has faith, somebody willing to believe.

That's the simplicity of being a child. No wonder Jesus said: "*Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein*" (Mark 10:15). In the original text, this means that a person may receive it intellectually yet still dwell outside the power of God. He will know about the kingdom and hear parables about it, but he won't live in the kingdom. Instead, the kingdom will elude him. We must all become as this little child, recognizing our own unworthiness but believing the simple truth: With men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

■ RECOGNIZING OUR OWN UNWORTHINESS

Isaiah had a similar revelation when he was drawn up to the throne of God. In the presence of a holy God, he saw his own unworthiness and lack of resources. Though he had already begun his prophetic ministry in Israel, his testimony at that point was, "*Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*" (Isaiah 6:5). He was saying,

"We have all fallen short of what I see here. I see Your glory and Your majesty Lord. I am standing in Your presence, and I don't have anything in comparison to You!"

Isaiah probably felt he had less than the little boy had for his lunch that day on the mountainside. Yet he began to hear the heart of God asking, "*Who will go for us?*" (Isaiah 6:8). Despite knowing he had very little by way of natural resources, he cried, "*Here am I, send me!*" Isaiah believed with the Lord, all things were possible—if he put his little bit into the hands of God, the Lord in His compassion would multiply it to bless many. And didn't God do exactly that? Today we have been given an incredible vision through what the Lord showed the prophet Isaiah—not only of time past and time present, but into the future—into the coming of Christ in His eternal kingdom.

Why is it that we wait until the ship is going down before we cry out for the miracle?

■ IN THE MIDST OF THE STORM

In Mark, chapter 4, the disciples were heading across the water when suddenly a storm arose. You can picture them rowing, chatting, and perhaps even encouraging one another. But the wind and waves continued to grow stronger until eventually water began to fill the boat. By that point, these seasoned sailors and fishermen were convinced they were about to go down. In the midst of their despair, they awakened Jesus in the back of the boat—not to pray, but actually to accuse Him: "*Do you not care that we perish?*" (Mark 4:38, NKJV). Many of our prayers today are

like that. How many even prayed that way this morning or last night? "Lord, don't you know what I am going through? Aren't you aware of the turmoil in my family, the war in my heart, the demonic powers that seem to be pitted against me? Don't you care?" Yet, in spite of our accusations, we know Jesus cares.

When Jesus heard the cries of His disciples, He stood up in the boat and with His spoken word calmed the wind and the waves. Then He turned and said to them, "*Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?*" (Mark 4:40). Why is it that we wait until the ship is going down before we cry out for the miracle? Is it just pride in the human heart? Why do we wait until there is no other option? Miracles could actually happen sooner if we simply believed and understood that there really is no option apart from God.

■ WEeping IN NAIN

"*And it came to pass the day after, that he [Jesus] went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him...*" (Luke 7:11). "Nain" means a city of pleasantness and beauty. It was a place where many people desired to live because of the promising future it offered. It was a place where the widow, the poor, and the oppressed could find solutions to their problems.

However, suddenly this city had turned into a place of hopelessness and despair. "*Now when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her*" (Luke 7:12). This woman had no husband, and she was carrying her only son out of the city. That son was her hope—her provision, her safety, her future—but now he was gone. And she was not the only one who had lost hope, for it says that many others were coming out of the city with her.

Today our options for a safe and secure future are quickly running out. You know it, the unsaved know it, and even the skeptic knows it. We are soon going to find ourselves in a situation just like the people who were gathered in Nain.

Now that's our choice—we can choose to live, or we can choose to stay dead.

I think of all the single mothers who must be crying out to God today. Those who had put such hope in their sons and daughters, such hope in the city they live in, which once appeared to offer a promising future. But instead they see it swallowing their sons and daughters, and their hope is quickly diminishing. There is a deep cry within, and God hears it.

“And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not” (Luke 7:13). This mother did not see Him, He saw her. Thank God, Jesus cares! He could have passed by, and nobody would have even known. But He couldn't pass by because He cares! He hears the cry of the widow, for His own law says He is the husband to the widow. It would have been outside His character to have no compassion. So Jesus came and touched the casket, and those that bore it stood still. The Scripture says, *“Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord”* (2 Chronicles 20:17, NKJV). Stop scurrying, stop worrying, stop fretting, stop wringing your hands about the future. Stand still and come face to face with the One who went to a cross and said, “It is finished.”

The reign of sin, hell, death, poverty, and sickness is over. Then Jesus said, *“Young man, I say unto thee, Arise!”* (Luke 7:14). This speaks to me of that deepest part of death that is trying to work in our lives—the deepest fear of the heart, the deepest struggles, the deepest places we go through when our resources have failed. And just as Jesus did in Nain, He will stop this parade of death in you—the parade of human effort and human reasoning. He will put His hand on that deep struggle and fear and say, “Live!”

The Scripture says that the young man then sat up and began to speak. The Greek word for “speak” is *laleo*—a word that is also attributed to the speech of God. This is the same word used in Hebrews 1:2 where it says that God has *“in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.”* We can infer from this that the boy got up and began to speak right things. His priorities were right, his conversation was right—he began to speak as an oracle of God.

The Scripture says that after this, great fear came upon the people of Nain. This city of weeping, this city of no hope, this city where a parade of death and hopelessness was coming out to bury the dead—suddenly began to glorify God, and the report of this went throughout all the nations round about.

■ **ARISE!**

Just as Jesus spoke to the boy who was dead, today He says to us, “Arise!” Now that's our choice—we can choose to live, or we can choose to stay dead. We can choose to just say, “There's no strength in me, there's no life in me, there's no hope in me. I am bankrupt in this area of my life.” We can make the choice to stay there if we want. We can look in the money bag and conclude, “No, the need is too great, and the resources in my life are too small,” and thus settle for essentially

living outside of the kingdom of God while on earth.

But why should you do this? Why should you make your life available to go through the battle with darkness? What is the point if heaven is your ultimate goal? There is only one answer: Jesus cares. He cares about you, He cares about the city, He cares about the people who are going into a Christless eternity. He cares about the starving, and He cares about the dying children. Jesus cares!

You will never know what God can do through your life until you make the step to let Him prove Himself to you.

Beloved, if we could just rise up and understand this; if we had the courage to call out to the God who can do the impossible, what a difference our lives would make in this generation. We don't come to God in strength—we come with the little bit that we have, and ask Him to multiply it for His glory.

Are you willing to do that today? You can do as the disciples did—look around at the great need, check your pockets, see your meager resources. Or you can be like that little boy who said, “I would like to give this to Jesus. I believe that we can feed this crowd.” You will never know what God can do through your life until you make the step to let Him prove Himself to you.

Today you may have an area of death so deep in your life that only God

can resurrect it. That young man was dead, and so was his mother's hope. But Jesus gave life because He cared. Perhaps you are not struggling as deeply as others, but you have another struggle—you don't really believe that God can use you. You don't believe that simple faith is enough. You are always looking in the mirror; always looking in the drawer for some elusive degree that is never going to be there and would not make a difference anyway. All you really need is a heart of compassion, and God will give you everything else.

■ WHOM WILL GOD USE?

I believe a great touch of God is coming to reach our generation, but it is not going to come in the way many assume. It will not be through some great new shining man or woman of God. No! It will be through the sons and daughters, the widows—those with just a little bit of strength—no impressive resume, no big ministry, no PhD. We have gone that route and look at the mess this society has become. Give me a young man raised from the dead. Give me a child with faith in this generation. Give me somebody who knows he has no hope, who is willing to come to God and say, "In my nothingness, touch me, Almighty God! Take my littleness and begin to feed thousands with it!"

That is the way it has been throughout Scripture, and that is the way it will be: the nobodies, the nothings, the prostitutes, the lepers, the lame, the blind—all coming to God. And one more time thousands will be fed the knowledge of God by those who have no strength.

Jesus came and touched that casket in Nain and commanded the dead youth to come to life. But notice that

the miracle was really done because of his mother. It says Jesus saw her and had compassion on her. God does the miraculous in us as His church. He heals us and gives us what we could never hope to possess. It is because He loves us, but also because He cares about others—those whom we will encounter in the future. If we can get hold of this truth and give God what little we have, He will bring us to life for the sake of the hopeless, the weeping and the hungry in our society. And it is all because He cares. Hallelujah!

Carter Conlon
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This newsletter is an edited version of "Jesus Cares," a sermon given on June 13, 2010 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.

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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