

Dear Friend,

This might be the most important newsletter you have ever held in your hands or set before your eyes. It comes to you in a season when your voice is needed more than ever. As a nation, decay and decline have set in so rapidly that many are standing in fear of the ominous days just ahead of us. It seems that human effort has no power to stop this onslaught against all that we once held virtuous and dear.

As followers of Christ, we realize that only He has the power to stop this flood of decline that has seeped through the walls of every place we once thought to be honorable and true. Your voice is now needed in the secret and public places of prayer as never before. It is no longer optional, if you and I would see a spiritual awakening in our time.

Please read this letter prayerfully and, by the grace of God, count yourself in this battle. *"And I looked, and rose up, and said to the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses"* (Nehemiah 4:14).

Yours, in Christ,

Pastor Carter Conlon

## A CALL FOR INTERCESSORS

by Carter Conlon

*"Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king's house, over against the king's house: and the king sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the gate of the house. And it was so, when the king saw Esther the queen standing in the court, that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand. So Esther drew near, and touched the top of the sceptre. Then said the king unto her, What wilt thou, queen Esther? And what is thy request? It shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom"* (Esther 5:1-3).

### *An intercessor does not pray solely for his or her own benefit.*

In the story of Esther, the Lord gives us a clear picture of the power of prayer—a specific type of prayer called intercession. We are given a visual image of what it looks like when an intercessor approaches the throne of God.

An intercessor does not pray solely for his or her own benefit. Rather, an intercessor recognizes and is gripped by the peril of other people. Unfortunately, intercession is not something that we are naturally drawn to. The Bible tells us that even Esther was influenced by an outside voice before she arose and

approached the king. It was not inherent in her heart to go to the lengths that she eventually did, just as it is not a natural tendency in my heart or in yours. The voice of the Holy Spirit must guide and woo us to go beyond praying for our own jobs, our own safety, and our own bread—although these are all justifiable things to pray for.

The Bible tells us that when the king saw Esther, he wanted her to draw near (see Esther 5:2). He extended to her his scepter, which represented his complete power and authority as king. When Esther was allowed to touch the top of that scepter, it was a picture of her having touched the heart of the king. She had actually tapped into a place of authority that did not belong to her. However, it became hers by invitation, much as we are invited to come boldly to the throne of grace in order to find help in our time of need (see Hebrews 4:16).

After Esther drew near and touched the top of the scepter, the king said these incredible words to her: *"...What wilt thou, queen Esther? And what is thy request? It shall be even given thee to the half of the kingdom"* (Esther 5:3). In other words, there will be nothing, except for the throne, that will be withheld from you.

#### ■ HOW TO APPROACH THE KING

In the second book of Chronicles, we are given another glimpse of the type of intercession that God seeks.

*“Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord...And the Lord appeared to Solomon by night, and said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for an house of sacrifice” (2 Chronicles 7:11–12).*

## ***You and I must be aware that when we come into the presence of God to pray, we are not to come casually.***

In the original Hebrew, the word sacrifice refers to the shedding of blood. All of the people who came into the temple were required to sacrifice a lamb, a goat, a dove or a calf in order to approach God in prayer. This means they would have been at the altar, watching as the young animal had its throat slit. The blood would have been poured out into the basins, and the carcass set upon the altar right before their very eyes. With such a scene still fresh in their minds, they likely would have been reminded that this was not a light or casual thing—it cost a life for them to be able to approach the throne and bring their intercession before God. Likewise, you and I must be aware that when we come into the presence of God to pray, we are not to come casually. It cost the Son of God His very own life to make a way for us to come inside the veil and have face-to-face interaction with God.

How serious is this matter to God? One thing we know is that it was regarding this issue that we have the only account of God’s righteous anger being physically manifested in the New Testament. As Jesus drove out

the moneychangers from the temple, He displayed His anger toward those who were robbing the people of what God wanted to do for and through them (see Matthew 21:12–14). The core issue was not merely the thievery and the bartering that was going on. Rather, it was the fact that they had taken away the holiness of the temple; the sense of awe was gone. As a result of their own casualness and lack of reverence, they had taken this out of the hearts of the people as well. I believe this is the greater thievery Jesus was speaking about and why His anger was so manifested. No longer was there a solemnity and awareness among the people that they had been invited by sacrifice to draw near to God—so that He might do something profound through their lives.

In contrast, Esther certainly did not approach the king’s court casually. In those days, it was against the law to come into the inner court without having been expressly invited by the king. She knew that coming into the inner court could potentially cost her life, yet when she came, the king chose to withdraw his lawful right to execute his wrath. I imagine that as he held out that scepter to her in full view of all the people who were ministering to him around the temple—the guards, the cupbearers, the servants—there must have been a collective gasp of awe.

In the same way at Calvary, Jesus Christ suspended His lawful right to execute His wrath upon us. His own law dictated that anybody who came into the presence of God uninvited would die. Although we rebelled against Him and, in abject ignorance, even declared ourselves to be as God, in His kindness the Lord chose to sacrifice His own blood. He tore the veil that separated us from Him, inviting us into His presence and allowing us to freely partake of His power—most likely to the collective gasp of all of heaven.

## ***Intercession is a type of prayer that begins with self-denial and self-sacrifice.***

Continuing in second book of Chronicles, we see further how we ought to approach the King: *“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven...”* (2 Chronicles 7:14). In other words, we are not to come like the self-made strategists—those who consider themselves to be as God. They step into the holy place with their own ideas, confidently saying, “God, would You bless what I have come up with?” They neglect the fact that many of our good ideas may actually be wickedness in the sight of a holy God. As He said through the prophet Isaiah, *“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts”* (Isaiah 55:9).

Notice that Esther came humbly before the king in her royal apparel, clothed only in what he had provided for her. She did not come asking the king to bless her plan, for she had no plan. In fact, she was not even sure if she was going to live or die. We, too, are not to come arrogantly to the Lord of the universe—we are to come humbly. Yes, we come with confidence, understanding that He desires us to come. However, we also come acknowledging who He is, aware of the fact that without His covering, without the royal apparel, we are nothing. We have no plan that is going to advance the kingdom of God. The church of Jesus Christ has tried these things for years now and it has not brought significant deliverance to our nation. It is time

to humble ourselves once more and enter into the place of intercession.

### ■ A CERTAIN TYPE OF PRAYER

We read in chapter 3 of Esther that a decree had been written, sanctioning the annihilation of all Jewish people. This is a type of the law of sin and death that is over our society today. Esther heard about it and with the encouragement of her uncle, Mordecai, she knew that she was called to intercede on behalf of her people.

*When you go  
into the prayer  
closet, be certain  
that the devil  
is going to come  
in with you.*

Just as Esther recognized the peril that her people were in, it is time in our generation that we finally acknowledge the reality that multitudes are headed for eternity without God. I do not know about you, but I am not content to have the city where God has placed me go to hell on my watch. I am not content to see this nation sink deeper and deeper into immorality; to let the Sodomites lead our society; to let wicked and evil media determine the value system of our children. I am not content to say, “Well, Lord, You have taken my life this far and that is far enough. I have some great accomplishments under my belt, so hopefully that will be good enough when I get to heaven.” No! There is something deeper for all of us, something more profound that God is calling us to.

Before she approached the king, Esther called those who were part of her entourage to three days of fasting. Intercession is a type of prayer that begins with self-denial

and self-sacrifice. Rather than being preoccupied with self, a true intercessor is willing to forego his or her own comfort for the sake of others.

Not only is it a type of prayer that begins with fasting, but it is a prayer that throws its life in with its petition. Esther was determined: “I am going in, and if I perish, I perish” (see Esther 4:16). Intercession is not merely a casual, “God, help those poor people over there.” It is, “Lord, even if it costs me everything, if You are sending me, I will go. I am not just praying a generic prayer to satisfy my own conscience that I have somehow exhibited some compassion today. I am willing to put my life in with my prayers.” That is the key, and that is exactly what Esther did.

After she presented her petition, Esther prepared a banquet for the king, which the enemy, Haman, attended as well. She had to listen to his endless chatter at the table, along with every force of hell that was likely sneering at her, saying, “Who do you think you are? Do you really think you can change the law of death that has been written over your people?” In the same way, when you go into the prayer closet, be certain that the devil is going to come in with you. You will have to fight through his lies and accusations. But do not worry, God will give you wisdom and a strategy. It will all come from the mind of God! In Esther’s case, the Lord had already set a trap, and when the time was right, Haman ended up hanging on his own gallows.

### ■ A NEW DECREE

*“And Esther spake yet again before the king, and fell down at his feet, and besought him with tears to put away the mischief of Haman the enemy, and his device that he*

*had devised against the Jews. Then the king held out the golden sceptre toward Esther. So Esther arose, and stood before the king”* (Esther 8:3–4). This is the second time we see such a scenario. Esther came in, and by then she has learned what is necessary to approach the king. The king automatically held out his scepter to Esther, and she was given the power to rewrite the law. Suddenly she was directly involved in rewriting the law of sin and death into a law of life!

Messengers headed out and the word spread: You don’t have to be overcome by the enemy; there is a law of freedom and victory! There is a law that heals the oppressed, opens prison doors and gives strength to those who have no strength. From India to Ethiopia, into 127 provinces throughout the world, this law went out by the power of Almighty God Himself (see Esther 8:9–10). It was all because of one young woman’s decision to go to the king.

*Imagine  
getting into  
your prayer  
closet and  
having the King  
come down  
to ask, “What  
can I do for  
you today?”*

After all this, something even more amazing happened. The king had received the report of all the victory that had been won by Esther’s people. “*And the king said unto Esther the queen, The Jews have slain and destroyed five hundred men in Shushan the palace, and the ten sons of Haman; what have they done in the rest of the king’s*

*provinces? Now what is thy petition? And it shall be granted thee: or what is thy request further? And it shall be done” (Esther 9:12).*

Notice that there was no longer a scepter involved—the king himself was now approaching Esther! The end of this chapter talks about the decree of Esther that was sent out, confirming the feast. She was writing laws now as bride and co-regent with her husband, just as we are going to rule and reign with Christ one day. The king had seen Esther’s virtue—the purity of her heart and motives that were not for her own benefit. He knew that she was not trying to acquire the kingdom for herself, so now he was the one approaching Esther.

Wouldn’t you like that to be the case in your prayer time? Imagine getting into your prayer closet and having the King come down to ask, “What can I do for you today?” Wouldn’t you like to be a person in our generation who could amaze heaven?

## *The Lord has issued a clear call for intercessors in this hour! Will you answer it?*

### ■ THE CALL IS ISSUED

We are living in a perilous time—a time when evil men seem to have the upper hand; a time when calamity could come upon us at almost any moment. Yet remember the word that came

to Esther: “*And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*” (Esther 4:14). Who knows whether we were born for this moment in history? We were born, we have been trained, we have been taught, and we have been wooed by the Holy Spirit. We have known the blessing of God in order to be drawn into His presence for the sake of the lost—to be drawn in to believe that He is able to move supernaturally in our cities.

It was the voice of Mordecai that prompted Esther to even consider the course of action that ultimately changed the future for her own people. She had to make a choice, just as you and I are faced with a choice: Do I put on my royal apparel—the righteousness that God has given me—and approach the King?

Do I come humbly and with reverence, recognizing the great cost involved in order that I might come into His presence? I must be willing to say, “If I perish, I perish. If I must lay down my comfort, my dreams, my plans, my vision for my future, then so be it. But God, You cannot let this generation die on my watch—not when I know that I have the authority in Christ to touch the power of God!”

The Lord has issued a clear call for intercessors in this hour! Will you answer it?

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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