

Dear Friend,

On December 12th at Times Square Church we had our first meeting of the pastors whose churches are partnering with our Feed New York initiative. It was a privilege to be part of a group of such spiritually hungry leaders who are dedicated to their communities. The prayer time we had together was explosive and incredibly faith-filled.

The first pastor ever to receive food supplies through this program reported that her empty church seats are already starting to fill up. She was absolutely radiant with the hope and vision that only Jesus could give. I believe that as we continue to meet and pray together, the Lord will take this seed of faith we have planted and turn it into a vineyard much bigger than we ever could have imagined.

Thank you for supporting such a worthwhile effort. Isaiah 58:7 promises us that if we reach out to the poor, God Himself will become our source of supply without end. In spite of the daily news reports, in Christ it is indeed a Happy New Year!

May He bless you and keep you in the very center of His heart and will. If we have not seen you for a while, please visit us soon.

With much love,

Pastor Carter Conlon

## DELIVERING THE LAMB FROM THE MOUTH OF THE ENEMY

by Carter Conlon

In the book of 1 Samuel, we read of a time when the testimony of God was in crisis—much as it has been in different nations throughout history and I believe is true of our nation today. At that particular time, the Philistine army was standing in opposition to the children of Israel—the very people whom God had ordained to be a blessing in the earth.

***A theological focus of wealth, position and status in society will always result in powerlessness and leave the church trembling.***

It has always been the case that an encroachment of evil will attempt to obliterate the testimony of God. As the Philistines stood on the opposite side of the valley, their spokesman, Goliath, taunted the children of God day and night: *"Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? Am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and*

*serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together. When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid"* (1 Samuel 17:8–11).

Though they faced an army that was greater in number and seemingly mightier than they, there was another reason why the people of God were left standing in fear and dismay. Saul and most of his followers had long ago abandoned faith for wealth, position and status. Notice that when this voice stood up against the ways of God, the only reward that Saul could offer the people was a product of what his value system had become: *"It shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches (wealth), and will give him his daughter (position), and make his father's house free in Israel (status)"* (1 Samuel 17:25).

A theological focus of wealth, position and status in society will always result in powerlessness and leave the church trembling. It causes God's people to end up overwhelmed, undermanned, hopeless, and with the sense that they are unable to win the battles they face. You and I are now living in an hour where there is no time for this self-seeking Christianity. It is doomed in our generation, trembling as voices rise to redefine everything that is right and holy.

The Israelites stood on the hillside, watching as godlessness threatened the very testimony God had given to them on the earth. As they awaited the battle, there must have been at least some of them who wondered, Is there anybody among us who is able to stand against this kind of threat? If so, what kind of person will he be, and when will he arise?

### ■ THE HIDDEN BATTLES

As he always does, God had prepared a vessel—a young man named David who had been diligently fighting to preserve what had been entrusted into his hand.

By this time, David had already been serving Saul as his armor bearer. In 1 Samuel 17, verse 15, it says *“But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father’s sheep at Bethlehem.”* It is significant to note that David was not yet in the battle—he was in an obscure place, keeping his father’s sheep. In the same way, it is important for you and I to be diligent with what God has entrusted to us, and that we do it with all our heart.

## *The first battle that you and I will have to fight is the hidden battle.*

One day when David was faithfully looking after his father’s sheep, a lion and a bear came and took a lamb—a Bethlehem lamb—out of the flock. David later recounted the story to Saul: *“Thy servant kept his father’s sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him”* (1 Samuel 17:34–35).

This speaks to me of a person who has had victories that are not spoken of until the day he must stand and face the giant. It is a type of those who have fought and won when the devourer came to kill what the Father had given to them. Keep in mind that God has entrusted to us the victory of His Son, Jesus—the Lamb of God who was born in Bethlehem.

## *You will never be a warrior in public until you have won these secret battles.*

Like David, the first battle that you and I will have to fight is the hidden battle. When you surrendered your life to the Lord, He gave you the victory of the Lamb from Bethlehem. However, you must be aware that the enemy is always going to come like a roaring lion, attempting to take that Lamb in his mouth. He is going to try to steal the victory God has given you—the promise of a new mind and a new life that will be lived for the glory of God. The enemy is going to take that Lamb in his mouth and say, “This promise is not for you. Look how easily I can take it away from you.”

In the midst of that hidden battle, you must rise up. In that secret place where nobody else sees you and you are all alone, the devil comes and says, “Your life will never amount to anything. The promises of God are not true for you. Your family is not going to walk with God. You will never have victory or a new future.” But just as David rose up and took the lamb out of the lion’s mouth, you must take those promises back out of the devil’s mouth.

Today you may be thinking, “What is the big deal about this lack of faith in my heart, the lack

of believing that I will ever amount to anything?” or “What is the big deal about this small compromise in my life?” Although a lamb may seem to be only a small thing, a big victory comes through it. You will never be a warrior in public until you have won these secret battles. They are a test of your faith in God and your confidence in His Word and His keeping power. Therefore, you must be determined to fight and win these hidden battles—whether it is a secret fear, a secret self-loathing, a secret sense of unworthiness, or unbelief within your heart.

David fought those hidden battles. If he had not, he never would have had the courage to go into that valley and face Goliath. You, too, must face the enemy in your own personal battle. As you do, something of faith will enter your heart. And just as David was no match for a lion apart from being supernaturally empowered by God, you will begin to acknowledge that there is no other way to win your battle but by the power of the Holy Spirit. And when you get the victory, suddenly the Scriptures will come to life, and you will be convinced that all things indeed are possible to him who believes.

### ■ THE FATHER’S INSTRUCTIONS

David not only won his hidden battles, but he was a person who cared about others and had the ability to hear and obey the instructions of his father: *“And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp to thy brethren; and carry these ten cheeses unto the captain of their thousand, and look how thy brethren fare, and take their pledge”* (1 Samuel 17:17–18).

The instructions were simple: Go to your brethren, bring provision to them, and let them know that their father cares about them.

We tend to make everything so complicated with our study and theology, when all along things actually are quite simple. Win the secret battles, then get up and do what the Father says. The Lord's instructions to us today are along the same lines: Feed the hungry, encourage those who are in despair, and share with them the love of the Father.

It is just as He describes in the book of Isaiah: *"Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?"* (Isaiah 58:6–8).

#### ■ A FAMILIAR ROAR

Obedying his father's instructions, David approached the camp of the Israelites and ran to greet his brothers. *"And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them"* (1 Samuel 17:23).

Suddenly David heard something that he had heard before—a familiar roar that caused something to rise up within him. The lion was once again after the lamb! This time, however, it was not a lamb in his father's flock in Bethlehem that was at stake. Rather, it was the Lamb of God who was soon to come through the very people among whom David stood. Another Lamb was going to be born in Bethlehem through the tribe of Judah. That Lamb was actually in David's loins, for we know that he was in the lineage of Jesus Christ. Of course, David could have no way of knowing this at the time.

Nevertheless, something must have stirred deeply within his heart. One more time he heard the lion trying to take the lamb in his mouth and so he decided to fight.

## *When David threw that stone and it sank into Goliath's forehead, it was a type of word that can come only from God.*

The Scriptures tell us that David refused to go to battle with the armor that Saul tried to fit on him. In other words, he refused to use the weaponry of those whose spiritual focus was on the things of this world. It may have seemingly won a battle or two along the way, but its powerlessness was now evident. Instead, David headed into the battle armed with five stones, a sling, and a confidence that had been born in secret: *"The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine"* (1 Samuel 17:37).

#### ■ IT TAKES ONE TO BREAK THROUGH

*"And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained him: for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?...And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field"* (1 Samuel 17:42–44).

Unmoved by the threats of the enemy, David declared, *"Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield:*

*but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand"* (1 Samuel 17:45–46).

In other words, you have come with the best that the world can give—your own armor, your own power, your own status, your own strategies. You have not defied religion, you have defied the Lord of Hosts. You have stood up against God in sheer arrogance, mistakenly believing that there would be no price to be paid for this. You have boasted against the power of God Almighty and His ability to take the weak and foolish and do something so significant that one more time the Name of Jesus Christ is glorified in the earth!

*"And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead...So David prevailed over the Philistine"* (1 Samuel 17:48–50).

When David threw that stone and it sank into Goliath's forehead, it was a type of word that can come only from God. It is the word that goes deep and finds its mark in the conscience of fallen man. When you and I stand up under the anointing, speaking words of truth for the glory of God, they will have the ability and inherent power to penetrate even the hardest of minds and hearts.

*"And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines...And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron"* (1 Samuel 17:52).

Some people will have to go through first, leading the way into the battle.

Some may even end up paying a price. Yet, how often throughout history have we seen that it takes only one to break through that gate of faith, and soon many people will begin to follow?

***God's people must get back into the prayer closet; we must turn off the football games and everything else that has diverted our attention and get back to the house of God.***

#### ■ A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

I feel in my heart that the very future of our nation is now at stake—we need a spiritual awakening in America today. There is no “Plan B,” no other way except that the Holy Spirit stir His Church once again. God's people must get back into the prayer closet; we must turn off the football games and everything else that has diverted our attention and get back to the house of God. We do not have ten more years to get this right.

I can already hear a familiar roar in our generation. Voices are rising up, trying to take the Lamb in their mouths—claiming that God's kingdom has no power, that Christ's victory is inconsequential, that nobody of any significance will

be able to withstand them. That is exactly what Goliath was saying. Once again, God is looking for the Davids who will stand and fight to see the name of Jesus Christ glorified in the earth. Somebody somewhere must stand up for the glory of God and for the souls of men. Somebody must fight for those who are losing their own salvation, and in their own ignorance are heading into hell. Somebody has to love them enough to fight for them.

I challenge you to stand up for the sake of Christ. You must recognize today that you are an integral part of this battle. You can do so much for the kingdom of God through prayer, through winning your secret battles, through obeying the Father's instructions, through acts of kindness—so do not write yourself off! If you are doing so, you are allowing the enemy to take the Lamb of God that belongs to you and put it in his mouth. It is time for you to fight back and say, “Not this time. The devil is not getting my testimony. Yes, he may be bigger and stronger than I am, but he is not stronger than the Holy Spirit who lives within me!”

When David ran into that valley, he put his life on the line for the Lamb of God to be born into Bethlehem. It is imperative that we, too, be willing to lay our lives on the line, determined to fight the battles before us. As we do, by the grace of God, we will deliver the Lamb from the mouth of the enemy!

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	Prayer Service	
Friday	7:00PM	Church Service	

This newsletter is an edited version of “DELIVERING THE LAMB FROM THE MOUTH OF THE ENEMY,” a sermon given on **November 11, 2012** in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in New York City. Other sermons are available by visiting our website at [tscnyc.org](http://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.