

Dear Friend,

I am writing to you today from Paris, France, on the way home from an incredible multichurch conference in Geneva, Switzerland. Everywhere I travel, the same scene is unfolding. In Geneva, the conference center had so many young people in attendance that hundreds had to sit on the floor around the stage area. There is an incredible hunger in the hearts of today's youth for a genuine spiritual awakening in their cities.

Here in France, we met with the pastor of a church in the area where the recent terror attacks took place. In the last while his church has grown from 600 to 1000 in attendance. Again, young people are taking leadership roles and are passionate about reaching their peers with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Though the secular media would have us believe that this generation has abandoned faith in God, I see the opposite taking place. There is a hunger for stability and a sense of purpose beyond what the natural eye can see. I find that the renewed cry of my heart is in line with the aging psalmist who cried, "Oh, Lord, don't take away your hand from me until I have shown your power to the generation yet to come" (my paraphrase).

I am believing God for the supply of His strength that I will need. I hope you will come along and believe with me that it will be yours in full supply, as well.

Yours, in Christ,  
Pastor Carter Conlon

## THE PROMISE OF PROVISION

by Carter Conlon

You and I live in a time of much uncertainty about tomorrow. We do not know what the future holds for America's economy or that of other nations. You may have a job today, but there is no guarantee that you will still have it next year or even next week. Yet, thank God that we as believers in Christ have been given an incredible promise of provision—particularly in a time when provision seems so scarce. Consider the words of King David in Psalm 37: "I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread" (37:25). I can personally attest to the truth of this verse, having witnessed the tangible provision of God coming into the lives, families and homes of those who made the choice to walk in the righteousness of Christ.

***Though the wicked seem to have the upper hand in almost every area, the season of wickedness will soon be over in this world.***

The psalm continues, "He is ever merciful, and lends; and his descendants are blessed. Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell forevermore. For the

*Lord loves justice, and does not forsake His saints; they are preserved forever, but the descendants of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell in it forever. The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of justice. The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide. The wicked watches the righteous, and seeks to slay him. The Lord will not leave him in his hand, nor condemn him when he is judged. Wait on the Lord, and keep His way, and He shall exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off, you shall see it" (Psalm 37:26–34).*

David penned these words during a time of great wickedness. Those who desired to follow God were becoming anxious and perhaps even angry, much like we see happening in our day. Nevertheless, David knew that wickedness always leads to a destructive end, and he encouraged the people of God not to lose heart in the midst of such a difficult season. "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a native green tree. Yet he passed away, and behold, he was no more; indeed I sought him, but he could not be found" (Psalm 37:35–36). In other words, though the wicked seem to have the upper hand in almost every area, the season of wickedness will soon be over in this world.

David continued, "Mark the blameless man, and observe the

*upright; for the future of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the future of the wicked shall be cut off. But the salvation of the righteous is from the Lord; He is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in Him”* (Psalm 37:37–40). And so we are reminded that no matter what is happening in the world around us, as we live for God and put our trust in Him, we will find Him to be our strength and our deliverer!

## ***The righteous have never been forsaken, and you will not be the exception!***

### ■ AN IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

Let’s take a moment to look once again at verse 25: *“I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread.”* What an incredible promise to those of us who have been appointed to live in an anti-Christian time in history! The righteous have never been forsaken, and I assure you that you will not be the exception!

Of course, it is important to note that the key to this promise hangs on the word “righteous.” When you and I came to Christ, we were given what the Bible calls imputed righteousness. The best way I can explain this is through the parable of the prodigal son (see Luke 15). The Bible tells us that this boy took his inheritance and went far away from his father, in the same way many of us strayed from God in our early years. He ended up in a place of famine and heartache, doing things he never believed he would be capable of. And although he knew he had no merit, one day

he just got up and started to return home. To his surprise, when he got close to home, his father ran to meet him—embracing him and covering him with the finest robe in the house.

In the same way, when you decided to return to God, God met you. He embraced you and covered you with the finest robe—the blood that Jesus Christ shed on a cross two thousand years ago. God cleansed you and gave you a righteousness that you did not earn.

In the parable, the covering came with a ring, representing the power that this son would need in order to be the ambassador his father was calling him to be. He was also given a pair of shoes—implying that his righteousness would involve a journey. He was not called to merely stand on the road and look good and clean. No, he was called to go on a journey with his father!

### ■ HOLDING THE TRUTH IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

Sadly, many people desire the righteousness of Christ and all the promises that come along with it, yet they do not want the pathway it requires. They simply want to be able to feel good and clean. Like the Pharisees, they may have knowledge of the Scriptures and possess all the exterior coverings, but in the end, knowledge of the truth is not good enough.

Consider how in America we have known the truth. The Word of God has not been hidden; there are Bibles in most homes, even if they are just gathering dust on a shelf. You can turn on the television, and as obscure as it may be, there is still something of the Word of God spoken through the media. Despite some of the glaring wrongs in the history of our nation, from the beginning there has been an abiding reverence for the Word of God.

***If you know the truth about an area of your life but will not obey Him, are you not essentially joining the crowd that says, “Away with Him?”***

Yet we began to hold the truth of God in unrighteousness. In other words, we had God’s Word, but we refused to walk in it. We became enamored with the blessings and forgot the One who is the author and source of everything we have. The Bible clearly warns us of the consequences of holding the truth of God in unrighteousness: A darkened mind is given to that nation; lawlessness and immorality begin to break out; and perversion becomes the order of the day (see Romans 1:28–32). And now we see all of these things happening in our nation at an accelerated rate. Our families are breaking down and our minds are confused. We can no longer distinguish between good and evil.

The Scriptures give us another picture of what happens when the truth of God is held in unrighteousness. Consider what happened in the nation of Israel: God Himself in the flesh was in their midst—the God who had fought their enemies, given them life, and done incredible miracles for them. Yet the Bible tells us that *“He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him”* (John 1:11). I cannot think of a darker moment in history than when Jesus was arrested, and the crowd began to shout, *“Crucify Him! Away with this fellow! We will not have Him to reign over us!”* (see John 19:14–16). They were looking the Son of God in the face and saying, *“Away with You;*

to death with You! We want our religion. We don't want You challenging our behavior! We have our own righteousness!"

It was not the righteousness of God anymore. They had been blessed; they had the history and the promises of God. Yet they grew careless and began to hold the truth of God in unrighteousness, which ultimately resulted in a reprobate mind. By the time they were only seventy years away from destruction, they still assumed that everything was going to continue on peacefully forever. Little did they know that an empire called Rome was about to take over, and there would be no withstanding it!

#### ■ AWAY WITH HIM

Now if you had been in that crowd, would you have been among those yelling, "Away with Him! Crucify Him?" Most people would be quick to answer, "I would never have done that!"

***Many people come to the house of God and essentially say, "I don't want to be led by Christ. I want influence; I want security; I want prestige."***

However, I ask you to think about it for a moment: If you know the truth about an area of your life but will not obey Him, are you not essentially joining the crowd that says, "Away with Him"? I am referring to something that the Lord clearly has His finger on. Perhaps you are in a relationship that you should not be in; you are watching something that you need to turn off; or you are doing something in the workplace that

you know is wrong. God has been speaking to you about this issue, but in your heart, you are essentially saying, "Away with this Man! I will not have Him reign over my life! I don't mind going to church or opening a Bible. I don't mind singing the songs and feeling good about myself. But do not try to govern my life, Jesus!"

You see, the Pharisees made a critical error. They wanted God's covering and all the social perks that came along with it. They wanted power and security; prestige and provision—which is what a lot of the gospel of our time focuses on. Many people come to the house of God and essentially say, "I don't want to be led by Christ. Let's not even talk about my giving or the mission field. I want to talk about how I can start using the name of Jesus Christ. I want influence; I want security; I want prestige in the church and advancement on my job." Yet, like the Pharisees, they are unaware that the pathway they are on is going in the opposite direction of truth.

#### ■ SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS

Jesus made it clear when He said in the book of Matthew, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness*" (Matthew 6:33). Seek first the kingdom of God—or in other words, seek to do the actual work of God on the earth. That ought to be the cry of your heart and mine: "God, what is Your purpose for my life on the earth? How do You want to glorify Yourself through me?" Sometimes it is as simple as speaking the truth in the marketplace when everybody else is lying; being honest when everyone else is crooked; standing up when everyone else is bowing down. Sometimes it is simply praying for people in your neighborhood rather than ignoring them every time you pass them on the street.

***When we ask God, "What would You have me to do?" we must also ask Him for the heart to do it.***

Notice that the verse tells us we are to seek not only the kingdom of God but His righteousness, as well. This includes not only the ability but the heart and willingness to accomplish His work on the earth. In other words, when we ask God, "What would You have me to do?" we must also ask Him for the heart to do it. Oftentimes what the Lord asks us to do is not easy, or it is the least appealing thing on our list. I have found myself praying lately, "God, You have to give me the passion and the desire. You must take me where You want me to go and give me what I do not naturally possess."

***When the Bible says that the righteous are never forsaken, it is referring to an interior provision as well as an exterior.***

Perhaps you already know what God is asking you to do; you are aware of the things that you need to turn away from. What you are in need of now is the willingness to do it. Instead of running from your marriage, you need the passion to fight for it—to fight for your future, your children, your home. Instead of running from being righteous in the marketplace, you need the heart and courage to stand up boldly for the gospel.

The good news is that God has everything you need! When the Bible says that the righteous are never forsaken, it is referring to an interior provision as well as an exterior. The Lord has all the passion, strength, joy, courage, and provision required for this journey He has called you to. And as you seek His kingdom and His righteousness first, all things will be added to you!

## *Walking with Christ does not affect only you, it affects the future of those you love.*

### ■ UNTO THE NEXT GENERATION

Now let's not forget that there is an incredible second half to the promise: *"I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread"* (Psalm 37:25). "Nor his descendants begging bread"—which means that walking with Christ does not affect only you, it affects the future of those you love.

Remember that it is ultimately because of Christ's obedience to the Father—because He yielded His life to fulfill the purposes of God—that you and I, as the descendants of Jesus Christ, can claim the promise in this psalm. And so we see how important it is that we walk in obedience and give our whole hearts to the Lord. As we do so, the promise will extend to all those who come after us—our children, our grandchildren, those over whom God has made our lives an authority. I have already seen this to be true in my own life.

As far back as I know of, I am the first believer in Christ in my family. But now I have nephews and nieces and other family members turning to God. And long after I am gone, I believe that the blessing of the Lord will still be touching my home as I make the choice to walk in the righteousness of Christ.

On Sunday nights here at Times Square Church, I hear many testimonies of people in our congregation who tried to run from God. They lived lives of sin and rebellion, turning up their music extremely loud in an attempt to drown out the voice of God. But the dilemma they faced was that they had a righteous mother or a righteous father; somebody was praying for them! And now it is obvious that they have not been forsaken; they are not begging for bread, because somebody in their house walked with God.

Let us make the choice daily to walk in God's way, holding the truth of God in righteousness, and trusting Him for the strength that we need to fully follow Him. As we choose to do so, we will see the Scripture fulfilled—the blessing of the righteous will be upon us as well as our descendants. All that we have need of will be supplied, for God is absolutely faithful to fulfill His promise!

Carter Conlon  
©2016 Times Square Church

### 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.

**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@tscnyc.org

### WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday	10:00AM	3:00PM	6:00PM
Tuesday	7:00PM	Prayer Service	
Friday	7:00PM	The Gate*	

\*Youth and Young Adult Service

**Live Webcast:**  
All our Sunday and Tuesday services can be watched live and replayed for seven days on our website.

[tscnyc.org](http://tscnyc.org)

This newsletter is an edited version of "THE PROMISE OF PROVISION," a sermon given on **August 30, 2015** 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 New King James Version.