

Dear Friend,

This newsletter reaches you at an incredible time in our nation's history. America is not only facing an increasingly hostile world, but also a homegrown agenda of darkness that, though foreseen and warned about by our founding fathers, has been both unheeded and largely forgotten in our time.

Scripture foretold of a last-days religiousness that prides itself in knowledge but deeply resists the truth. I believe that it is a form of doctrine that shifts its focus from a dependence on God to a dependence on human skill and effort.

In the days of King Saul, a misdirected focus led the entire army of Israel into spiritual paralysis when confronted with the threatening voice of Goliath. "You will serve us and do our bidding," was technically the threat of that time. Then entered David—a young man who knew how to pray and trusted only in the inner strength, wisdom and power that God is willing to give to those who seek Him. We still speak with awe of his victory over the darkness of that day.

As you and I return to walking in the purpose of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, may the generation behind us speak of this moment just as we speak of David's victory. It's time to pray.

With you in faith,

Pastor Carter Conlon

A BLIND CHURCH IN A MIRACULOUS PLACE

by Carter Conlon

"Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it meant. So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. And he cried out, saying, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!' Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!' So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, 'What do you want Me to do for you?' He said, 'Lord, that I may receive my sight.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Receive your sight; your faith has made you well.' And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God" (Luke 18:35–43).

This incredible scene where Jesus healed a blind man occurred in the vicinity of a place called Jericho—a site of both historic and spiritual significance to the people of God in that generation. It was at Jericho that their ancestors followed through with their decision to be spiritually separated from their former places of captivity (see Joshua 1:16). A generation had failed and died in unbelief in the wilderness, but Joshua was about to bring the next

generation through into this incredible place of promise.

I do not want your plans. You are to listen and do it My way if you want to know the victory I am willing to give you.

It was also at Jericho that Joshua had an encounter with the preincarnate Christ. "It came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, 'Are You for us or for our adversaries?' So He said, 'No, but as Commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.' And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, 'What does my Lord say to His servant?' Then the Commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, 'Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy'" (Joshua 5:13–15).

In other words, "I do not want your strength; I do not want your ingenuity or your plans. This is

a holy place. You are to listen to Me and do it My way if you want to know the victory I am willing to give you.”

Jericho was a place of impossibility! Some historians say that the walls of the city were thirty feet high and twenty feet thick. In fact, the walls were thick enough to drive a chariot or a horse across the top. And so Jericho was considered by the people of that generation to be an invincible place. Nevertheless, the Lord promised Joshua, “*See! I have given Jericho into your hand, its king, and the mighty men of valor. You shall march around the city, all you men of war; you shall go all around the city once. This you shall do six days. And seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of rams’ horns before the ark. But the seventh day you shall march around the city seven times, and the priests shall blow the trumpets. Then it shall come to pass, when they make a long blast with the ram’s horn, and when you hear the sound of the trumpet, that all the people shall shout with a great shout; then the wall of the city will fall down flat*” (Joshua 6:2–5).

Every time we open the Word of God, there should be a sense of awe—knowing that the promises in this Book are ours!

So the people did as they were instructed. When they shouted on the seventh day, the wall fell down flat, and they took the city (see Joshua 6:20).

What an incredible history this place had! And now, as we fast forward many years to another generation, Jericho was still a place where the

miraculous was possible. After all, the Promised Land was always meant to be a place of miracles. The people of God should have felt a sense of awe when they were in that city. Likewise, that is the way it should be for you and me today every time we open the Word of God. There should be a sense of awe, knowing that the promises in this Book are ours!

Isn’t it amazing that there were so many people who had natural vision but no spiritual vision?

■ WHAT THE BLIND MAN SAW

Let’s take a moment to look once again at our opening Scripture: “*Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging*” (Luke 18:35). Keep in mind that this was the same Jesus whom Joshua had encountered, now coming near Jericho again. You see, there are moments in history when Jesus passes by again—when He is determined to meet with His people and do the miraculous.

This time, a blind man was sitting in the very place where the power of God had once before been displayed. However, this blind man had more than a thirty-foot high by twenty-foot thick wall before him—he had a veil of impenetrable darkness. The condition in his body was not going to change apart from a miracle. Yet, ironically, though he was blind, he began to see something that many people could not see at the moment. Isn’t it amazing to think that there were so many people who had natural vision but no spiritual vision? They were a type of a blind church in a miraculous place.

And so the blind man, hearing a multitude passing by, asked what

it meant. This is a type of people in our society today who are saying, “Those Christians are going down the street, meeting together in this place they call church...but what does it all mean? Why do they get together? What happens in that place? I want to know!” You see, I believe a hunger for God is arising in the hearts of this generation.

In response to the blind man’s question, the people told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by (see Luke 18:37). Yet the irony of it all was that the agenda-driven church had no idea who was passing by; they had no idea that Jesus was willing to do the miraculous. I cannot help but wonder: Did this blind man remember the story of the incredible victory that once took place in Jericho? Did he hear about how there appeared a being from heaven who spoke to Joshua personally? Somehow he saw something, and he began to cry out, “*Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me*” (Luke 18:38).

Are we as the Church truly ready for a spiritual awakening?

■ RELIGION’S BLINDNESS

“*Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet*” (Luke 18:39). I believe this verse brings up an important question: Are we as the Church truly ready for a spiritual awakening? Remember, when God begins to touch people again, they will come into churches, and they will not know our programs or the songs that we sing. All they will know is that Jesus of Nazareth is passing by, and they will be crying out for mercy!

Yet sadly, in this scene the religious crowd had become so programmed that they could no longer recognize

the cry that God wanted to answer. They did not even understand the reason why Jesus was there. He came to give sight to the blind, to open doors for the prisoners, to tell the poor about the treasure of heaven, to heal the brokenhearted, to release the captives. That was the ministry of Jesus Christ! But they had become such agenda-driven people that they could not see this purpose anymore, and so they told the blind man to be quiet.

The least expected in society will be the ones who will lay hold of the victory of God.

“So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, saying, ‘What do you want Me to do for you?’ He just said, ‘Lord, that I may receive my sight’” (Luke 18:40–41). In other words, the blind man was saying, “I want to see a promising future. I want to see Your glory manifested inside of my heart. I want to see a way out of my darkness and realize the divine purpose for my life. But even more than all of this, I just want to see You as the Son of God!”

Jesus is passing by America one more, and perhaps one last, time.

“Then Jesus said to him, ‘Receive your sight; your faith has made you well’” (Luke 18:42). And so we see that one more time, the “walls” of Jericho fell, and a blind man took the city! It is just as the prophet Isaiah said, “The lame [will] take the prey” (Isaiah 33:23). The least expected in society will

be the ones who will lay hold of the victory of God.

The Bible goes on to tell us that *“immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God”* (Luke 18:43). This is exactly what happens in a spiritual awakening. It happened in the book of Acts with the early Church. When the disciples came out of the Upper Room, they had fresh vision, and they spoke about the things that God was determined to do through His people. They were saying it with such glory and authority that three thousand people dropped their powerless religion and laid hold of a living relationship with God (see Acts 2).

■ A HUMBLE CRY

I happen to believe that Jesus is passing by America one more, and perhaps one last, time. This is something that the Lord has been speaking to me for years now. And just as the blind man cried out, a spiritual awakening must always begin with a cry!

As we see society deteriorating daily all around us, I can already hear that cry arising now—that cry for freedom. And when that cry comes into the hearts of the people, God answers. Psalm 107 tells us, “And then they cry, and the Lord hears them and brings them out of their distresses. He brings them to their desired haven—to that which their heart has always longed for” (see verses 28 and 30).

Now that cry begins on a personal level, something I experienced in my own life. Many, many years ago in my marriage, I was an extremely selfish man. Selfishness would cause me to stubbornly hold my ground. My wife would try to talk to me about my faults, and I would reciprocate and point out all of hers.

Am I going to sit blindly by the side of the road, or will I humble myself and move forward, taking my rightful inheritance in Christ?

Yet finally one day, I just got fed up with the whole thing. We were sitting in the kitchen of our farmhouse when suddenly, out of my inmost being arose a deep cry. I was so desperate to be the man that I felt God wanted me to be. I had been reading in the Scriptures about giving myself for my wife as Christ gave Himself for His Church—how I should be leading, not pushing, my family. There was just so much that I had been reading in the Word that I realized I was not living.

And so, as I sat in my chair, I started to cry out from the very depths of my gut. “Oh, Jesus, if You will set me free from all of these things that I have become and give me the life that I know You promised me, I will live for You all the days of my life!” And when that cry arose, suddenly a physical light came into the kitchen, touched me, and scared me to the point that I screamed. I was terrified and tried to pull away, but I could not. The light touched me in my eyes and went right through my body, setting me on my face on the floor, trembling and sweating. It was a Daniel moment in my life. Then I felt the voice of God telling me, “Stand up. I want to speak to you.” So I stood to my feet.

My wife was in the kitchen the whole time, so she saw it all. She later told me that I had started quoting a psalm that she knew I did

not know. *“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?”* (Psalm 8:3–4). God met me, and I was set free! It was a major turning point in my life. That was when my heart truly began to change, and the Jericho walls in my life came crashing down.

And so, this is the question each of us must consider today: Am I going to sit blindly by the side of the road, or will I humble myself and move forward, taking my rightful inheritance in Christ?

***Call out to
God for your
freedom, your
strength, the hope
that you need for
the future.***

Perhaps you have a Jericho stronghold in your life. It may have been there for a long time—something people told you that you are—an experience that you simply cannot escape. Maybe it is a voice constantly telling you that you will not go any further than where you are today.

However, I remind you that Jesus is passing by once again, so do not be afraid to tell Him exactly what you need! Do not consider what the crowd is going to think or be afraid of the voices that are telling you to be quiet. Have the courage to believe and receive what God wants to give

you. Be willing to humble yourself and cry out from an honest heart, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Call out to God for your freedom, your strength, the hope that you need for the future. God will surely answer your cry and give you the victory. He will open your blind eyes and give you spiritual vision, and you will be among those who take the city for His glory!

Carter Conlon
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CARTER CONLON

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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	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

This newsletter is an edited version of “A BLIND CHURCH IN A MIRACULOUS PLACE,” a sermon given on **March 13, 2016** 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 New King James Version.