

Dear Friend,

Imagine yourself today getting this greeting, as Gideon once did: *"And the Angel (Messenger) of the Lord appeared to him, and said to him (or her, as the case may be), 'The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor (someone who has been given more ability than they realize)!'"* (Judges 6:12, parentheses mine).

Today you might be tempted, as Gideon obviously was then, to say, "Wow, did this greeting ever find the wrong address!" Aware of your own frailty, your initial thought is, "Maybe somebody else, but never me." My question today is, Why not you?

Throughout history God has never been able to use anyone who possessed even a secret inward boast of his/her own strength. Remember, in 1 Corinthians 1:27 we read that "God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty." And so I ask again: Why not you? Has God changed? Has He regretted His former manner of doing things?

Take this first and simple step today: Ask God what He wants you to do. When He answers, simply take the first step in faith and watch what begins to unfold. Jesus is still a miraculous Savior. Enjoy the newsletter. It has your name written all over it! :)

Blessings,
Pastor Carter Conlon

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF LITTLE STRENGTH

by Carter Conlon

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens: I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength'" (Revelation 3:7–8).

We must be aware that there are demonic powers specifically set against this nation to destroy and divide it.

I believe that just like this church in Philadelphia, the Church in America today has only "a little strength." We are not nearly as strong or powerful as many of us would like to believe. Our voices have been largely marginalized and we have been cast out as "salt to be trodden underfoot," as godlessness seemingly has the upper hand (see Matthew 5:13). However, I believe that the beginning of a spiritual awakening comes from having the humility to finally admit our true condition rather than boasting of what we are not.

Furthermore, we can be encouraged because Jesus says in this passage, "I have set before you an open door that no one can close" (see Revelation 3:8). In other words, "I am inviting you into a place where the impossible becomes possible. It is a place where you will win a battle that you could never win in your own strength."

It is critical that we hear this today, for we are in the midst of an intense battle—a battle for the souls of the people of this nation and a battle for the future of a society. Just to clarify, this battle is not between Republican and Democrat or Libertarian. Yes, they have the ability, in measure, to give or take away hope for the future. However, there is a much deeper battle going on, a battle that, according to the Scriptures, is not against flesh and blood but against powers, principalities, and spiritual wickedness in high places (see Ephesians 6:12). We must be aware that there are demonic powers specifically set against this nation to destroy and divide it. As believers in Jesus Christ, this ought to be our concern now, for we have been given a great responsibility in this hour. After all, what is the point of having everything go our way while most of our nation ends up in hell?

Jesus went on to say to the church in Philadelphia: *“Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown”* (Revelation 3:11). I believe the Lord is saying to us today, “Do not despair because of this moment. Do not despair because of the darkness that has invaded our schools and seems to be in every facet of our society. Do not despair because evil is on parade, calling itself good. Hold fast to the truth that I have planted within your heart.”

Whenever God intends to move powerfully, He intentionally waits until we have only a little strength left.

“He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more” (Revelation 3:12). Perhaps you are thinking: What if I can barely survive as a Christian now? I cannot even lift my voice in the workplace because I am so afraid of being vilified or mocked. I am a coward, and I know it. Yet now God is asking something else of me? What is it that I have to overcome?

■ HOW GOD PREPARED MOSES

First of all, you have to overcome your own sense of inadequacy! You must understand that whenever God intends to move powerfully, He intentionally waits until we have only a little strength left. Let me give you an example from the Old Testament.

When the Israelites, God’s own people, had been taken captive

by a foreign power, He called a man named Moses to bring deliverance to them. However, upon witnessing the burden of his people, Moses initially set out to make a difference with his own strategies, only to end up defeated. Rather than bringing three million people into freedom, he managed to bury one Egyptian (see Exodus 2:11–12). That was all he could accomplish in his own strength.

Moses was then driven into the wilderness for forty years, where he became keenly aware of his inadequacy. Once a powerful orator in Pharaoh’s court, he lost his ability to speak well (see Acts 7:22, Exodus 4:10). By the time God called Moses to return to Egypt, he was fearful, stuttering, and no longer had anything but a staff in his hand. In other words, God called him at his lowest moment—when he had only a little strength left. That is when the Lord gave him a great responsibility, essentially saying to him, “Now you are ready. I have heard the cry of My people, and I am sending you to bring them out of bondage, that My glory might be reestablished in the earth” (see Exodus 3:9–10).

■ FULLY SET APART

Despite his initial reservations, Moses obeyed the Lord. Taking his family with him, he headed back to Egypt in the little strength he had left. However, along the way, *“it came to pass on the way, at the encampment, that the Lord met him and sought to kill him”* (Exodus 4:24). There was something in Moses’ life that had the potential to cause failure on this mission—to the degree that, if undealt with, it would have been better that he die rather than progress on this journey!

What could be so serious? After all, Moses obeyed God in his weakness. He chose to go through the open door that the Lord set before him, so what was it that caused God to consider taking him out along this journey?

We see what the issue was in the next verse as his wife *“took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at Moses’ feet, and said, ‘Surely you are a husband of blood to me!’ So He let him go. Then she said, ‘You are a husband of blood!’—because of the circumcision”* (Exodus 4:25–26). Moses’ son had not been circumcised! Most commentaries agree that bringing an uncircumcised son on this journey to set a nation free represented the fact that Moses had not yet become fully identified with the people of God, nor was he fully engaged in the calling of God on his life. Although it was within his power to do so, his own son had not been set apart. Moses was bringing something of himself and his lineage into this battle.

Are you part of something bigger than yourself?

We see this issue arise again when Moses’ successor, Joshua, was leading the people of God into the Promised Land to claim their full inheritance and become the testimony that God was calling them to be in the earth (see Joshua 5). A whole generation that was raised up in the wilderness had not been circumcised! In other words, they had not fully identified themselves as the people of God. Before they could enter the

Promised Land—before Jericho could fall, before the Amalekites and all the other enemies could be defeated, before the full inheritance that God had for His people could be claimed—there had to be a reckoning with God. All those born in the wilderness had to be circumcised, wholly set apart for the Lord and His purposes.

Is there anything in your life that the Lord has His finger on—anything that you know you need to put away?

And so my question to you today is: Do you fully identify with the people of God? Do you fully identify yourself as part of a Body that Christ has placed on the earth for a divine purpose? Are you part of something bigger than yourself? In the book of First Corinthians, we see that the apostle Paul admonished the church because selfishness had crept into their fellowship. The people were gathering together to worship, but they were actually self-consumed, unconcerned about those around them. They never bothered to consider: Does my neighbor have enough to eat? Are they encouraged? Paul said that “many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep because you have failed to discern the Lord’s body” (see 1 Corinthians 11:30). They did not understand what it truly means to be part of the Church of Jesus Christ.

And my second question to you is: Have you fully embraced God’s

purpose for your life? Before you are tempted to give an immediate “yes,” remember that in order to fully embrace God’s purpose for your life, there cannot be any uncircumcised thing that you are trying to bring with you into the work of God. In other words, is there anything in your life that the Lord has His finger on—anything that you know you need to put away?

For example, are you a purveyor of hate in this society? Are you fostering division? Is your speech clean? Are you a loyal employee? Are you stealing in the workplace? Do you pay your taxes? Are your relationships holy? What do you do on Friday nights? Just as the Lord stopped Moses on his journey, as well as the Israelites, you and I must stop and deal with these things before we can continue on to do the work of God.

■ A DOOR NO MAN CAN SHUT

Remember, in our opening Scripture, Jesus said, “Behold, I set before you an open door.” That means that once we are set apart and have fully embraced God’s purpose for our life, all we have to do is get up and go through the door that He has set before us! The text implies that though our strength is small, we are invited to arise and pass through into a place of victory which has already been prepared for us. We do not have to fight for it, for the fight has already been won. As the Scripture says, “*Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts*” (Zechariah 4:6). You see, God is not asking us to craft some brilliant strategy in order to win our cities. He is simply saying, “I am asking you to get up in the smallness of your strength and go through whatever door I open for you. You will go through solely by faith and it is a door that no man can shut!”

“If you follow Me, I will do something so powerful in and through your life that false religion will lose its hold on the people.”

We may not know exactly what that door will look like for each one of us, but we do know that those who are willing to go through it have an incredible promise from the Lord: “*I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you*” (Revelation 3:9). I believe the Lord is saying to us today: “If you follow Me, I will do something so powerful in and through your life that false religion will lose its hold on the people.”

Jesus continued, “I will make you a pillar in the temple of My God. And I will write on you the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven. And I will write on him My new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches” (see Revelation 3:12–13). In other words, “I will give you strength, making you unmovable. I will write on you the name of hope and victory in the midst of a crooked and deceived generation. You will have another countenance. You will have a source of inward strength that does not come from anything in this world—it comes only from Me!”

I can see it now: Just as the early Church began on the Day of Pentecost, in smallness of strength, you and I will burst out into the marketplace one more time in our generation, and false religion will bend its knee before us. We will travel from place to place in our weakness, and the glory of God will follow us. That which seeks to destroy men and women around us will have to bend its knee, acknowledging that Jesus Christ is with us!

Of course, this means that you and I are given the choice today: Will we stay in smallness? Will we stay swallowed up in what this world has told us we are? Or will we get up and go through the open door—in our weakness, in our struggles, in our trials—yet with faith to believe God for victory in every area of our lives? Will we believe that God will give us the power to put away whatever needs to be forsaken—every work of darkness, every wrong attitude of heart, every mistake we made in the past that still heeds the voice of condemnation?

It is time for us to recognize our responsibility in this hour. It is time to believe God for the power to identify with the Body of Christ and fulfill the purpose that He has ordained for our lives! It is time to get up, though we have only a little strength, and go through that open door into a victory that only God can bring—believing God for our families, our coworkers, our city, our nation! It is time to believe God as Moses did—not because

of our own strength or with our own plans, but because of the victory of Christ who has given us authority over all the power of the enemy (see Luke 10:19). Remember, God is the One who makes us more than we are. He is the One who takes us where we could never go, that His name might be glorified once again in the earth!

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.

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