

Dear Friend,

I hope this letter greets you at a time that it can be an encouragement to you on your journey. This has been a great year for Times Square Church and if you haven't been here lately we hope that you visit us soon.

I was told last week that our Bible school, Summit International School of Ministry in Grantville, Pennsylvania, will soon have a wait list on applications due to the increased volume. The school has a stellar reputation overseas, with prospective students applying from approximately 28 countries.

With campus buildings in the twenty-year-old range, we need to begin significant capital cost upgrades to exterior walls and roofs; air conditioning; furniture replacements; office expansion; student dorm renovation and expansion; a new water treatment plant; road repair; and landscaping—just to name a few. We desire to keep the property in pristine condition for the students and as a testimony to the Lord.

We don't like to make a habit of asking for financial help; however, this is one instance where I would like to prayerfully ask if there is something you could do. As you know, we keep the tuition very low so that all young people who feel called by the Lord to make a difference in their generation have a chance to get a solid biblical education, learn to pray, and earn an associate degree from a participating college. I have always said, "In a time of darkness, it's a wise people who invest in light!"

Thank you for always being there. We look forward to continuing to encourage you on your journey. I trust the newsletter gladdens your heart today.

Yours, in Christ,

Pastor Carter Conlon

WHEN ICE FORMS ON YOUR WINGS

by Carter Conlon

According to an ABC News article, federal investigators deemed pilot error to be one of the chief causes of an airplane crash in February 2009 which killed all 49 on board and one person on the ground. The plane lost speed as it was approaching the airport near Buffalo, New York, due to ice on the wings.

Most people think that a plane flies because wind gets underneath its wings and lifts it, but it is actually the motion of air flowing over the top of the surface of the wings that lifts the plane. So when ice gets on the wings, it interrupts the flow of air over the top and the aircraft loses lift—meaning it can plunge like a stone straight down out of the sky to the earth.

When cockpit warnings indicate that a plane is about to stall, pilots are trained to push what is called the stick shaker forward so that the nose of the plane will drop, causing the plane to increase in speed and return to a position of lift. At that point, the pilot can raise the nose and literally take off again. Yet in this case, instead of pushing the stick shaker forward, the captain pulled it backwards—not just once, but several times.

The airline involved issued a statement: "By all accounts, the captain and first officer were fine people. They knew what to do in the situation they faced that night a year ago, and they had repeatedly demonstrated that they knew what to do, and yet they did not do it. We cannot speculate on why they did not use their training with the situation that they faced."

In other words, this pilot, as part of training, had most likely been in a simulator where he would have learned how to respond in that particular situation. Yet when it occurred in real life, rather than trusting the training he had received, the captain leaned on his own instincts.

How different are we in the house of God? Are we in a “simulator” of sorts whenever we read stories in the Bible of others and how they reacted in certain situations? We are being trained the right way to speak, think, and act so that when we end up in a crisis, we do not come crashing down—destroying not only ourselves but often taking along others who had been trusting our authority. That is why it is so important that the words of God not just be on the page but they become part of our character so that we will instinctively respond according to what we have learned.

Coldness can seep into our relationship with God, and we begin to do things on autopilot.

■ LOSING LIFT

It says in the book of Isaiah, “*He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall*” (Isaiah 40:29). In other words, there comes a season in each of our lives when we feel we cannot go on. We feel as if we are going to crash and burn, spiritually speaking. Similarly, we all face seasons when coldness gets into our heart—sometimes simply because of the repetition and monotony of daily life. Marriages often get into trouble because there is no effort on the part of the husband or wife to rekindle the flame of love that was once the bedrock of the relationship. Coldness can also seep into our relationship with God—particularly when we become so accustomed to the pattern of our Christian walk that we begin to do things on autopilot. Soon the weight of repetition, personal trials, and struggles in our own mind start to crash in upon us, and

before we know it, we feel like we are losing lift.

It is imperative in these moments that we go back to our training and recognize that God has already told us what to do when this happens. Of course, our instinct might be to pull back, just like the pilot did, even though God says to push forward. We pull back from the Word of God, the house of God, the service of God. Yet all along God is saying, “No, now is not the time to pull back. Now is the time to push forward and believe!”

You see, the Bible tells us to “*Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways, acknowledge Him*” (Proverbs 3:5–6). In other words, when you do not understand—when it looks like heeding God’s instructions is the worst course of action in the natural—trust what He says rather than relying on your own instincts.

The Apostle Paul said it this way: “*For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen*” (2 Corinthians 1:20). He said elsewhere, “*Nor let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry*” (1 Corinthians 10:9–14). When the Apostle Paul said to flee from idolatry, I believe he was referring

to the idolatry of the human heart taking the place of God. In other words, “Flee from becoming the god of your own life. Flee from following human instinct that always wants to rise up and take the place of the Word of God.”

■ OUR OWN UNDERSTANDING

So what are some other examples of how we can avoid leaning on our own understanding and instead acknowledge God in all our ways? Let’s look at a few more Scriptures.

Paul says in the book of Ephesians, “*Therefore, putting away lying, ‘Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,’ for we are members of one another. ‘Be angry and do not sin:’ do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. Let him who stole steal no longer*” (Ephesians 4:25–27). This is a particularly pertinent verse during tax time. Stealing from the government is still theft, even if you conclude, “God knows I need the money more than the government does. They are only going to waste it anyway.” That is leaning on your own understanding.

Whenever we decide that someone does not deserve to be forgiven, we are leaning on our own understanding.

The passage continues: “*Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers*” (Ephesians 4:29). We can acknowledge God in all our ways by keeping our speech clean—by ministering grace to the people who are listening to us. “*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking*

be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you" (Ephesians 4:30–32). Whenever we decide that someone does not deserve to be forgiven—that we have a right to hold on to the bitterness in our heart—we are leaning on our own understanding.

You do not find out whether or not you passed the test when you are in a simulator—it is when you are in the crises of life.

In the next chapter of Ephesians, Paul says, *"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her"* (Ephesians 5:22–25). If your marriage is in trouble, do not pull away from the pages of God's Word—from the specific instructions He has given to you as a husband or a wife. Do not draw that throttle back. Push forward and get your heart and mind back into obedience to the Word of God.

■ **HE SHALL DIRECT YOUR PATHS**

Remember, you do not find out whether or not you passed the test when you are in a simulator. It is when you are in the crises of life—when you have to trust God for your finances, when you have

to believe for your family and for your children and for your marriage. That is when you must push that stick forward. You must get back in the Word of God and say, "Lord, would You help me not to lean on my own understanding? Would You help me not to try to figure a way out of my dilemma in my own strength? Would You help me to trust in You with all of my heart?" As you pray this way and allow the Holy Spirit to lead you, suddenly you will find yourself gaining lift again.

I love what King David said in Psalm 44: *"Our fathers have told us, the deeds You did in their days, in days of old: You drove out the nations with Your hand, but them You planted. You afflicted the peoples, and cast them out. For they did not gain possession of the land by their own sword, nor did their own arm save them; but it was Your right hand, Your arm, and the light of Your countenance, because You favored them. You are my King, O God. Command victories for Jacob. Through You we will push down our enemies; through Your name we will trample those who rise up against us. For I will not trust in my bow, nor shall my sword save me. But You have saved us from our enemies, and have put to shame those who hated us. In God we boast all day long, and praise Your name forever"* (verses 1–8).

David was saying, "Lord, You have told us what You have done in the past. You brought Your people out of captivity and into the place of promise—not by human intellect, reasoning, or strength, but by Your Spirit. Knowing the history, I am not going to trust in my bow or my sword; in my own strength or reasoning. You will be my boast all the days of my life!"

When I get to the finish line, I, too, want to have this testimony: "Only God could have done this." I want to look at the generation coming after me and, like the Apostle Paul, be able to say, "Follow me as I have followed Christ. Yes, I was crushed; I was distressed and had the sentence of death in myself at one time. Nevertheless, I did not trust in human strength. I trusted in the One who raises men from the dead!" (see 1 Corinthians 11:1, 2 Corinthians 4:8–10).

In Proverbs, the Scripture continues with a promise: *"In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths"* (Proverbs 3:6). We know the pathways of God. He has told us in Jeremiah 29:11: *"I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope"*—to bring you to that place of freedom that you long for; to bring you to that place of strength that you need; to bring you to a renewed vision of what your life is all about in the first place; to bring your marriage beyond what it has ever been. Those are the pathways of God! So let's trust the Lord and acknowledge Him in all our ways, and then watch where He will lead us!

Carter Conlon
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THIS MONTH AT SUMMIT

Graduation has passed, students have gone home or started summer jobs and internships. So what exactly happens at Summit in June?

A lot actually!

Sky Summer Camp, the Times Square Church Restoring Faith Renewing Joy conference, and a Summit trip to Ireland are just a few of the things happening in June. However, the most exciting thing happening right now is the unprecedented numbers of applications coming in for the Class of 2020 from all over the world.

On our last count, we had applications from more than 28 countries. The admissions

team is carefully praying over each application as our wait list begins to grow.

We hope you are encouraged by this news! Don't believe the lie that we are living in a post-Christian society. Millennials are eager for the truth and want to know God! They are knocking at our door in more numbers than we can hold. Pray with us as we seek the Lord for what He wants to do next.

If you or someone you know is interested in attending Summit this fall, we encourage you to send in your application soon. Thank you for your continued prayers—we can't wait to meet the Class of 2020!



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 10AM | 1PM | 3PM | 6PM
Tuesday 7PM | Worldwide Prayer Meeting
Friday 7:30PM | The Gate
2nd & 4th Fridays (ages 18-29)

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

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