

Dear Friend,

Recently at Times Square Church we held a three-day fast where we prayed for the city, the nation and the nations, respectively. There was a strong, sometimes almost overwhelming presence of the Holy Spirit every night. We believe the Lord is moving us in prayer to ask and believe for one more moment of mercy before He returns. So many souls have yet to hear the good news of the cross. As we continue to bring our petitions to the very heart of God, it is our prayer that every person alive today will be given that chance. Please join with us in that faith-filled cry.

You can access all three of the prayer and fasting services on our website at tsc.nyc. I believe that even listening and watching after the fact will invigorate your heart and cause you to join us in calling out for mercy in our generation.

One of the highlights of our prayer time together was streaming in and witnessing the burden and prayers of the graduates and present students from our Bible school, Summit International School of Ministry. It happened on the third night. How precious it is to see another generation of youth rise up with passion and purpose in this needy hour in which we live. I hope it will bless your heart.

Stay strong—and together let's believe that Christ in us is still powerful enough to push back this present darkness.

Yours, in Christ,

Pastor Carter Conlon

PUSHING BACK THIS PRESENT DARKNESS

by Carter Conlon

In Acts chapter two, we read of an incredibly dark time. Jesus Christ had just been put to death, and a blood lust remained among the people, who were in no mood to endure Christ's followers. History seems to be repeating itself in our day as we, too, find ourselves living in a society that is growing ever darker. Yet we see in Acts that God found one hundred and twenty people—ordinary people like you and me—who simply said, "Lord, I want to make a difference in this dark hour." They believed that despite their insufficiency, God promised them power to be a testimony on the earth. And so they gathered together and began to pray. The Bible says, "*When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place*" (Acts 2:1).

Once again, God is looking for those who believe their lives can make a difference in pushing back this present darkness. And just as the disciples in the book of Acts, we must be found "with one accord"—walking in unity with God and with His people.

■ FROM UNITY TO DISUNITY

Now the history of man's relationship with God began with perfect unity. When God created Adam and Eve, He would come down to the Garden of Eden and walk with them in the cool of the day. God set the boundaries,

Adam and Eve walked inside those boundaries, and there was fellowship between God and man.

However, God had a sworn enemy—Satan—who hated the fact that he was exalted less than God. Described as a cunning serpent (see Genesis 3:1), Satan not only hates God but mankind, who was created in His image. Jesus said that he comes to "*steal, and to kill, and to destroy*" (John 10:10). That was his mission in the Garden of Eden, and that is what he continues to do to this day.

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In order to accomplish his purpose, Satan knew that he had to begin by breaking that bond of unity between God and man. Therefore, he convinced Adam and Eve that they could ignore the boundaries God had set and, instead, determine by themselves what standards of right and wrong were acceptable. Let's take a moment to look at some of the consequences—many of which still impact us today.

■ CONSEQUENCES OF DISUNITY WITH GOD

When humankind sinned and broke unity with God, the first thing they realized was that they were naked (see Genesis 3:7). Thus, the preoccupation with nakedness was introduced and, by extension, the origin of sexual sin—which has plagued every generation up until this present day. This preoccupation with nakedness has spawned the multibillion-dollar pornography industry and it is all rooted in separation from God.

In the very next chapter of Genesis, we see the introduction of envy, hatred and murder. Adam and Eve had two sons, Cain and Abel, who brought sacrifices to the Lord, but only Abel's sacrifice was accepted by God. Seething envy and hatred took hold of Cain's heart and subsequently led him to murder his brother. When the Lord came to him and asked, "Where is your brother?" he nonchalantly replied, "How should I know? Am I my brother's keeper?" (see Genesis 4:9).

And so we see yet another consequence of separation from God—it leads humankind to commit murder without conscience. When the religious crowd around Jesus claimed to be the children of Abraham, he said to them, "*You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning*" (John 8:44). In other words, "You want your own rules; you want no boundaries; you want your own way—and you will kill to get it." That is exactly what happened; eventually they killed the Son of God in the name of religion. It was the beginning of mankind wanting his own way, even to the point of taking the life of anyone who got in the way of those objectives.

Is there a more glaring example today than the recent law on

abortion that was passed in New York State? Not only was the law passed but state legislators were literally patting each other on the back and smiling as they signed into effect a law permitting the slaughter of the innocent. In many cases, it is a license to murder for the sake of convenience. We read God's warning in the Old Testament about the abomination of the nations: Molech—a pagan god to whom the people would sacrifice their children (Leviticus 18:21). What makes us any different now in this generation?

The cross is the tree of life regained—the way back to unity with God. Now everyone who wants to come to Him can.

Not too far down the road, as the earth was repopulated after the Great Flood, we see humanity still on this quest to be as God. The people said, "*Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves*" (Genesis 11:4). They began to build a tower to prove to the whole world that they could reach the heavens by their own strength. However, the Lord came down, confused their speech, and scattered them abroad. Here we see the introduction of yet another consequence of disunity with God: a level of division among people so severe that they could no longer communicate with one another.

Look at our society today. Envy, hatred, murder, evil speech, and lying have become the order of the day. There is division in our society on almost every level. I do not think anybody can suggest that there is any ability to communicate anymore.

■ THE TREE OF LIFE REGAINED

And so the question arises: What can you and I do to push back the darkness of this hour? First of all, now that we recognize disunity with God is the root of the problem, we must recognize that the cross is God's invitation for us to return to Him. When Adam and Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, humankind lost access to the favor, promise, hope, and life of God. However, it was not a coincidence that Jesus was crucified on a tree. The cross is the tree of life regained—the way back to unity with God. Now everyone who wants to come to Him can. The Lord is willing to forgive and cleanse us from all sin—the preoccupation with nakedness, the envy, the murder, the lies, the duplicity, the stepping on other people for personal advantage—whatever may have settled in our hearts.

You and I can go to the cross and say, "God, I do not have the love I need for this generation."

There is a covering for sin and shame for all who are willing to live God's way. He offers us mercy, hope for the future, and life with purpose. This means you and I can go to the cross and say, "God, I do not have the love I need for this generation." On the cross, captivity was taken captive, and gifts were given to men (see Ephesians 4:8). God says, "Walk in unity with Me and partake of Me, for I have all the love you will ever need to reach the unlovable and make a difference in your time."

■ BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

Secondly, we must be filled with the Holy Spirit. When the people built the tower, they lost the ability

to communicate and relate with one another. But we see what happened in Acts chapter two:

“When the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

“And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, ‘Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?...So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, ‘Whatever could this mean?’” (Acts 2:1–8, 12).

When the disciples finally realized that it was not by might nor power but by the Holy Spirit, suddenly God came and filled the whole house. What was the immediate fruit? What had been lost at the tower of Babel was regained! The disciples stepped out into the marketplace, now with the ability to communicate once again with people of other cultures and tongues.

Peter stood up and boldly proclaimed the gospel to the crowd, and “they

were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.’ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them” (Acts 2:37–41).

When unity with God returns, suddenly you find yourself with the divine ability to speak to people you were never able to speak to before.

At least three thousand people were added to the kingdom! You see, the one hundred and twenty disciples were brought out of the natural into the supernatural. They were back in unity with God, living within the boundaries He had set. As a result, their hearts were enlarged, their mouths were opened, and they started to speak in a way that they had never spoken before. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord. When unity with God returns, suddenly you find yourself with the divine ability to speak to people you were never able to speak to before. You find yourself in foreign fields, in places and neighborhoods that you are not

familiar with, communicating by the power of God. Suddenly people around you are standing in wonder, asking, “Where did you get the power to do this?”

■ YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

It is amazing to think that not only were three thousand added to the kingdom that day, even mighty Rome bent her knee to Christ. It was all because the hand of God was upon one hundred and twenty ordinary people who decided to come back to a place of unity with Him and one another. That is why I believe the godless ideologies of this moment can also be brought to a place of surrender to Christ. However, it depends on you and me and what we choose to do. We all have a vital part in this.

Do not be sold short of what God has for you. He has promised you eternal and abundant life. It is time to pray, “Lord, let my life make a difference. Don’t let me just be a mediocre player in this incredible, divine moment in history. I want to walk in unity with You and with people. I want to walk within Your boundaries; I do not want to set my thoughts above Your thoughts. Let my life be so full of Your love, mercy and miracle-working power that it will push back this present darkness!”

Carter Conlon
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SCHOLARSHIP SEASON AT SUMMIT!

April at Summit means warmer weather, sunshine, and a return of the green grass on our rolling hills. It also ushers in one of the busiest application times of the year!

Through Times Square Church, World Challenge and generous donors like you, Summit is able to offer a very generous scholarship program to our student body. In 2018, more than half of our student population received some scholarship money to help with the cost of tuition and housing.

Summit has always made it a priority to invest in the lives of men and women who have a heart and a passion to know God. In addition to a robust

scholarship program, we intentionally keep our tuition far below actual cost. There is an adage that says, “put your money where your mouth is,” which essentially means “support your claims with action.” Through our tuition and scholarship program, Summit is doing just that.

If you or someone you know is interested in attending Summit, the time to apply is now! Scholarships are limited, and they go fast every spring!

To learn more about scholarships at Summit, visit summitpa.org



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 St.
Between Broadway & 8th Ave.

Mailing Address:
Times Square Church
1657 Broadway, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10019

e-mail:
info@tsc.nyc

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday 10AM | 1PM | 3PM | 6PM

Tuesday 7PM | Worldwide Prayer Meeting

Friday 7PM | 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.

tsc.nyc