

Dear Friend,

In 2 Chronicles 7:14, we see that God's promise to move His hand to restore a nation begins with the word "if." This implies that we can play an important part in seeing spiritual awakening. IF we will humble ourselves; IF we will pray; IF we will seek the presence and will of God; IF we will turn from that which is an offense to Him and His calling for our lives on this earth—THEN God will hear, forgive and bring healing to the people. If ever there was a time to pray for our country, that time is now.

This coming fall, sometime in late September or early October, Times Square Church will be leading a prayer meeting along the above lines from the place where America began, Plymouth, Massachusetts. In 1620, the early Pilgrims prayed. They had little strength, no plan, and were surrounded by enemies. All they had was a promise from Jesus that they were being given a land where every person could worship God freely and according to conscience. God was faithful to His promise.

Today, our freedom to serve God according to conscience is being challenged. That's why we are being led to rediscover our roots and reclaim the promise of God that made America the envy of the world.

Visit tsc.nyc as events unfold. We will be encouraging people from all over the country to gather in churches and homes to pray with us. I believe that with God, all things are still possible—IF.

With you in prayer,

Pastor Carter Conlon

NOT WITHOUT YOU: THE GOD-TOUCHED LIFE

by Carter Conlon

"Then Jacob said, 'O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you.''" (Genesis 32:9).

Here we see that Jacob was being called back to an old place armed with a new understanding. It was a place of blessing—a place of affecting the futures of many people, even you and me today.

***"Are you really
who you say you
are? Do you love
your brother
unconditionally?
Are you willing to go
wherever I lead you?"***

Now Jacob had sought this place of blessing before, but he had not done it God's way—in truth. *"Jacob said to his father, 'I am Esau your firstborn; I have done just as you told me; please arise, sit and eat of my game, that your soul may bless me.' But Isaac said to his son, 'How is it that you found it so quickly, my son?' And he said, 'Because the Lord your God brought it to me.' Then Isaac said to Jacob, 'Please come near, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not.' So Jacob went near to Isaac his father,*

and he felt him and said, 'The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.'... 'Are you really my son Esau?' He said, 'I am'" (Genesis 27:19–24).

This conversation would be the same as the Lord asking us today, "Are you really who you say you are? Do you speak truth? Do you love your brother unconditionally? Are you willing to go wherever I lead you? Are you really My son, My daughter?" "Oh yes, Lord, I am. I am genuine," we would reply.

"[Isaac] said, 'Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's game, so that my soul may bless you.' So he brought it near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. Then his father Isaac said to him, 'Come near now and kiss me, my son'" (Genesis 27:25–26).

This speaks to me about the pretended embrace of the responsibility that comes with the blessing of God. In Jacob's case, it was a self-focused pursuit of the incredible promise that was once given to his grandfather, Abraham: *"Now the Lord had said to Abram: 'Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and*

you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you” (Genesis 12:1–3).

Who wouldn't want that blessing?

People will pass you walking down the street and know that the protective hand of God is on you. He will go to battle against your enemies. But there is a last part to the promise: *“And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”* (Genesis 12:3). This implies that the blessing is not just for you, but is something God is going to do to flow through you for the sake of other people.

Now, we know that this promise was fulfilled in Christ and, ultimately, in you and me as His Church. So technically we are the fulfillment of the promise of the blessing that God made to Abraham. However, just like Jacob, there are many people in every generation who say, “God, bless me,” but it is not a truthful seeking. They more or less mean, “Bless me the way I think my life should be blessed,” while completely negating what that blessing is intended to be all about.

In other words, they fully embrace the first half of the promise, but they push away the second half. They want a great name, a great position, a great future, the assurance that their enemies will not prevail—but they do not want Part B where God is supposed to flow through their lives. The blessing of God ought to become known wherever we go. Families everywhere should be brought to the knowledge of God and touched by His presence and power as evidenced in our lives.

■ FACE-TO-FACE ENCOUNTER

Let's see what happened when God called Jacob back to the place he

once had sought by deceit. First of all, on his way back, there was something he had to face: his fear of his brother (see Genesis 32:9–23).

I believe this is a type of many people in the Body of Christ today who are afraid of what it might cost to go back to the place of God's calling. Sure, we love to talk about the book of Acts, sit around and philosophize, put on big productions. We love to do everything but personally go back there—back to the place where we fully give ourselves for the sake of others. In order to face his fear, Jacob ended up in a face-to-face encounter with God. I feel we are in a similar place as the Church of Jesus Christ. We fear a face-to-face encounter with God where we must make a decision of how deep we want to go with Him. How willing are we to be fully given for a sin-sick generation?

We become a different person once we stop trying to get the blessing our own way and finally say, “Lord, bless me Your way.”

The Scripture tells us, *“Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day”* (Genesis 32:24). You and I now know this Man to be the preincarnate Christ. *“When He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. And He said, ‘Let Me go, for the day breaks.’ But he said, ‘I will not let You go unless You bless me.’ So He said to him, ‘What is your name?’”* (32:25–27).

Remember, the last time Jacob went for the blessing and his father asked him his name, he replied,

“Esau.” He lied to his father and declared himself to be a man that he was not. The name Jacob actually means “deceiver.” However, this time Jacob was finally willing to be honest with God. He said, “My name is Jacob. My name is deceiver. I sought the blessing without the responsibility that comes with it” (see Genesis 32:27).

You will receive a spiritual authority when you wrestle honestly with God. God's presence will go with you, and those around you will be blessed.

But Jesus said to him, *“Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel”* (Genesis 32:28). You see, when we have a face-to-face, honest confrontation with the Son of God, our nature is changed. We become a new creation. We are given a new passion, new power and new vision. We become a different person once we stop trying to get the blessing our own way and finally say, “Lord, bless me Your way.”

“For you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed” (Genesis 32:28). How did Jacob prevail with men? He was not even wrestling with men. But God was telling Jacob, “Your face-to-face encounter with Me has given you an authority that will move the hearts of men.” In the same way, you will receive a spiritual authority when you wrestle honestly with God. There will be power in your speech. God's presence will go with you, and those around you will be blessed.

■ STAYING WITH THE LEAST

In the next chapter, Jacob finally encounters his brother, Esau. Esau is what I call the self-made man. He is in the lineage of God, the first inheritor of the blessing, but he sells it off for the satisfying of his own appetite. He does not want the promise that through him all the world will be blessed. In Esau's world, it is, "To hell with the rest of them. I just want soup for my belly." In other words, "Just feed me, clothe me, give me a nice house, make me comfortable. That is all I am looking for in life."

Here we see the heart of the carnal Christian. "I will go before you—me first."

During their encounter, Esau says to Jacob, "Let us take our journey; let us go, and I will go before you" (Genesis 33:12). Here we see the heart of the carnal Christian. "I will go before you—me first. I want the best place. I want the preeminence. I want to be known as a warrior in a victory." Esau has 400 soldiers with him, ready to gallop off to conquer something.

The mark of the God-touched man or woman is that they are not willing to go any faster than the slowest among them can go.

On the other hand, Jacob is now a God-touched man, entirely

different from his brother. Jacob replies to him, "My lord knows that the children are weak, and the flocks and herds which are nursing are with me. And if the men should drive them hard one day, all the flock will die. Please let my lord go on ahead before his servant. I will lead on slowly at a pace which the livestock that go before me, and the children, are able to endure, until I come to my lord in Seir" (Genesis 33:13–14).

The mark of the God-touched man or woman is that they are not willing to go any faster than the slowest among them can go. The Esaus of this generation might end up in pulpits around the nation—where the people are just things to be counted in their victories. But to the God-touched man and woman, every soul is precious in His sight. This person is the one who says, "No, you go ahead. I am not going any faster than the weakest among us can travel. I am not leaving anybody behind. The motto of my life is the motto of Christ's life: I am going to heaven, but not without you."

I believe it was God's grace that gave Jacob a limp after he wrestled with Him. I, too, have learned to thank God for every struggle and trial—for everything He has ever allowed into my life that has kept me from running ahead of Him and His people. Every once in a while, if I get a little bit ahead of Him and myself, He just touches my hip one more time and reminds me, "Slow down, son. You are going just a bit too fast."

■ RETURNING TO THE PLACE OF POWER

Just as God called Jacob back,
He is now calling His people back

to something deeper than we have ever known. He is calling us to be a blessing. Yes, we may be afraid of the cost, but who knows what will happen if we will move in this direction?

Jacob had no idea what getting up and going back would produce. He had no idea he was carrying Jesus Christ in his physical DNA. He had no idea he was carrying the Church of Jesus Christ—you and me. But in his simple act of obedience, Jacob became the fulfillment of the blessing, "In you, all the families of the earth shall be blessed!"

And so it is time for the Church to return to that place of power! It is time for us to come before the Lord and say, "God, give me influence in this generation. Give me strength and vision that is not my own. Give me a life plan that is so much deeper than anything I could ever hope to come up with on my own."

I think you and I will be amazed at what a simple act of obedience can produce in our world!

Carter Conlon
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REVIVAL SERVICES 2020!

Dear Friend,

We invite you to join us at Revival Services 2020! Summit is hosting a series of services and seminars for students, staff and invited guests to renew and rekindle a passion for the work of God in their lives.

Revival Services and events will take place on Thursday, February 20 and Friday, February 21. We are excited to hear from the hearts of Pastor Carter Conlon, Senior Pastor of Times Square Church, Pastor David Ham, Associate Pastor at Times Square Church, and Pastor Peter Tsukahira, Founder of the Mount Carmel School of Ministry in Israel. There will also be a special seminar dedicated to pastors and ministry leaders who attend. You won't want to miss it!

DATE

February 20–21, 2020

LOCATION

Summit International School of Ministry
74 Harrison School Road
Grantville, PA

“My hope is that people will come to Revival Services to hear a living word for today which will give them hope for tomorrow. Hearing what God has done through other people’s lives gives us hope that He can do the same for us!”
—Pastor Carter

Register at 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.

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WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

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

Tuesday 7PM | Worldwide Prayer Meeting

Friday 7PM | Young Adults (18–35)
Teens Night (1st Friday)
Small Groups
Special Events

Live Webcast:

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

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