

Dear Friend,

As General Overseer of Times Square Church, Inc., let me say how grateful I am for the leadership of Pastor Tim Dilena, our new senior pastor, and for your continued support of the testimony God has raised up in the center of New York City.

Pastor David Wilkerson used to say that if Jesus can cause a church to thrive here, it is evidence to every believer that He can enable each one of us to flourish anywhere. The critics said it couldn't be done. Others warned that a church this large couldn't survive without its own parking lot. Some church leaders warned that such a culturally diverse congregation could not worship in unity for long. Yet here we are! After 33 years of meeting together, we have found that the bond of Christ's love does indeed bring us together in a way that nothing of this world can! Jesus said: "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35).

The days ahead do indeed present their challenges to us all. However, the testimony of Times Square Church reminds us that we serve a God of the impossible. Not only does He plant us in impossible places, but He causes us to bloom there as a fragrant reminder of His goodness.

I look forward to staying in touch with you through this newsletter, to remind you of the promises He has made to both carry you and to enable you to flourish right where He has placed you. This newsletter will serve as a reminder that Jesus will never fail or forsake you. It's time to pray! As with Times Square Church, the best is yet to come!

With you in prayer,
Pastor Carter Conlon

WHEN THE END COMES, WHERE WILL YOU BE?

by Carter Conlon

In the book of First Thessalonians, the apostle Paul exhorted the early Church about the day that is now coming upon us—the day of Christ's return. "*But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night*" (1 Thessalonians 5:1–2). The day of Christ's physical return to the earth will be preceded by the rapture—His coming to gather His Church to Him. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the dead in Christ are going to rise, and then we who are alive and remain shall be gathered together with them. Imagine how lost you would feel if you did not know Christ as Savior at that moment and suddenly all the believers disappeared!

***Which house
is the thief trying
to break into? You
are the house!***

"For when they say, 'Peace and safety!' then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake

you as a thief" (1 Thessalonians 5:3–5). Jesus Himself once said, "If the man in charge of the house had been aware that a thief was in the neighborhood, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into" (see Matthew 24:43). Likewise, if there was a thief in your neighborhood who was striking every night, wouldn't you do something to protect your house or your apartment? Wouldn't you examine the windows and the doors to make sure everything was secure?

Now, in the context of the last days, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:19, "*Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you?*" He put it more simply in 1 Corinthians 3:9: "*You are God's building.*" Therefore, which house is the thief trying to break into? You are the house! You are the temple of God—the place of God's dwelling. You are the one called to bring glory to the Lord because of the light and life that is inside of your earthen vessel. Meanwhile, the devil will do everything in his power to break in during this darkened hour in which we live. So what are some specific things we should be watching for?

■ THE END OF THE AGE

To help answer that question, let's see what happened when

Jesus' disciples asked Him, "What will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?" (Matthew 24:3). In other words, "What will the spiritual temperature be? What will be happening?" Jesus began His reply by saying, "Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many" (24:4–5).

He was warning them that in the last days, the devil will do everything he can to "break into" the people of God. False messiahs will arise who will stand up and say, "Yes, the Holy Spirit is leading me. If you look at my life, you will see what Jesus looks like." They will claim to have the words and the way to go forward into security, and they will deceive many.

So how do you discern the difference between what is being animated by the Spirit of God and what the devil is animating as an imitation of God? There are several references in the Old Testament to Satan and his ways of thinking. For instance, the prophet Isaiah said, "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' Yet you shall be brought down to [hell], to the lowest depths of the Pit" (Isaiah 14:12–15). Simply put, Satan's theology focuses on self. In contrast, the theology of Christ focuses on others. For example, you may be listening to a preacher who is telling you, "You are not the tail, you are the head. You will sit in places of prominence in society. You will always be healthy and rich, and trouble will never come to your door. You will be known among

people everywhere you travel, and you will be like the Most High"—and that is all his message is. If this is true, it is inspired by darkness.

Of course, I understand there are moments when we have to say, "God, I need this," or "I need to be free." However, when we come to maturity in Christ, the focus shifts to, "Not my will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42). In other words, "God, use my life for the sake of those who do not know You—for those who are going into a Christless eternity." The focus of Christ is always about others. That is why Jesus said, "If any man does not take up his cross, he cannot be My disciple" (see Matthew 16:24). Any gospel that causes you to focus solely on yourself is from hell itself.

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■ OTHER SIGNS OF HIS COMING

Jesus continued, "You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet" (Matthew 24:6). In other words, there will be an increase of angry speech. Nations will start threatening other nations, ideologies will start threatening other ideologies. As a matter of fact, we are already seeing this in our own society here in America.

"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places" (Matthew 24:7). In the last days, the world will not just speak about violence but will actually turn to violence. There will be famines,

earthquakes, new diseases coming into the world. And here we are facing the coronavirus now in our own society.

"All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake" (Matthew 24:8–9). This is already happening in China and various other places throughout the world. What started as a marginal tolerance of Christianity has now turned to intolerance and even violence in many places. Perhaps you have already been experiencing it in the workplace or in your community. It seems one cannot have a biblical opinion anymore without being vilified or deemed a hater and a divider.

"And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another" (Matthew 24:10). Paul also warned us that before the return of Christ, there would be a great falling away (see 2 Thessalonians 2:3). There will be people who will conclude, "I did not sign up for this. When I came to Christ, I was told I was going to be healthy, happy and rich. I was going to have a big house, a nice car, the best spouse, a great family. I didn't sign up to be hated. I didn't sign up to be part of a religion that society does not endorse!" And so many will be offended. "And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold" (Matthew 24:12). Mankind will descend into a depravity perhaps unseen in the history of the world. It will sweep the world in lawlessness and immorality.

■ A VICTORIOUS CHURCH

However, here is the good news: "But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the

nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:13–14). There will be a victorious Church in the last days. There will be a people of God empowered by the Holy Spirit. They will be given supernatural ability to stand and there will be power in their speech. They will have a love that will cast out all fear.

It is time to do a security evaluation of your house.

Yes, multitudes will be descending into darkness. And, sadly, there will be multitudes of formerly professing believers who will be following them. But thank God, there will be a victorious Church as well as an incredible harvest of souls in these last days. God will empower His Church to continue loving when the love of many grows cold. She will be empowered to keep on giving when selfishness is abounding and countries are fighting over resources. While everyone else is pointing the finger, there will be people committed to pointing the way to eternal life. Their lamps will be filled with light to help those who are trying to escape the darkness. Lastly, God will have a Church empowered by the Holy Spirit to have hearts filled with praise even when the joy of the land is gone.

■ IS YOUR HOUSE READY?

And so the question I ask you today is: When the end comes, where will you be? Are you certain that you will be part of this victorious last-days Church? I suggest that it is time for you to do a security evaluation of your house. Do you have the motion sensors working to detect prowlers? You cannot have them if you are not in the

Word of God. You will not know when somebody who is not truly representing Christ has suddenly come to your ears—whether in a church service, on a podcast, or through some other means. Remember, if the message you hear is not leading you to a lifestyle of being yielded for the sake of others, then your motion sensors should go off. You might have a prowler outside your house.

You cannot live in duplicity and assume you will suddenly have the strength to stand in the coming days.

Are your doors locked? Are you letting anything into your dwelling that should not be there? Is anybody sitting at the table who does not belong inside your house? Are you reading something that you should not be reading? King David once said, *“I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away”* (Psalm 101:3). You need to make sure, for you cannot play games with this one. You cannot live in duplicity and assume you will suddenly have the strength to stand in the coming days. You do not know what tomorrow is going to bring; you do not know the severity of what is coming upon our world. In fact, you do not even know for sure if you will still be alive in a month.

And so, are you ready? Is your house ready? Have you trusted God for the strength, the power, and the giftings of God to live for His glory? Are you able to praise Him in the

midst of your darkness? Are you looking every day for somebody, somewhere—some need that God can meet through you? We are living in the last days—Christ is coming! Let us pray, “Lord, prepare me. Give me the character I need, and give me power. Give me everything I need of Your Spirit—not for myself, but for the sake of Your glory first and for the sake of others second. Pour out Your life through me and give me a song that this world cannot take away!”

Carter Conlon
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WE LOVE YOU PASTOR CARTER!

As most of you know, last month Pastor Carter transitioned his role from Senior Pastor to General Overseer of Times Square Church, Inc. We are so honored to have been recipients of his 26 years of faithful service. As the Bible school of Times Square Church, we have gleaned directly from his leadership and support.

One of the benefits of his transition will be the increased amount of time we get to spend with him at Summit! This coming year, Pastor Carter will be spending more time on campus than ever—pouring into the lives of students

and speaking in classes and seminars when time allows. The few times we had him on campus last year, it wasn't uncommon to see him walking the campus talking with students between classes or after chapels. The spiritual insight, mentorship and leadership he brings is invaluable—we can't wait for this next chapter! (Now if we can get Pastor Carter and Pastor Tim Dilena out here this fall for a student Q&A session...hmm... the possibilities are endless!)

We love you Pastor Carter and we are so grateful for all you do!



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.

tsc.nyc