

## Dear Friend,

At the risk of being repetitious, let me encourage you today to pray. Not ordinary prayers only, but prayers of personal commitment as outlined in this newsletter. The situation today is critical. The storms of confusion are getting stronger and the judgments of God getting closer. Scriptural examples are given to teach us both the consequences of inaction as well as the miracles that can still happen when prayer combines with personal commitment. *"Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit"* (James 5:17–18, KJV). Elijah was, as you and I are, concerned about the people around him being increasingly given to spiritual darkness. His prayers and willingness to personally confront the darkness of his day brought the power and deliverance of God into clear view once again! *"And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God"* (1 Kings 18:39). Let this be our prayer today! Pray that through your life, many would be turned back to the worship of the one true God, through His Son Jesus Christ.

With you in prayer,  
Pastor Carter Conlon

## JESUS, HELP ME!

Carter Conlon

**T**his is one of my favorite prayers—a prayer that Jesus has always answered all my days. It is only three words: "Jesus, help me!" I am never too proud to pray this.

Remember, we are living in a generation that is dark. Society seems to be unraveling all around us; evil is becoming good, good is becoming evil; and confusion is starting to abound. As the Bible says, lawlessness will get to the point where the love of many, even many of God's people, will start to grow cold. This speaks to me of the love of the work of God, which is the redemption of the lost. That means we will need sovereign help to stay engaged with the work of God. It is no shame for us to pray, "Jesus, help me!"

## Abraham

In the Old Testament, a man called Abraham was given an incredible promise. God took him outside and showed him the stars in the heavens, saying, "Count the stars if you can. That is the number of descendants you are going to have" (see Genesis 15:5). Abraham had no way of understanding the greatness of God's promise that through him, the whole world was going to be blessed. He could not have known that through the nation of Israel would come a Messiah, and through the Messiah would be born a people on the earth called the Church of Jesus Christ—and that through the Church, the world would be blessed.

## WE WILL NEED SOVEREIGN HELP TO STAY ENGAGED WITH THE WORK OF GOD.

Now Abraham went on a bit of a journey. He was not a perfect man, but he simply believed God. And the Bible says it was accounted to him for righteousness (see Genesis 15:6).

In Genesis 18, we see that Abraham had prospered. Four chapters earlier, he saddled up three hundred and eighteen trained warriors from his own house (14:14) and went to fight against the kings who took his nephew and family captive when Sodom and Gomorrah were defeated in a small civil war. Finally, he was at a place of rest. He had increased, he had shelter, and he had the presence of God with him. Suddenly, two angels and a preincarnate Christ (according

to most interpretations) came and visited him. They sat in his tent, and the Son of God told him that Sarah, his wife, was going to have a son. So now he also had the promise of life that he had always longed for—the future that he had always wanted.

The Lord left his tent after communing with him for a season. And then we read in Genesis 18:17–18: *“The Lord said, ‘Shall I hide from Abraham what I am doing, since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?’”* The Lord then revealed to Abraham the wickedness in Sodom and Gomorrah. It had become so vile that the report of its vileness had ascended into heaven, prompting the visit by the preincarnate Christ and the two angels to see if it was as bad as the report had been.

## SOMETIMES IN OUR PRAYERS, WE ARE SO CLOSE WHEN WE QUIT.

The Lord let Abraham know that He was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. We have seen throughout history that society can get so bad that it must be judged. I often wonder if we are getting very close to this. In our nation, we have killed sixty million children in the womb. We now call evil good and good evil. We are redefining everything that God defines as true and right and holy. It could be that as a society we are very close to the judgment of God!

Abraham then came into what I call a prayer meeting outside of Sodom. The Scripture says, *“Abraham came near and said, ‘Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare it for the fifty righteous that were in it? Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked”* (Genesis 18:23–25).

Now, this is quite a bold prayer when you read it in context. Abraham was standing in intercession and saying, “God, You cannot destroy the city if fifty righteous are in it because it is not like You. It cannot be said of You that You would treat the righteous in the same way that the wicked are treated.”

The Lord responded, *“If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within this city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.’ Then Abraham answered and said, ‘Indeed now, I who am but dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: ‘Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for lack of five?’ So He said, ‘If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it.’ And he spoke to Him yet again and said, ‘Suppose there should be forty found there?’ So He said, ‘I will not do it for the sake of forty.’ Then he said, ‘Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there?’ So He said, ‘I will not do it if I find thirty there”* (18:26–30).

Now Abraham continued, *“Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there?’ So He said, ‘I will not destroy it for the sake of twenty.’ Then he said, ‘Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?’ And He said, ‘I will not destroy it for the sake of ten.’ So the Lord went His way as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham; and Abraham returned to his place”* (18:31–33).

I have always been perplexed by this story. First of all, why did Abraham stop at ten? In Sodom and Gomorrah, there were four righteous. Their righteousness was iffy, but the Bible does declare Lot righteous. His wife and two daughters were also rescued and taken out of the city by the angels. So that means Abraham was only six souls short of victory. Sometimes in our prayers, we are so close when we quit. We read that after the Lord went His way, Abraham went back to his tent—to his wife, his family, his provision.

I think if I were Abraham, I would have gone back to my entourage and announced, “I need ten volunteers to live in Sodom and Gomorrah. The Lord has told me if ten righteous people are in the city, He will not destroy it.”

Now, if the judgment was inevitable, Abraham should have warned the righteous to get out of the city. But, for some reason, he went home. It reminds me of prayer meetings in our generation where we go, we pray, and then we assume that our prayers are enough. Sometimes we pray, “Oh, God, send deliverance. Be merciful to the city!” We implore, and then we feel we have done our part, so we go home to our family and our comfort.

However, the book of James says, “Faith without works is dead” (see James 2:17). Faith without an outworking of it does not bring us to say, “God, send

me if necessary. I throw my life in with my prayer." It is a concept that we have lost in the Western world. The thought of taking up our cross, going to the lost, being given for the sake of others has eluded our generation. Even when we do pray, we tend to hold on to a measure of our own protection, security, and comfort.

## Jonah

Another man in the Old Testament, Jonah, was commissioned by God to go to the people of Nineveh and he did not want to go. These people were known for their violence against the people of God and Jonah actually wanted them to be judged. He was afraid that if he preached to them, God might forgive them and let them live another day, and they would hurt more of His own people.

And so Jonah went in the opposite direction. He was still a prophet of God, still called of God. But it was as if he was saying, "Do I have to talk to the ones who have caused such heartache to our people—those who deserve Your judgment? Can't I just pray for them? Isn't that good enough? Do I have to give of myself?"

Out on the sea, on Jonah's journey away from God, a great storm arose. Everybody on the boat that Jonah was on began crying out to their version of God. Of course, there was no answer because their versions were not the true God. Finally, they awakened Jonah, saying, "Who are you? Where do you come from?" And Jonah replied, "Well, I am a Hebrew. And I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land" (see Jonah 1:8–9).

*"The men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, 'Why have you done this?' For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them. Then they said to him, 'What shall we do to you that the sea may be calm for us?'—for the sea was growing more tempestuous. And he said to them, 'Pick me up and throw me into the sea; then the sea will become calm for you. For I know that this great tempest is because of me'" (Jonah 1:10–12).*

I find that interesting. Was Jonah incapable of climbing over the side of the boat by himself? Think about it for a minute. The side of the boat could not have been that high. He knew what to do, but he just could not do it. And so he said to the men on the ship, "Pick me up and throw me into the source of the storm, and it will become calm for you." In other words, "Jesus, help me. I know what to do, but

I cannot do it on my own. I know what You are calling me to do, but I do not want to do it, nor can I do it in my own strength. You have to pick me up and take me where I need to go!"

## The Grace to Love People

When I was first called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, I did not really like people because they were a source of pain in my life. I remember the first time I walked into church as a brand-new Christian, and a guy came up to me and hugged me, saying, "I love you."

I just looked at him as he backed away from me. My wife asked me, "Why didn't you tell him you love him?"

"I don't even like the guy," I replied. "Why would I tell him I love him?"

I did not want any kind of intimate relationship with anybody. I was probably the worst candidate to ever be called into the ministry. And so the only thing I could pray was, "Jesus, help me! Throw me into the sea; throw me into where the people are because I cannot go there by myself!"

Remember, there is no shame in praying that prayer! As Paul said, "I know what to do, and I delight to do it in the inner man. But I find another law warring against me in the members of my flesh, bringing me into the captivity of the law of sin" (see Romans 7:21–23). In other words, "I know that I should be kind. I know that I should do more than just return to my tent after I pray. I know people are perishing, and I should be willing to give of myself for their sake." That is the dilemma of this generation. One more time, God is going to have to stir us with the storm. He is going to have to give us the grace to yield our lives for His purposes—to not live merely to preserve ourselves. And so let us make that our constant prayer: "Jesus, help me!"

Carter Conlon  
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**SUMMIT**  
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF MINISTRY



Update from Our Bible School

Living for the Benefit of Others

## SUMMER VIRTUAL MEET-UP

On Sunday, July 17, Summit is hosting a virtual meetup! Join us online at 12:30pm to meet Summit faculty and staff “face to face”, see a bit of the campus, and ask any questions you have! We are going to chat about what it’s like living on campus, what our classes are like, our college partnerships, and more.

As a bonus, everyone who signs up to join us will enter a drawing to win a \$1,000 Summit scholarship toward their first year! Since our international application deadline for Fall 2022 has passed, this scholarship offer is only for new US applicants. We do, however, encourage people from around the world to join the conversation!

We can’t wait to meet you on the 17th!

To sign up, visit [summitpa.org](http://summitpa.org)



**Carter Conlon** is General Overseer of Times Square Church, Inc. He joined the pastoral staff as an associate pastor in 1994 and was the senior pastor from 2001 to 2020.

**Times Square Church** is an interdenominational church located in the heart of New York City, founded in 1987 by Pastor David Wilkerson, author of “The Cross and the Switchblade.”

**Senior Pastor**  
Tim Dilena

**Church Online**  
Sunday 10 AM & On Demand

**Worldwide Prayer Meeting**  
Tuesday 7 PM

**Church Location**  
237 West 51st Street  
New York, NY 10019  
(Between Broadway & 8th Ave.)

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

**Tel:** 212-541-6300

**Email:** [info@tsc.nyc](mailto:info@tsc.nyc)

[tsc.nyc](http://tsc.nyc)



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