

Dear Friend,

I can literally read your mind today. "Good grief! Another newsletter asking me to do something or give more. I can barely survive as it is."

The apostle Paul once pleaded with God to take out of his life what (in his opinion) was making him weak. Yet the response from the Lord was not something we would expect in our times of weakness. "And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness'" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

So what exactly was Jesus talking about? Could there be a secret in this that some of us are missing today? The bottom line is that I am going to ask you to give something today. Read this newsletter and give God your best attention to what it says! When you prayerfully finish and put it down, I expect that as Paul, you will say: "For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:10). Then give God praise!

With you in His strength,

Pastor Carter Conlon

## THE WILL OF GOD FOR THE WEAK

by Carter Conlon

In the Gospel of John, Jesus gives two definitions of Himself, revealing what His heart is and why He came to the earth. "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' Then they said to Him, 'Lord, give us this bread always.' And Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst'" (John 6:32–35).

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Later, in John 11, a man whom Jesus loved had died. Instead of going to him when he was sick, Jesus waited until he was dead for four days. The man's sister, Martha, said to Jesus, "'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to Him, 'I

know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day'" (John 11:21–24). In other words, "I have no hope for the present. My only hope is for when we are all going to rise and meet You in the air."

But Jesus said these important words to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:25–26). In other words, He offers a present hope—supernatural life for all that is dead and hopeless.

### ■ THE MISSING MANNA AND ROD

Jesus revealed Himself as "the bread of life" as well as "the resurrection and the life." I want to take a moment to consider these two ideas in the Old Testament. Now in the Old Testament, the "bread of heaven" was known as "manna." It supernaturally provided for the people through their wilderness journey. It was like white coriander seed and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey, and it provided the Israelites with complete nutrition for many years.

We also see in the Old Testament a type of "the resurrection and the life." When there was once

a dispute as to who was truly the priesthood called of God, the Lord said, “Let every man bring his rod, lay them in a pile before the tabernacle, and I will show you who belongs to Me” (see Numbers 17:1–5). So they brought their rods, which were simply sticks that had long been dead, and in the morning, Aaron’s rod had budded. It was an absolute miracle—out of a dead stick came life!

In the book of First Kings, something very interesting happens regarding these elements. At the time, the Ark of the Covenant, which has always represented the presence and victory of God, was brought to Solomon’s temple. Inside the Ark were the tablets of the commandments that were given to Moses on Mount Sinai, the rod of Aaron, and a golden pot of manna (see Hebrews 9:4). All of these things were put inside the Ark as a reminder of who God is.

However, by the time Solomon brought the Ark of the Covenant into the temple, something strange happened. The Bible says that they put it behind the curtain in the Most Holy Place, where the shekinah glory of God would reside, and *“nothing was in the Ark except the two tablets which Moses put there at Horeb, when the Lord made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they had come out of Egypt”* (2 Chronicles 5:10).

What happened to the manna and the rod?

There are a lot of theories—some interesting, others ridiculous. My personal belief is that they were removed by God. Consider for a moment what everything represented. The Temple of Solomon, the Ark of the Covenant, and the stone tablets that were

left all represented the law. It was an Old Testament covenant where the people had to come into the presence of God and make promises to Him. In this particular Old Testament temple, there would literally be a river of blood. People would bring in their goats and lambs as offerings for their sin, promising that they were going to try to do better. In other words, the things that remained all represented our human attempts to be godly in our own strength—the promises we make to God, our best efforts to obey His will through our own power.

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On the other hand, the manna and the rod, which were no longer there, represented the supernatural provision and life found in a relationship with God!

You see, the law with its temple were both doomed to fail. There would be a day coming when not one stone would be left upon another—not just of the temple—but of the whole system. When Jesus came into Jerusalem near the end of His life on earth and He cursed the fig tree, I believe He was cursing the whole system of human effort and human covering (see Mark 11:12–14). Remember that in the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were covered in fig leaves, having embraced this thinking of Satan that “I can cover myself. I can produce righteousness in

my own strength.” How ridiculous Adam and Eve must have looked! Yet our human efforts to be godly in and of ourselves look just as ridiculous in the sight of God.

The problem is that humanity does not know it is impossible to be godly without God. We keep making promises, only to grow more discouraged. We come back into the presence of God, confess our sin, say we are going to do better, and try our best to do better. But the whole system of you and me making promises to God was doomed to fail. That is why there had to be a cross. In other words, the supernatural life and provision were removed from that old system, only to be returned at the cross.

That is why I believe the hand of God, however He chose to do it, removed the manna and rod. He removed this promise of life coming from death, for it was going to be returned only through Jesus Christ. It was just as Jesus said—“I am the bread of life,” and “I am the resurrection and the life.” Nothing in biblical history was happenstance; it was all orchestrated by God and led to one conclusion: There is no hope apart from divine life through Jesus Christ! There is no hope to live a godly life apart from the covering of His blood and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. However, this divine empowerment and supernatural life is what He has come to give us each day!

#### ■ HE HAS COME TO HELP

I would now like to pose the question: What is the will of God for the weak—for those who are tired of seeing their best efforts to obey God constantly failing; for those who have come to the end of strength?

Let me share a personal story that I believe will encourage you today.

I have been a Christian now for about forty-three years. Roughly thirty years ago, I left full-time employment and entered full-time ministry. We bought and renovated a church and even started a food bank. I was preaching, fasting, doing everything I knew to do to serve God and people. But one day, I completely ran out of physical strength. The church was in revival; a lot of good things were happening, and people were coming from miles away to experience the presence of God.

***The Lord has come to help you out of your weakness, your struggle, your self-loathing, your fear.***

But I was standing in the front of the church, so weak that I could not even sing. I could not pray; I could hardly speak. As I stood there, the thought came into my mind, “I’m finished. I can’t do this anymore.” I was due to preach in about fifteen minutes, and I was trying to figure out how to tell the church that I was done.

Suddenly, I heard the audible voice of God, which has happened only one time in my life. I am typically led by His Word or through strong impulses in my heart. That is how I have known the voice of God. But this time it was audible. It was not an impression on my heart or a thought in my mind. Somebody actually spoke to me. Was it an angel? Was it the Spirit of God? I have no idea, but it was a voice about five inches from my right ear. And in the midst

of my deepest despair, this voice said, “I have come to help you.”

It so startled me that I jumped and looked over my shoulder to see who was speaking to me, but there was nobody even close enough to have spoken those words. So, in the strength of that word, with the sudden sense of the infusion of God’s help and power, I got up to the pulpit and preached that morning. I have never turned back. I continued going forward, not in my strength, but in the strength of God. I have now traveled over most of the world. I have preached to hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people. I still thank God for speaking those words into my ear at the weakest time of my life.

Today, I believe I am called to be the voice from God to you today, saying, “I have come to help you.” The Lord has come to help you out of your weakness, your struggle, your self-loathing, your fear. All you have to do is what I did—simply get up and move towards the first place God has put before you. The first place I had to go from that place of weakness was to the pulpit to speak for the next thirty minutes. God did not show me India or Africa. He did not show me the civil wars where I would to be sent to help. He did not show me standing in the houses of prime ministers or presidents. He simply showed me the pulpit that was right before me.

You see, that is where it begins. For some of you, it is time to just get out of bed. It is time to open

your Bible and start reading it. Remember, it is not about just trying to follow the rules anymore.

***Even if you feel dead and dry; the Lord says, “Come, and I will satisfy you.”***

You will instinctively do it, because God promised to write His law in your heart. The “bread of heaven” and the “resurrection and the life” that was taken from the Ark in that old system has now come down to you and me. Even if you feel dead and dry, the Lord says, “Come, and I will satisfy you. Lay down before Me and before the morning comes, there will be new blossoms in your life. It will be done supernaturally, not by human effort. You will not live by making promises to Me. Rather, you will live by My promises to you!” It’s time to get up and trust Jesus to be your supernatural life and strength!

Carter Conlon  
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## DEAR GRADUATING CLASS OF 2021

It has been a year unlike any other, so our heartfelt congratulations to you are said with complete enthusiasm and such joy!

Throughout your school year you have experienced quarantine, masks, social distancing, and constant uncertainties, yet Jesus has been completely faithful to you. You have let Him take you on a journey of trust right through to this finish line. Well done! It is now time to do what you have come here for—to step out and believe God to use your life for the benefit of others. You have been forged in the fire of repeated opposition, yet your growing spiritual character and God-given natural talents equip you to be called world changers!

The memories you have made here are everlasting; the friendships are strong and the Summit story will always be a part of you. You are a very special class. We love you very much and we are so very proud of you! Your faith and His faithfulness will keep you strong.

Love and best wishes,

Dr. Teresa Conlon  
President  
Summit International School of Ministry



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

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