

A Billion Reasons Not To Give Up
by Pastor Carter Conlon

From Cartel to Christ:
Jairo's Journey of Redemption

SUMMIT: God is Moving
on College Campuses



Prayer Points 2025

FOR OUR CHURCHES

- We believe for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the pulpit and the pews.

FOR OUR CITIES

- We believe for God to raise up a gospel witness all over our cities in schools, universities, and the workplace.

FOR OUR COUNTRIES

- We believe for God to raise up Daniels, Esthers and Josephs in gov't offices around the world that will be a voice from heaven to the nation.

FOR THE WORLD

- We believe for God to save 1 billion souls.

A Billion Reasons Not To Give Up

by **Pastor Carter Conlon**, *General Overseer*

Today, we will be reflecting on Galatians 6:9, a verse that speaks to the resilience we need in our journey of faith.

As we study this together, I pray that God will help you understand and embrace His message and that His will be done in your life. I pray that God will propel you, as His child, into the purposes He has for you, especially during this critical hour in history filled with challenges and uncertainties. May God instill in your heart a longing to seek Him above all else—above your personal comfort, desires, and even your fears.

In Galatians 6:9, the Apostle Paul offers a vital reminder: “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.” The original King James Version states, “... if we do not faint.” This imagery evokes the picture of

an athlete running a long-distance race; halfway or two-thirds of the way through, they may feel overwhelmed by exhaustion, pain, or discouragement, leading them to consider quitting altogether.

You may relate to experiencing fatigue and discouragement. There are moments when you may feel drained and tempted to withdraw from the important work that God has entrusted to you. Yet, embedded in this passage is an incredible promise from God. Paul assures us that if we remain steadfast in our effort, there will come a time—referred to as God’s “due season”—when we will indeed reap the rewards of our labor, if we can keep our hearts and minds focused on the goal.

This leads us to consider a critical question: Why do people lose heart? Why do they faint and abandon their pursuits?

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A Billion Reasons Not To Give Up (continued)

People often lose hope when they lack a vision for their future. Proverbs 29:18 (KJV) states, “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” The New King James Version says, “They cast off restraint,” which means people may become self-focused or disillusioned when they lose sight of their life’s purpose and God’s purpose for them. It is crucial to understand why you are here. When you lose vision of God’s plan for your future, you inevitably lose heart.

Constant complaining about the present can also lead to heartache. Psalm 77:3 (KJV) says, “I complain, and my spirit is overwhelmed.” If you want to sabotage your own life, start complaining, and you will sink like a boat with a hole in it. Times may be tough, but for Christians, the good news is that we are not destined for hell. If you’re going through a difficult time, remember to be thankful; you’re merely passing through, and your eternal home is in heaven.

There is no guarantee in God’s Word that life will be easy. You will face opposition and an enemy in this world. There will be

comments made against you, exhaustion will come, and various challenges will arise. However, don’t fall into the trap of complaining. A complainer not only sinks their own boat but also affects everyone around them. It’s draining to spend time with people who constantly complain.

Complaining is the opposite of faith; it signifies a lack of recognition of God’s presence. The Bible says that “all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28). This encompasses not just the pleasant things but also the trials and challenges we face.

People also lose heart because of pain. Psalm 55:6 expresses this sentiment: “Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest.” Pain can come from betrayal, constant enemies, or the overall difficulties of life. This can lead to moments where you just want to give up. As Paul warned the Galatians, losing heart can hinder you from reaping the fruits of your labor.

People also lose heart due to regret. Psalm 42:3 reflects this feeling, as the psalmist writes, “My tears have been my food day and night.” Regrets about past choices, wrongs done to us, or missteps we have taken can weigh heavily on your heart. But through Jesus Christ, your sins are washed away, and your past is buried. You can walk in newness of life through Christ.

**We find reassurance
in the truth that in due
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I spent a season mired in remorse as a young believer, often misunderstanding that I needn’t remain in that bleak space. There were times when my prayer turned into daily tears, each drop carrying my burdens and confessions about what I did or failed to do. It felt almost sacred, this ritual of lamentation, until one day, amid my tears, I heard the Lord’s voice.

“Stand up,” He said.

Surprised, I complied, and then He imparted profound wisdom: “If you kneel and weep one more time, I will interpret it as

an accusation against the faithfulness I’ve shown you.”

Those words struck deep, resonating in a way that only divine insight can. It was a pivotal moment, a revelation that propelled me into a new understanding of hope and purpose. None of us are called to dwell in the shadows of the past. We are gifted with a future brimming with hope and renewed life.

Some might ask, “What reason can you give me to persevere?”

I have countless reasons—though I won’t enumerate them all.

In John 8:32, Jesus proclaims, “And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Why should you persevere? Because you possess the truth! I speak to believers, and I assure you that while freedom may not manifest in an hour, a week, or even a year, it is surely on its way. The truth is your anchor.

An anonymous prayer request I received speaks volumes: “My son hates me and believes I don’t care for him. I love him dearly. Please pray for his salvation and the restoration of our relationship.”

Such heartfelt pleas reveal the tremendous healing and restorative power accessed through faith. If you’ve walked this path with God for any length of time, you understand this deeply. In due season, your perseverance will yield a bountiful harvest, offering freedom not only for yourself but spilling over into the lives of others.

You must resolve in your heart that regardless of the challenges that confront you—whether they arise from this world, your own mind, or other forces—that you will remain steadfast. Hold onto hope, not solely for your own benefit, but for the countless souls out there grappling with their own struggles, seeking the very hope that you have found.

In a world where many are lost and desperate for connection, there are those whose hearts ache for salvation. Families are fragmented, torn apart by misunderstandings and anger. There exists a longing for forgiveness, a hope that someone out there understands that coming to Christ transforms lives. It offers the promise of becoming a new creation, letting go of old ways and bitterness, and

embracing renewal. For the sake of these souls, I refuse to give up.

As we persevere in faith, we find reassurance in the truth that in due season, we shall reap if we do not falter. The love of the Father resonates deeply within us, echoing the powerful message found in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." Whether or not we experienced this love from a natural father, we can now grasp the boundless affection of our Heavenly Father.

When you shift your focus from your own challenges, the world around you expands.

Consider the poignant story of a six-year-old girl named Ruth, who shared her heart's cry in this prayer request: "I need to know that somebody loves me."

Can you imagine the weight of such an earnest plea from a child so young? It is both heartbreaking and inspiring. For the sake of every Ruth in this world, I am committed to forging ahead, spurred on by their vulnerability and courage. I will not yield; I will race toward the grace that God has set before me, sharing not just words but living out the love of Jesus in every interaction. I will pause to engage with these little ones, who often seem overlooked, to show them they are cherished beyond measure.

Moreover, we can also confidently proclaim that Jesus possesses the power to shatter the chains of addiction. As stated in Luke 4:18, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me to proclaim liberty to the captives." He holds the keys to break every chain and fling open every prison door. While struggles may arise, they do not diminish our certainty that the power of God frees those who find themselves ensnared by the darkness of this world.

Recently, I received a heartfelt plea from a man named Jerry, who is ensnared by pornography and lust. Each day, he feels its heavy chains tightening around him, leading him deeper into despair. But we hold fast to the truth that freedom is found in Jesus Christ. For the sake of every Jerry—every

man or woman trapped by the shadows of their past—we must not tire. We must deliver the message of forgiveness and the liberating power that awaits those who earnestly seek it.

I recall a time when I was a young police officer, asked to share my testimony in a prison. Little did I know that I would be speaking to a group of 700 men, each grappling with the consequences of their actions. Initially, I felt a wave of discomfort in that space, but I knew I had a message of hope to share. I reminded those men that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Despite their past, the love of Christ extends to them just as it did for me. I encouraged them: "What you've done is grievous, but know this, your hell is my hell. Without Christ, we are all destined for the same fate."

When I offered an invitation for them to embrace salvation, men came forward, shaking and weeping, as they grasped at the chance for redemption. In those tears, I saw the flicker of hope—the realization that they did not have to remain ensnared by shame and captivity forever. Jesus had sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the truth of Romans 8:18 became a reality: the sufferings of this present time cannot compare to the glory that is soon to be revealed in us.

When we finally liberate ourselves from the chains of self-obsession, that is when we can truly begin to live for the sake of others. In that moment, the transformative power of God flows into our lives, reshaping our priorities and purpose. It ceases to be about our individual desires and aspirations; it becomes about the people who surround us—the Jerrys of the world,

our communities, and those languishing in captivity. We cannot fully recognize God's voice until we emerge from the constant preoccupation with ourselves.

I challenge you to take a moment and count how often you say the word "I" in a single day compared to how often you speak about others. I think you'll be surprised by the tally. Now, consider the countless reasons—the nearly one billion souls—that await the light of salvation to shine into their lives. These are the billion reasons you should never give up.

We are part of a community led by our senior pastor, Tim Dilena, who fervently believes that the Gospel will reach one billion people in our generation. This is the divine vision God has placed upon his heart, and our church is making remarkable strides toward that goal. For those who doubt its feasibility, remember that Billy Graham preached to an estimated one billion people during his lifetime without today's technological advancements, which allow us to reach the world all at once. There are one billion reasons—one billion souls—waiting for you and me to share the hope of salvation.

Break free from self-centeredness. When you shift your focus from your own challenges, the world around you expands. Suddenly, you can notice the myriad of people around you, each with their own needs

But I want to challenge you: You have an abundance of opportunities ahead—perhaps 60 or 70 years before Christ returns—to reach countless souls for the Kingdom of God. I urge you with all my heart: don't give up. Don't lose heart. In due season, you will reap the harvest if you hold on and do not lose faith. ■

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The banner features two copies of the book "Because You Prayed: Things Change When People Pray" by Tim Dilena. One copy is standing upright, showing the cover with a silhouette of a person walking through a doorway. The other copy is lying flat, showing the title and author's name. Next to the books is a spiral-bound prayer journal with a light brown cover. The journal's cover has the text "I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH Christ which strengtheneth me." written in a mix of fonts and colors. A yellow pencil is tucked into the journal. The background is a dark blue gradient.



From Cartel to Christ

Jairo's Journey of Redemption

Jairo's story is a powerful testimony of the transformative power of faith. Fleeing Colombia in the 1980s in search of a better life for his family, he found himself caught in the grip of the notorious Cali Cartel. Jairo hit rock bottom when he was arrested and faced imprisonment. Despair threatened to consume him. But in the depths of his brokenness, an extraordinary spiritual encounter changed everything.

While incarcerated, Jairo—raised in the Catholic faith—turned to prayer in desperation. In that moment, he experienced something profound: an inexplicable sensation, “like electricity,” coursing through his body from his feet to his head. This divine encounter with Jesus left an indelible mark on his soul, leading him to surrender his life to Christ fully.

Determined to turn his life around, Jairo began attending prison church services, immersing himself in the Word of God, and discovering the life-changing power of grace and forgiveness. As he grew in his faith, he found solace and purpose in serving his fellow inmates, offering hope and encouragement to those struggling with the same despair he once felt.

Despite being sentenced to a harsh Louisiana prison and facing the threat of deportation, Jairo clung to his newfound faith. He continued to serve others, trusting that God had a plan for his life. Miraculously, after five years in prison, Jairo was granted clemency and released. Against all odds, he was also allowed to remain in the United States—proof of the power of prayer and divine intervention.

But Jairo's transformation didn't end there. He returned to the prison system, not as an inmate but as a messenger of the Gospel. For the past 20 years, he has devoted his life to serving incarcerated men and women, bringing hope and the redemptive power of Christ to some of society's most broken and forgotten members. Through Jairo's missionary work, hundreds have come to abundant life in Jesus.

Adding another incredible chapter to his story, Jairo became a U.S. citizen. Today, he serves as the prison ministry director at Times Square Church, continuing his unwavering mission to share the “living water” of Christ with the lost and hurting.

Jairo's journey is more than a story of personal redemption; it is a powerful testimony of hope in the power of Christ. His life demonstrates that no situation is beyond God's reach and that even in the darkest circumstances, transformation and redemption are possible for those who believe and serve the living God.

Jairo's story powerfully illustrates the impact of the Gospel within prison walls. God's love extends to all, and He has a purpose for every life, including those behind bars. A key goal of the 2024 Vision Fund was to reach incarcerated individuals. This year, through the Pando app, 500,000 prisoners across New York State and New York City's prison system now have access to Christian resources, including Times Square Church messages, on tablets in their cells. Thank you for your generous support of the Vision Fund. Your contributions are making an eternal difference.



God is Moving on College Campuses

On February 21 and 22, Summit had the amazing opportunity to partner with Yale University for a two-day prayer event called “Arise.” The event brought together hundreds of college students from all over the Northeast—Yale, Dartmouth, UPenn, Cornell, and more—for an unforgettable time of worship, fellowship, and evangelism. God is on the move in our colleges!

The first evening kicked off with powerful worship led by students from Yale University. After that, Pastor Carter Conlon took the stage and shared an inspiring message that encouraged Christian students at Yale to be bold in their faith. He challenged them to step out and invite their peers to the evangelistic service the following evening—a challenge that many students took to heart!

Then came the second night. Wow, God showed up in such a powerful way! Summit students led in worship, and Pastor Carter shared a profound message about the love of Christ—more than a dozen students gave their hearts to Jesus for the first time. It was truly an incredible outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The journey didn't stop there! Next, Summit headed to Princeton University in Princeton, New Jersey, for a prayer event on March 20-21. We were grateful for everyone who stood with us in praying for college students across the US and beyond. God was willing and able to transform the lives of students who were hungry for truth, and we were so blessed to be a part of it.



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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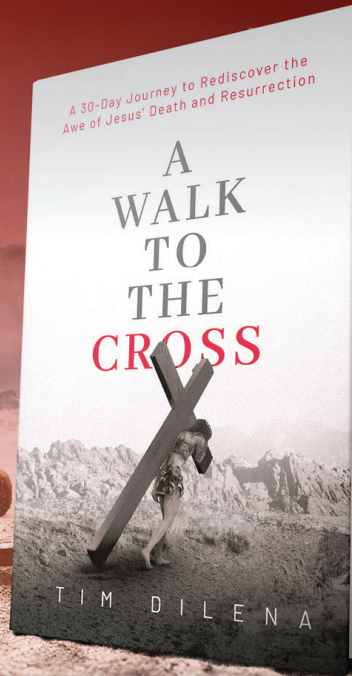


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Concept

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