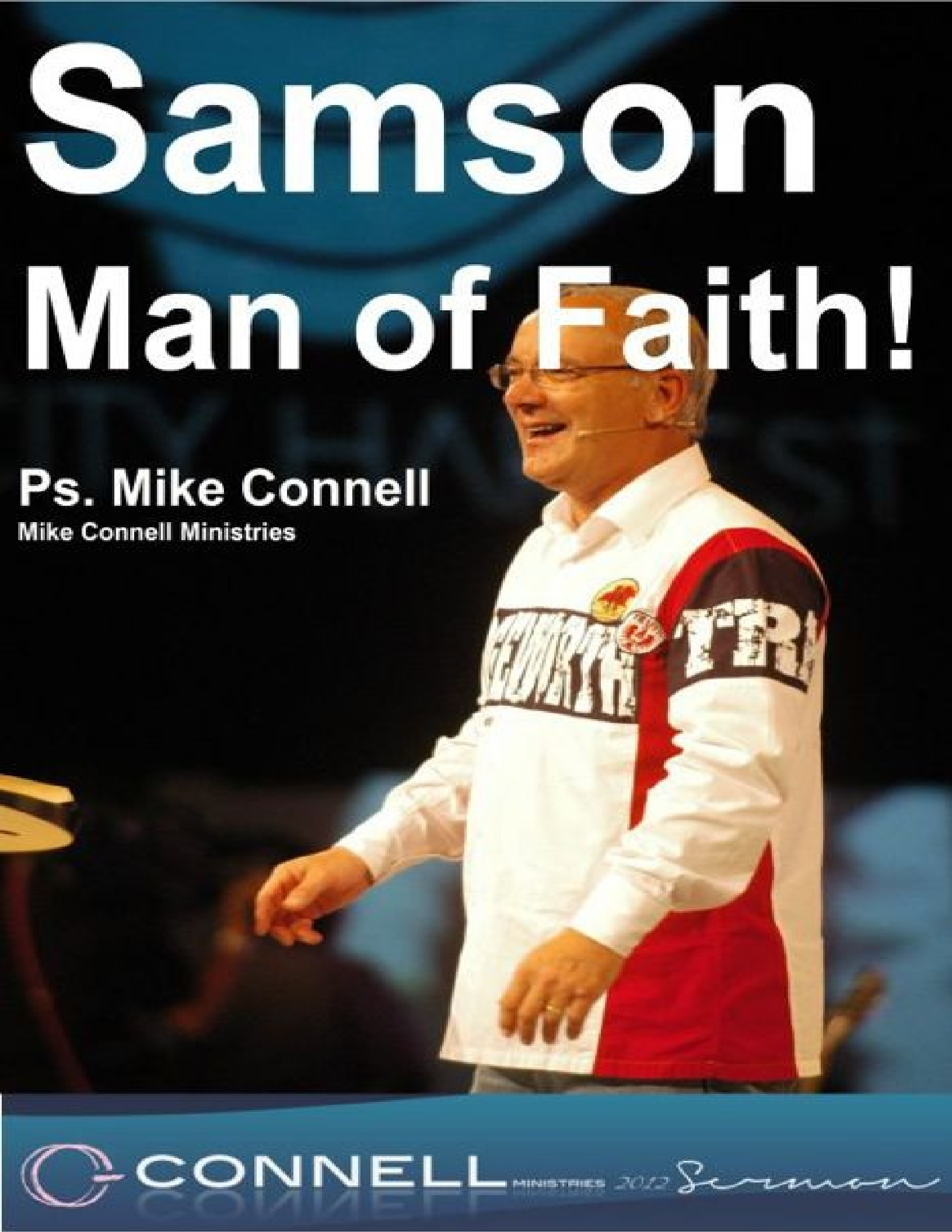
Samson
Man of Faith!



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CONNELL MINISTRIES 2012 Sermon

Samson – Man of Faith

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Smashwords Edition

Summary: *Keys from the story of Sampson, about the grace of god, how he loves us even in the midst of defeat and disgrace. This story is about the goodness of God to someone who's fallen over, fallen down. You are not beyond the reach of God no matter where you are today. The best days of our life are ahead of us if we're in the hands of God.*



Glory to God! Holy Ghost, well, Holy Ghost, I feel very excited and I've run out of time, so I'll totally change what I was going to do and we've got enough time to be able to do something, so I want you to look with me in Judges, Chapter 16 I think it is - and so for those of you who are listening online and getting it online it's going to be a short message today but it can inspire you nevertheless.

If I was to mention to you the name Samson what would come to mind? What words would come to the mind straight away? ... [Delilah.] ... Delilah - isn't that interesting? Delilah is the first thing that would come to mind. Isn't that amazing? And I'm glad you said that word because it indicates that our tendency is to look at life from a very negative perspective. If we were to look in Hebrews, Chapter 11 and we look at people from an incredibly negative perspective - that story is not about Delilah by the way. The story is about a man of faith, a man who believed God in spite of massive failure and the thing is, he's named a hero of faith, not because of all he did before he met Delilah, but what he did after he was restored. How about that? Have a think about it and I'll just show it to you in a couple of verses in just a moment.

So our first response when we think of the name Samson is immediately you think Delilah and immediately you think the sexual sin, you think the bondage, the troubles he got into and so our mind tends to look at him and in a way we kind of feel sorry for him and we feel like well we wouldn't do that. We've just seen what happened to him; we wouldn't do the same - and of course we tend to arise and look at it out of a negative and prideful perspective, but the Bible has a different perspective on him.

If we were to check up in Hebrews 11, Verse 32, we would find that the Holy Ghost specifically encouraged someone to write down and He recorded out of four thousand years of history men who God liked, men who impressed God, men who pleased God and out of all of the people that did something for God in history the Bible records or pulls out about

a dozen of them and right there stuck in the middle is Samson! Not a mention of Delilah in the New Testament, not one mention of her. Why is that? Because when the Holy Ghost looks on Samson the Holy Ghost records he was the man who rose out of failure and setback and trusted in the grace of God. He dared to believe that grace could come to him. He dared to believe that in the most impossible and difficult setback where everything in his life had been stripped away from him, where his life now was in ruins and he's no longer fulfilling his purpose, he dared to believe that God was still good and would help him at that moment.

It's great when life is going well to think good of God, but you know when you're right down there and things are in trouble and there's pressure on you, that is when you need to know that this God we serve is a God who loves us. He's a God of grace and He's a God who can reach right down to you wherever you are and everyone's said it's over, you're history, you've failed and God says I see the fire of faith in that man's heart; I can pick him up out of there and I can cause his end to be stronger than his beginning. Now that is a great message and Delilah's got not much to do with that. It's all about God. See, you've got to focus on the right things. We're going to have a quick look in it and I'd love to pick some things up but since I haven't got time I'll just pick the key part of it up.

It says in Judges, Chapter 16, Verse 4 - it says afterwards he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, the Valley of Vines, whose name was Delilah. Delilah means literally - it means to bring you low, to dry you up, to make you feeble - how about that? To bring you low, dry you up, make you feeble - so every person has got a Delilah, something that brings you down, makes you weak, makes you feeble. Your faith starts to falter. It could be some little wee habit you've got in your life, it could be some area in your heart, whatever it is the devil knows about it I can tell you now and he will have assignments that will go descend a Delilah into your life. Your Delilah is whatever you trade with to feel better. Your Delilah could be the television, it could be the internet, could be romance novels, it could be all kinds of things. You Delilah is whatever you trade away your purpose and destiny to feel a little better about yourself.

Your Delilah comes in when you feel the need of comfort, when you're feeling lonely, it comes in to offer you comfort and it'll take away your purpose, your destiny, it'll steal your vision, it'll steal your strength, take everything away - and everyone has got one. Question is whether you can name your one. You can't name it, it'll be working on you all the time and so it says here the Philistines, Lords of the Philistines, a picture of demonic spirits or familiar spirits, came and said to her entice him or let's see if you can open him up, get his soul opened up, find out where his strength lies that we might prevail against him or overpower him or overcome him and then afflict him or put a yoke on him and then attack him or afflict him or depress him and put him down and humiliate him.

So notice the strategy of the enemy, it's very simple; send a Delilah, something into your life that looks good, feels good, makes you feel a little better about yourself, but it strips away some things from your life as we'll see in a moment and it says very simply your Delilah is anything that you open your life up to, anything that draws you, takes you away from God said about your life. And it says it'll overpower you or overcome you. It says it will bind you or yoke and harness you and then it'll depress you and bring you down, so I'm sure that you could probably already think of what it is that whenever it happens it gets on top of you and it seems to somehow get around your mind and emotions and knock you back. Now that's your Delilah - and see, he didn't even see it coming because she seduced him. He fell asleep on her knees and - in other words he was spiritually unaware of what was going on around him. Many Christians live spiritually unaware of what is going on in their personal life, what is really happening around them in their atmosphere. It's very easy for us to become passive, shut down, prayer's gone, our praise has gone. We don't really have much energy and vibrancy in life, we're into a routine in our prayer time or devotional time or it's not there are all, instead of having some vibrancy of the Holy Ghost!

And so Delilah got him to sleep so he didn't see her, wasn't aware what was going on. You need people around you to help you become aware what's happening in your life. We need fellowship, we need people, we need to be connected to people that can talk into our life and say hey, you don't seem to be yourself today. Hey, you seem to have lost your

spark. Hey, how are things going? That's what groups are for, is to get you into relationships - not so you can sit around, have a cup of tea and talk about the Bible. It's more than that. It's to stimulate you to get on top in your personal life and to grow. He never had anyone like that so he was a sitting duck, then he become a lame duck, then he become a very powerful eagle. I love it how it ends! I love how it ends! God can take a lame duck and make him a mighty eagle. You'll watch [unclear 00.07.55] and we'll look at the verse on it; so she caused him to fall asleep.

Once he fell asleep she nipped off the hair, yeah, the most expensive hair cut he ever had in life and so he comes out of the hair cut and the enemy come in around him and the Bible says he shook himself saying I'll move in the Holy Ghost like I did before - and he didn't realise the Holy Ghost wasn't on him anymore. That's the most tragic thing isn't it?

I remember being in a men's conference one time and I was talking to these guys the first night there and I was picking up some of the comments people were making and I said to the guys, I said I don't know which is the worst. I don't know which I feel most sad about, one, that the spiritual atmosphere is totally empty and devoid of any move with God, or that this is something people have got so used to that they think this okay. I said I think I'm really stirred about that, that people have got so used to living under a spiritual atmosphere of passivity and heaviness and oppression and blah, blah, blah, that actually they think that's normal.

Blind - and so what happened to him, they took him, they got hold of him and the first thing they took from his life was his vision, his sense of purpose, because if you have no purpose you're lost. One of the things Jesus came was to connect us to purpose. I was going to speak on discovering your purpose today but I felt this one, I should do this first - so they took out his eyes. He couldn't see where he was going. He had no direction for his life. They took out his eyes. Second thing they did is they bound him; they put him bondage so he was in chains, he had no strength. His strength was never in hair. His strength was in the mighty spirit of God on him and that same Holy Ghost that's on him is inside you and me! We can stir our spirit man any time we want - pray, move with

the Holy Ghost! It's a matter of exercising your will and your voice and making decisions to build a strong life. We can do that anytime because the Holy Ghost that came upon him now lives inside all of us.

Then they put him down and they got him going round in circles, just his life became a daily grind and you see the whole thing - and this is where so many people live; they live and they have no vision, no sense of purpose, no captivating dream - even if they can't see, they can't see that God has got something for their life and they're in a place where they're bound and restricted by old habits, old sins and they're going round in circles, grinding out on a day to day routine and something inside the person feels not right. And I want you to see what Samson did because this prayer - and this prayer is really the key to what happens; you notice his hair began to grow again. They took him out and wanted to put him on display and humiliate him, so there was a great public gathering and it says there were thousands. Verse 27; the temple was full of men and women, the Lords of the Philistines there, about three thousand men and women watching while Samson performed in front of them.

The Bible tells us that you and are on display. It says there is a crowd of heavenly witnesses watching our life. There are people who went before us who ran their race, Paul and Peter and men of every generation watching how you're running. There's also some other people in the arena. There are also demonic powers. There's the Lords of the Philistines, there's all those demons and they're lookin' and they're watchin' how you're doing too and what they want to see is they want to see God's man, God's woman blind, no Holy Ghost strength, locked up and going round in circles humiliated.

Why does the devil love to do that? Because he can't do anything to God but if he can get the people God loves into a place of bondage and defeat, then he can say look at your champions. I wonder if the spirit world what's going on around you, whether the demons are saying go on! Look at your champion defeated! Going round in circles, no purpose, no vision, no dream, no Holy Ghost fire. Is that the best you can do? That's what goes on in the spirit world. It's what goes on.

There's other men and women saying God, move on behalf, move on behalf - and so Samson's out there and they're all humiliating him and he's got thousands of his enemies around him and deep inside him there's something has risen - faith in God. Not faith in faith, faith that God is a good God. The Bible says after it describes our simple condition, it says that God who is rich in mercy and His great love, His great love that He loves is - oh, I've been meditating in that verse today and we were singing it - and the great love He loves us; He's rich in mercy. Wherever you're at you're not past the reach of God - so this man said and you'll read it in those verses, he said remember me Lord and give me my strength one more time and I will lay my life down for your purpose. God heard that prayer. That's a great prayer. God, remember me, remember me - and so God remembered him.

The power of God came on him again. This is not about Samson and his defeat and about Delilah. This is about the God that we serve is waiting to step in on your behalf. The God we serve is the God of grace and power. He's waiting to step in on your behalf. What activates Him is not your need. What activates Him is your faith. Samson was listed as a man who believed God, so I'm sure that in the time that he was going round and round in circles getting nowhere, he didn't just sit down feeling sorry for himself. He would have taken time to meditate in the words God had spoken to him, to meditate in what God had done in the lives of others. Every day, even though it was a bad day and he was in a bad place he believed it's possible for God to lift him back up out of that bad place and he came to a place where he said - you see before he was toying around with the call of God. Before he liked the anointing, he liked the feel of power, he liked to get the victory but you see there was an issue in his soul that had never been resolved. It was the issue of will I surrender to the purposes of God? So he wanted God and the other and he got a Delilah and then when he came to himself, he came to a place where he said God, it's all about you and your purpose for my life and so he reached out - Lord, remember me, remember me. Lord, in all your goodness remember me, remember me and strengthen me again and I will lay my life down for your purposes.

And when God heard that cry God responded. It's not the cry of someone who just wants well God, I'm feeling down today. Can you come and send someone to pray for me and bring me a prophetic word and bless me? It's not that kind of cry. It was a cry that said God, I have come like the prodigal son to the end of myself and I've come to my senses and I'm coming back - and you can marry what happened there at that point that there with the story of the prodigal son. When the prodigal son returned, the Father held him in his arms. The Father put on him a shimmering garment of righteousness, restored him into the throes of sonship, put a ring of authority so he could stand again as the son. He didn't have to do anything. It's because the Father is good, the Father is loving, the Father is gracious. All it takes is for someone who'll dare to come to Him and believe.
The thing I observe about Samson is this, that in the midst of his pain he did not become bitter. The midst of his sorrow and his mistakes he did not become depressed and suicidal. Instead in the midst of it he thought about God and faith rose in his heart and there came a day when he said God, I lay my life down to serve you. Now Lord, strengthen me, remember me. I know I've blown it. I know that I'm really short of what you had, but Lord I'm not short of your grace, your goodness.

It was never about his prayer and is never about Delilah. This story is about the goodness of God to someone who's fallen over, fallen down. You are not beyond the reach of God no matter where you are today. You may be - can't see how my calling could work out. I can't see how I can get from where I am, but I tell you you're not past the reach of God. He's able to reach into your life if you will let Him - but God who is rich in mercy and His great love, that's the God we serve. That's the God we've been singing about.

Why don't we close our eyes right now? God is rich in mercy. All He's looking for is a heart that will be surrendered to Him and will dare to believe that no matter where they're at God can help. Lord, remember me and strengthen me one more time. With that the Holy Ghost came on him. He tore down the pillars of the temple and in his last act of warfare against his enemies killed more in that last act that all his lifetime put

together. His last moment was a glorious moment, a moment of great, great victory and your next season in your life can be like that.

Is there anyone here today first of all who's not received Jesus Christ as their saviour? I'd love to give you an opportunity to receive Him. That would be the most important thing would be to become a Christian, to give your life to Jesus. He loves you. He's concerned for your life. He's given His life for you. Are you here today and want to give your life to Christ? I'd love you just to raise your hand, let me know. I'd love to pray with you and lead you to come to know Jesus.

Is there anyone here today wanting to receive Jesus? God bless, I see your hand over there. Is there anyone else wanting to receive Jesus, anyone else today? Anyone else? You're right at the place of decision. We would love to pray for you.

There's one girl over there who's just put her hand up. Anyone else like to respond also? This is your day to receive Jesus. Just keep our eyes closed. I wonder just while we're in this place right now, I wonder is there anyone here and God has been speaking to you, you feel this like Samson, that I'm in a low place; eyes been put out, lost my strength and vigour and determination, feels like I'm going round in circles. You don't have to stay there. God is a good God. Say but how can He do it? How can He do it? Don't try to figure out how. Put yourselves in His hands. Put your life in His hands. Let Him work with you one more time. Let Him work with you again.

Let Him work to change you. Let Him work to help you grow through this difficult season and there is a great day ahead for you. It'll be the greatest day of your life. All of us, the best days of our life are ahead of us if we're in the hands of God. Don't assume you always are. Put yourself there today like Samson did. Is there anyone God's speaking to you that way today, raise your hand quickly right now. God bless, God bless, God bless, many hands going up and I thank the people responding right now. Why don't we just stand and let's just worship the Lord and just as we stand that girl who wanted to give her heart to Jesus, would you like to come over? I'll just pray with you, take you just a moment and others

today that wanted to respond to what God was saying, please just come forward right now. If you're listening online then maybe you could just pray this simple prayer we're going to pray in just a moment. You could join us and the same anointing here will touch you wherever you are.
So that girl that put her hand up over there, just somewhere over there and the others that put their hands up, would you make your way up now? Come now, just come now, come to the front, make a row in front of me right now, that's right, just come, just come, just come. Let's believe God together, believe God together for God to touch you. Need some of the pastors and leaders to come forward and help the ministry in a moment - the girl that put her hand up, would you like to come here?

The others come. Anyone else? Just come, come, there's some more people wanting to respond today, come on, there's others need to respond. Please come, please come, please come, that's right, just come, come, come. Come, come, come, come. Come on, let's just lift our hands to the Lord together. Don't be passive. Nothing happens to any passive person. You have to actively extend your faith. I believe God's wanting to help people today, so I need all the pastors to come out, if they've got any family elders that can pray, minister, prophesise, please feel free to come out as well right now. We're just going to minister to people. I want you just to lift your hands up now. You know where you're at. You know exactly where you're at right at this point in time. I want you to pray this prayer with me; Father, I come boldly to you in Jesus' name. I ask that you restore my strength to me. I put my life in your hands to serve you, to become available for you. All I am and have I put in your hands and I ask you Lord today as I reach out to you to put your anointing afresh upon me and to begin to pick up my life and walk with me afresh. Strengthen me Lord to fulfil my course. Amen. Amen.

Church, let's just pray in tongues for a moment and pastors, come and lay hands on people. Dave, Kate if you're available come over please, Steve, Paula, come on up please. The others just come. Pete and Sandy, like to just come on up and pray for people? Come on, let's just begin to rise and worship again, just arise and worship. I encourage you to come back tonight and bring some friends with you, so the great Holy Ghost meeting tonight. Going to be a tremendous time together. Have a

fantastic week. Don't forget to pray for unsaved people and reach out to befriend them. ...

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