

A Day of Fierce Conflict

by Alan Redpath

Alan Redpath's sermon emphasizes the importance of genuine faith and devotion to Christ, illustrated through the story of the widow's offering.

Duration: 15:51

Topics: "Conflict"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Jesus' actions and observations in the temple. Jesus was not interested in winning arguments or silencing intellectuals, but rather he longed for something that would satisfy his heart. He sat near the treasury and watched how people cast their money in, not focusing on the amount but on their devotion. The preacher emphasizes the importance of giving to God and loving Him with all our heart, and contrasts this with the love of material things. The sermon also highlights the story of a poor woman who gave everything she had, demonstrating her vision of eternity and serving as a powerful argument against living solely for material possessions.

Transcript

And it'll deal with your obligation and your sense of what is right and what is wrong, for here standing in your very midst is the eternal Son of God to whom you owe everything. All your problems will be silenced if you get right in your attitude and outlook toward me, Sajid. I would just underline that principle, beloved listener, this morning.

Your problems of unbelief, your problems of skepticism, your problems of obligation will all be shattered and settled finally when your heart is right toward the eternal Son of God. And they were silent to his question and he leaves them with a final devastating word of warning which you read in verses 38 to 40 against the hypocrisy of the scribes. Their love, notice it, their love of popularity, their love of prominence, their love of priority, their love of possessions, their pretended piety.

And he gives that warning against them and then leaves them, Jesus Christ silencing his enemies. But I come more to grips with this in terms of life today when I ask you to notice Jesus Christ seeking for his friend. I scarcely like to suggest it, but do you know I am sure that our Lord was desperately lonely at that moment.

Dare we try to enter into his mind what had been the result of his ministry? He didn't come to judge the world, it was to save he came. He wasn't interested in winning an argument, in silencing the intellectual, in

causing these people to withdraw without an answer, that wasn't why he came. And he sat down in the precincts of that temple and lingered and longed for some fruit, something that would satisfy his heart.

And you notice that he sat down over against the treasury where there were 13 chests, copper chests, called trumpets because of their shape. Nine of them were for gifts which might be given instead of offerings, four of them for the free will offerings of the people. And Mark tells us that he watched how the people cast their money in, and many that were there were casting in not much in terms of quantity, but many coin.

And he watched not the amount, but the devotion. He knew that where your heart is, there will your treasure go. I know that's not a correct quotation, but it's the implication of it.

I repeat you know the correct quotation. Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also, but I'm suggesting that the implication is, where your heart is, there goes your treasure. And suddenly his attention is drawn to a poor lonely widow, and she drops her offering into the chest and goes her way.

Nobody speaks to her, and she speaks to nobody else. If there had been a subscription list published of the gifts of that day, hers would have been among a whole host of them under five dollars, if we might use such an American currency in such a setting, donations that are anonymous. But I want you to listen to what the Lord Jesus said in verses 43 to 44, she has given more than all.

They have given out of their superfluity. She has given from her destitution. She has given her whole livelihood.

And Jesus saw that moment in that day of loneliness, in that woman, the travail of his soul. Have you ever thought to yourself how intimately connected this choice little story is with all that has preceded? Listen. The Lord has faced the question of unbelief in the Pharisee, and there comes into the temple this poor lonely woman and gives a gift of faith, the token of her loyalty to God.

She gave all her living. In amidst all her poverty, amidst all the loneliness of her life, it might be said of her, as we read in the 11th of Hebrews concerning others, she endured as seeing those who are him who is invisible. Hers was a gift of faith she gave like that.

He faced the question of skepticism of the Sadducee, the question of the rich, the rationalism of these people who didn't believe in the afterlife. But there came into that place a woman who gave everything. Why? Why? What made that poor soul wend her way into that temple and give all that she had? Vision, that's all, vision, vision of eternity.

What a mighty argument against the philosophy of life which is content to live for material things. This poor soul has responded, has responded completely to the vision of things that are not seen and she's given everything. He has faced the question of obligation from the scribe.

What is my chief, the chief commandment? What is my obligation? Thou should love the Lord with all thy heart, thy neighbor as thyself. Here's the gift of love and she's the poorest of the poor, but she's given all she's got and she's expressed her love to God and to her neighbor. Do you see this? That on the one scale, on that lonely Tuesday, on the one scale you have all the hostility of the Pharisee and the Sadducee and the scribe.

All massed against the Lord in these few days before his crucifixion. All this overwhelming him and over against that on the other scale, the simple devotion of one poor lonely widow woman in whose life all the requirements of the law of God have been fulfilled for she has faith and she has vision and she has love and she's given everything. The Lord Jesus seeks his friends and I have just a closing word in the last two minutes to say that the same Lord Jesus searches today for you.

That same Christ who stood alone in that temple stands in Moody Church today by his spirit and confronts your life and mine. Tell me, how are you facing him today? Do you face him with the question of unbelief? By what authority doest thou these things? Do you challenge his authority? Do you face him with the question of unbelief? Do you face him with the question of skepticism? I'm not sure about the afterlife. I don't know about the resurrection.

Do you face him like the Sadducee did? Do you face him like the scribe? And as Jesus said of him, thou art not far from the kingdom, almost persuaded. But last, looking right into the kingdom but withdrawing, has Jesus something to say to you and to me as he said to those people about our love of popularity and our love of prominence and our love of possessions and our love of pretended piety, all of which keep us outside the kingdom for they're all false love. God gave his only son.

What have you given him? Oh, we sing in Francis Ridley Havergill's hymn, isn't there a verse which talking about giving our money says, not a mite would I withhold and how true it is. Many of us look round our purses for the mites and fling them all in. We don't hold them but we keep a lot more.

We give our little and we keep our much. I pray that as you've listened today to this simple exposition of this portion of scripture, has the Lord silenced the question of unbelief? Render unto Caesar the things that are unto Caesar's, but remember your higher loyalty to God, the things that are God's and your silence. Has he silenced your question of skepticism, your supposed cleverness and his saying to you, thou dost greatly err for thou knowest not the scriptures and thou knowest not the power of God.

And has he silenced the question of obligation and says to you, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, all thy strength, all thy soul, all thy mind and thy neighbour in thyself. And I wonder if in Moody Church today, our dear Lord, looking down upon some heart this morning, perhaps some lonely life, perhaps somebody who's crept in here quite inconspicuous today, nobody knows much about you, you're alone, just come in to church, people don't know you too well, just come in and out and you steal in quietly and want to get out quietly. I wonder if Jesus has seen in you today, my beloved friend, the travail of his soul and he's satisfied because he has got from you today faith and vision and love which has brought you to lay all your life at his feet.

Shall we bow together in prayer? Take my love, my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure store. Take myself and I will be ever, only, all for thee. May we spend one moment in quiet prayer before we sing our closing hymn.

Just a moment's silence. Jesus stands in our midst, not to silence our arguments but to win our love. Has he done it? Does he get from us today faith, vision, love? Oh Lord, today may we not be like the scribe who was not far from the kingdom, but may we be like that dear widow woman who gave her all.

And Lord Jesus, we would think of this not primarily in terms of our money, but primarily in terms of a life and a heart that's laid at thy feet for thy use. We ask it for thy name and glory's sake. Amen.

Our closing hymn today is number 208. 208. I want you to think about this hymn.

It's not a hymn we often sing. It somehow has rather a doleful end to it, but it need not be so. Almost persuaded now to believe, almost persuaded Christ to believe, to receive, seems now some soul today to say, go spirit, go thy way.

Some more convenient day on thee I'll call. Oh may that not be your answer to the Lord. We're going to sing the hymn.

I trust we will sing it thoughtfully, prayerfully in the light of what God has been saying to us. And I want to give the opportunity for our visiting friends, or indeed for regular worshipers of the congregation, to whom God has been speaking this morning, to confess their faith in Jesus Christ. In these tremendous days in which we live, we cannot be secret disciples.

We must acknowledge him as our Lord and Savior. We never, we never seek to embarrass anybody in Moody Church, but we do seek to be faithful to the proclamation of the word. And I may be speaking to some today who are almost convinced.

Jesus has been silencing your arguments, but he wants more than that. He wants to win your heart. So I'm going to ask as we stand to sing this hymn, if that's true of you, arguments silenced, your heart utterly his, your life at his disposal, if that's the outcome of this morning worship, I wonder if as we sing this hymn would you mind just coming and standing in the front of the church, and then I will lead in a prayer of dedication prior to the benediction.

That will be all. You will not be approached by anybody. Nobody will speak to you unless you desire for us so to do.

But I love to think that Jesus, on that day of Passion Week, saw something of the travail of his soul and was satisfied. And I love to think that even today Christ in our midst can see just the same here at Moody Church. God grant that it may be so.

We will sing this hymn together. We'll stand to sing it. Mr. Carbaugh will lead us.

And I'll be at the lower platform, and I would like to welcome with the right hand of fellowship those of you who are dedicating your lives to the Lord Jesus Christ this morning. All the opposition and antagonism to him has been crushed. And today faith, vision, love are yours.

God grant it for Jesus' sake. Just push your way past any friend who may be next to you, or bring the friend with you, and just come and stand for a public act of witness and dedication at the conclusion of our service. Hymn number 208.

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