

First Century Christianity

by Joshua Daniel

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in the risen Savior and proclaiming the message of Easter to overcome fear and anxiety in our lives.

Duration: 25:36

Topics: "Bold Faith", "Spiritual Renewal"

Description

This sermon focuses on the boldness and courage of Peter in proclaiming the Gospel message, emphasizing the power of faith in Jesus' name to bring about transformation and healing. It also touches on the importance of waiting upon the Lord for strength and renewal, contrasting the world's demands with the rest found in God. The speaker shares personal experiences of witnessing revival and the impact of true faith in Jesus, highlighting the need for believers to boldly proclaim the risen Savior in the face of opposition and challenges.

Transcript

If you will turn to Acts, third chapter, please, here is Peter, after the healing of the lame man at the temple, which of course excited a great deal, invited a great deal of attention. It could not be passed by as some ordinary happening. Here was this man who had never walked, and here he was found leaping and dancing, and naturally people wondered, what is the answer to this? How come? And Peter said, now look here, twelfth verse, please, when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, you men of Israel, why marvel you at this? Or why look you so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we have made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his son Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate.

He squarely put the charge upon them. Yes, Peter, the same Peter, who was slinking around, warming his hands at the fire, and saying, I know not the man, I don't know what you're talking about. The same Peter says to these men, you denied him.

Well, fourteenth verse, but you denied the Holy One and just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you, and kill the Prince of life, whom God has raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses. His name, through faith in his name, has made this man strong. Whom you see and know, yea, the faith which is by him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

Look at that, the kind of courage that came into Peter. You know, many of you know how my dad wanted to prove Christ, and prove that first-century Christianity is possible in his lifetime. So, as a boy, I saw my father and mother give themselves to prayer.

They prayed for my conversion, and of course, I was not in any revival meetings or anything of the sort. A revival broke out in the family, and we children were convicted of our sins and were converted right in the home. Following that, I saw my father taking his stand before all comers, and it was at a time in history when modernism, some of you may not even know the name, what it means.

You see, modern unbelief began in some of the seminaries. One of those professors in Germany, Bultmann by name, said, we will demythologize the Bible. So, this Bible is full of myths.

We will demythologize the Bible. And he had a number of students proceeding out of, he was a professor in one of the universities of Germany, and this plague went around the world when people were ready to accept formal stuff, you know, some kind of nice religion, a Sunday morning's do, and people like it that way, but they denied the power thereof. Now, to my father, such a thing was most obnoxious.

So, he said, when communists confronted him, I will prove God to you. I remember a scene when I saw a very wealthy landlord, his wife, who had been bedridden for about nine or ten years, on whose healing or medical treatment the man had spent quite a deal of money and all to no effect. That same woman was found walking and telling, saying to my parents, as they came back from the meeting, your God is a mighty God.

He was a terror in that area, well known, and somebody had given him the name, you know, a nickname, called him Hitler, and this man's conversion was like an amazing event in that area. They said, how can this man be transformed? And the testimony of this woman, of course, they were such a wealthy and influential family, and when they turned to the Lord Jesus, there were many people who began to throw away their idols and turn to the Lord. Now, of course, as revival spread from place to place, and as in the days of my youth, I carried it on into Europe and the United Kingdom, England and Ireland, and later began to preach here, people began to see the works of God, not with a lot of fanfare, you know, as though I originate or one of us originates these marvelous things, nothing of the sort, nor had it to do, had it anything to do with money.

Money was never mentioned, and but here were these people proclaiming Christ, Communists, former Communists, heathen people who hated Jesus, transformed by the power of Jesus. You know, you can't stop some of these things from spreading. They go from mouth to mouth, person to person.

So, revival in the high schools, revival at the college level, and some of these young fellows becoming missionaries, you know, people from wealthy families, choosing rather to become poor for the sake of Jesus, to reach unreached areas. You know, my dear friends, when I saw all these happenings around me, I could not rest. You see, of course, as a sports person, I thought a great deal of my games, but everything else in my life had to give way to the work of the Lord.

Now, we are in locked into a situation today where the workplace is demanding your uttermost, you see, all your strength and energy. I can see it that by Friday, you're jaded, tired, weary, weary, worn. There can be no cure to this except they who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength.

You see, I am one of those who have labored night and day, jet lag, no time for jet lag, you know, no time for eating even, but I found my strength in waiting upon the Lord. So, we see these people, the early disciples, fired up with the message of the resurrection, and it's amazing that we are not, and we are witnessing every year this mandatory pilgrimage which every Muslim must undertake once at least in his life to visit the grave of their prophet, looking closely at the history and life of the prophet. I am shocked.

By a prophet, I mean a man who articulates God's mind both in his life and action, and alas, you better read that history. It is so shocking that so many people can be fired up by the writings of such a person, even to feeling that it is their duty to obliterate and exterminate all others. I can't understand it.

While we whimper and cower in a corner as though we must apologize for Jesus, my dear friends, this cannot be Easter. When there is any such attitude in your heart or mine, you and I have to prove that all power is given to Him, the Savior, and what a wonderful field in which to prove it with collapsing ideas and theories and financial crises bringing down the mighty. You know, we do not have the courage these days to even point out, you know, well, the home is the place of freedom.

If I can't say what is wrong with my own home and get my wife to agree about it, well, that's a serious flaw. Right is right and wrong is wrong, and that is being enacted in the privacy of the home, of the family. And so often I see families where the husband feels so shackled he cannot even express the truth.

A wife is mouthless, a mouthless creature. You know, my dear friends, when we come to the open grave, that's the grave, you see? That's the condition of the grave. But when you come to the open grave, it's different, completely different.

It's open. There's no death there. There's no stink there.

You know how carefully people cover up the stink and the stuff that which they feel nobody should know. But you know, friends, there is a sense in which that great performer who said, when I miss a day's practice, I know it. When I miss two days of practice at my violin, my wife knows it and my children know it.

And if I miss more days of practice, the whole world knows it. So some people are so careful to say, hey, look, I don't want anybody to know this. No.

Truth will be out. Truth cannot be hidden. If this message of Easter doesn't fire our hearts to a new height of love and passion for Jesus, what will? What can? So my friends, before I close, the fourth chapter of Acts and the tenth verse, be it known unto you and to all, and to you all, all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him does this man stand here before you whole.

Yes, Jesus has brought meaning to our lives. Otherwise, every one of us here would be covering at the thought of death. Death has no terrors.

I remember being in a plane and my seat was very close to one of those propeller-driven planes. And I saw to my amazement that dark smoke was pouring out of the engine. That was just about four or five feet away from my seat.

Couldn't miss it. And I knew there was impending fire. I said, why? The plane had taken off.

But surprisingly, I got lost in the Bible. I wondered, hey, what's happening here? But the Bible was before me and I got lost in the Bible. And when I came to, I found that the plane had banked and the pilot had brought it back.

The captain had brought it back to the airport from which we had taken off. And a week later, when I passed through the same airport, I found that the engine was down for repairs and the plane parked far from the terminal because they were afraid it would explode any moment. But the Lord kept us, the passengers.

And you know, folks, when you confront death and you have no fear, the reality of the risen Savior, He is mine. I know Him. I love Him.

And I want every one of you to prove Him in the tough situations of life. Peter said it is Jesus whom you crucified, He's risen. That was their watchword and that was their war song.

And today, we too shall be faithful to this risen Savior. Let us pray. How we thank you, precious Lord, that instead of going to view the grave of some dead supposed prophet, in whose life there was little integrity, we come to this matchless Savior and to an open grave out of which proceeds the marvelous message.

He is risen, so Lord, in every vicissitude of life, in every apparent defeat, in every stressful moment. Help us, Father, to proclaim, to know, and to be so assured as to say, My Savior liveth. He knows my predicament.

He will teach me the path of victory. Lord, our God, let this message of Easter be imprinted upon our lives such that every shock that life can render us will be cushioned and buffered such that we come to know ill at all times. Because our Lord is risen in Jesus' almighty name.

Amen.

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