

Titus 1 vs. 3

by Leonard Ravenhill

The sermon emphasizes the importance of preaching, holiness, and purity in the church, and warns against the dangers of worldliness and hopelessness.

Duration: 33:27

Scripture: Matthew 24:3-4, Titus 2:11, Titus 2:13, 2 Peter 3:10, 1 John 2:13

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Matthew 24, where Jesus speaks to his disciples about the signs of his coming and the end of the age. The preacher emphasizes the warning given by Jesus to not be deceived by false teachings. He highlights the prevalence of deception in the world today and gives an example of a famous man in a church who deceived people for financial gain. The preacher also mentions the opposition between the world system and the system of Christ, emphasizing the need for believers to not love the world.

Transcript

Tonight, our Heavenly Father, for the access we have to the eternal throne, we bless, bless your name, for the one who has made it possible. Think of one who said, and how shall I, whose native sphere is dark, whose mind is dim, before the ineffable appear, and on my naked spirit bear the uncreated being. We thank you that there is a way for man to rise to that sublime abode, an offering and a sacrifice, a Holy Spirit's energies, and advocate with God.

These, these prepare us for the sight of holiness above, the sons of ignorance and night, may dwell in the eternal light, through the eternal love. Lord, we bless you that you enabled us through another week, maybe a week of real opposition for many, a week of struggle, a week of discouragement, a week, Lord, when it seems the enemy has come in like a flood so often. But Lord, we thank you you've enabled us to trust and obey.

We thank you for the simplicity. Lord, if you said we had to pay, we wouldn't be able to come. If we had to shed the blood of bulls and goats, it couldn't be done.

But we thank you for the Lamb of God, the spotless Lamb, that once in the end of the age he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, all the accumulated sin, the iniquity of the ages. We think of the millions or billions of sins committed today that Jesus himself is able to bear and take, take away for those

who trust in his atoning blood. We thank you for the gifts he has given unto men.

We thank you for the gift of peace tonight in a world that's torn up with war. We thank you that there remaineth a rest for the people of God. And we want to enter into that rest.

As one said, our restless spirits yearn for thee, where'er our changeful lot is cast, glad when thy gracious smile we see, and blessed when our faith can hold thee fast. Lord, we bless you for this rock on which we are established. Our hope is built on nothing less.

For millions across the nation, financial security has disappeared. For millions of others, the political peace they have has been disturbed, has been torn away. And others who put their trust in other things have trusted that they have no real foundation.

But we bless you that on Christ the solid rock we stand. And we rejoice in this tonight, that we know in whom we have believed, and we're persuaded that he is able to keep that which we've committed unto him. And not only able to keep that we've committed for our past, but he's able to keep us from falling.

He's able to keep us in peace. He's able to keep us in joy. He's able to keep us in assurance and hope, again, in a hopeless world.

Lord, we think of the millions tonight, the billions who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. And as we celebrate this coming week, the gift of your great son, the Lord Jesus, and his death and resurrection, we think of the millions who yet have never heard his name. Lord, we ask that somehow that revival for which we've yearned, that divine invasion, that interference, when God interferes in the affairs of men, that something will come to turn us from our stupidity.

We're building houses of sand that time will blow away. Lord, we thank you again for this imperishable word. We know men have scorned it and burned it and banned it and blamed it, but we thank you for many of us it still burns.

As we handle it, Lord, it kindles something in our hearts, a joy that's not of this world, a peace which is not of man. We pray for those who are spreading this truth tonight. We thank you for every precious missionary, some are well-known, some are unknown, some are new, some are veterans.

But Lord, we bless you that you guarantee to everybody, as your day is, so shall your strength be. We thank you, Lord, that you've anticipated our every need. Lord, as we sang about the blood, we thank you for that precious blood.

There's no stain that that blood cannot remove. We thank you that Jesus Christ came. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.

Lord, we know that we, we can't do that. The world is stubborn and arrogant and self-satisfied. It's so based on humanism, self-gratification, self-anticipation, self-confidence, self-assurance, and yet history behind us shows us, Lord, that's all false.

In fact, there have been empires, we can't even find a stone as a record of them. There have been nations that ruled the world with cruelty and fierceness, and they've disappeared like the, like the mist disappears in the rising sun. But Lord, we thank you again for the true sense of the living God.

We thank you that in almost, not quite, but in almost every kindred and nation and people and tongue. And so we rejoice, Lord Jesus, tonight that you're the right hand of the Father, there to make intercession for us. That after 2,000 years, you're not tired, you're not weary, you're not embarrassed, unless we embarrass you by our frailties, our dullness, often our deliberate unwillingness.

Lord, recurring this week is I'd thought how often we've cried in the language of Isaiah, oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens. And in turn you say to us, rend your hearts and not your garments. Lord, if there's anything we need to rend, help us to rend it.

If there's any obstruction, Lord, help us to pray and believe you'll break it tonight. Give us liberty, Lord, to pray for the needy, for the lost, for the dying, for the bewildered. There's confusion everywhere, in politics, in business, in the religious world.

But Lord, we thank you that there's peace given by Jesus. We thank you the path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. As we've sung when we walk with the Lord in the light of his word.

And as we sang it, we thought of millions who are walking in darkness tonight. We think of the children in our schools, we've taken the lights out of the school, the 10 commandments, the 10 lamps have been put out. And these youngsters are staggering here and stumbling there and falling into sin.

Falling into despair, committing suicide, running from home. We live in such an insane world. Lord, we pray that you restore the power in your house.

That people will come and find there is a place of deliverance. There is a hope in a hopeless world. There is purity in an impure world.

There is a joy in a sad world. There is life in a dead world. God, God quicken my heart tonight.

Quicken each of our hearts. We thank you for this blessed book that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. God, may each of us be in that place where you count us holy.

Where you can share your secrets with us for this generation in which we live. That we'll know whether to turn to the right or the left or go straight ahead. I pray for the younger people here tonight.

With so much potential. With so much possibility. And yet with so much opposition.

When sin has never been as arrogant and proud and popular. Where people buy it and sell it. They talk it.

They walk it. They watch it. Consuming them.

It seems so idiotic to many to lay it on one side. And yet we know in everything that these men touch there's death in those things. There's no sin that's profitable.

We pray for the brothers who are absent to a witnessing or preaching tonight. That your grace may be upon them. Again, thank you for the joy of meeting in this place together in Jesus name.

Thank you. Proceeded. Well, I've got some good news for you.

There's not much good news, but I'll tell you some good news. Next Friday night, God willing, our David will be here to speak. I know you're all relieved, but that's fine.

He'll be here for what? Four weeks, but some Fridays he'll be away. We need to pray some doors will open for him for two reasons. Number one, he has a message.

Number two, he needs to get some money to get back to New Zealand. We'd like to keep him, but he has to get there and back. Pray for him.

Paul has been having some blessings, some more freedom and evidence that God is bringing some release down there. They've started an outpost about 150 miles in the country and a very fine young man. Well, he's not too young.

Well, he is. He's 50. So you young people, 50.

Jack's nodding. Thank you. Very some help.

He's got some relief, which is great. Let's look in a little book. We don't preach from often Titus.

There's a very interesting phrase in Titus chapter one and verse three. Verse three, Titus one, verse three. But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching.

Isn't that something? Or in other words, manifested his power through preaching. You know, I'm realizing more and more there's less and less preaching being done. There's more lecturing being done.

We're talking about drugs. We're talking about crime. We're talking about this.

But we're to preach the word, Paul says. And he says that God is manifested or God is displayed through preaching. Now look in the second chapter.

And this came to me after this brother said this week that there's a blank. And he's a well-traveled man. He's a very intelligent man.

And he said all over the nation now there's a blanket of hopelessness. There's despair. People are worn down.

Again, in the religious world through what's been this unholy war that's been going on on radio and TV. In the political world because of Iran. Because of these men who swear their loyalty to the country.

And then they hide behind the fifth amendment when it's convenient. In the material world they, well I was trying to get the word there a few minutes ago. In the stock market these fellows have been trading on the inside and making millions.

Everywhere there's hopelessness. Well here's hope. Titus chapter 2 and verse 11.

Oh let me get verse 13 first. Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Well how do you prepare for that? By obeying the previous verse.

Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. Even in the midst of all the turmoil, moral turmoil, political turmoil, financial turmoil, religious turmoil. That we're to walk in this present world in holiness, in righteousness.

Let's look at this same thing in 2 Peter chapter 3. There's the same emphasis here in chapter 3 of 2 Peter in verse 1. This second epistle beloved I now write unto in both which I stir up your pure minds. Notice

that? There's not much emphasis on purity today. It's all on power.

There's not much emphasis on holiness. It's on happiness. And yet the stress here is this second epistle I write unto in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.

Now go a bit further in the same chapter. Chapter 3 verse 14. He says wherefore beloved seeing ye look for such things for what things? Well let me go back there to verse 10.

That the day of the Lord, we sang about it a few minutes ago, the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night in the which time the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the elements shall melt with a fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are thereof shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, not they might be, not they could be, they shall be. God has ordained it that they shall be dissolved.

What manner of persons are ye to be in all holy conversation? And conversation there doesn't mean speaking, it means manner of life. Our manner of life is to be a manner of life of holiness, to be a holy conversation and godliness. Again looking for that hasting unto the coming of the day of the Lord.

Now skip over to verse 14. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye be found in him in peace without spot and blameless. You see it's the demand all the way through, without spot and blameless, in holiness, in righteousness.

If I were to ask you tonight, do you think the world is ready for the second coming of Jesus? No? Do you think the church is ready for the second coming of Jesus? None at all. We've got lost somewhere. Many people have got out of Egypt all right, but they haven't got into Canaan.

What we need is some Joshua's to lead the people now from where they are, I was going to say in midstream or if you like in the wilderness, to get right there into the promised land. Without spot and blameless, and account that the long-suffering our Lord is salvation, even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto us. Isn't that nice? This is Peter writing about who? Our beloved brother Paul.

Well something's happened to Peter, boy he was so volatile and outspoken, and yet one day when Paul met him he resisted him, he said I met Peter and I withstood him because he's to be blamed. But now Peter says our beloved brother Paul, boy he didn't used to take a punch on the nose as easy as that. He'd stand up and fight Paul, but not now.

Because he's bent on holiness, he's bent on purity, he's bent on being ready for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. You know it would be one thing if you were going on a journey and I said to you look I've just been on that trip, I want to warn you when you get 10 miles down the road it's very bad, it's a very broken road. But I want to tell you something more, when you get to a certain spot, and I'll give you the mileage, there's a big, there's a bridge down.

If you go down there, boy you're going into disaster. It will be one thing to tell you there's danger on the road, it's another thing to tell you where that danger is. It's one thing to say the Lord is coming, it's another thing to say are we ready? Here are the danger spots.

So I want us to look now in Matthew 24. Let me step back just a second here and I quote this, you don't need to look at this, in the first epistle of John chapter 2 and verse 13. John says, love not the world,

neither the things that are in the world.

Now this is Passion Week. I will suggest to you that every day this week you read one version of the crucifixion of Jesus. Begin with the 53rd chapter in Isaiah, no begin before that, begin with the 22nd psalm.

And from the 22nd psalm in all its agony, you know it's prophetic of Jesus. In that psalm he says, I'm a worm and no man. We don't like to be called worms.

I used to call her my sister often. She'd get desperate and she'd say, you worm. Oh boy, I could have thrown the piano at her.

I hated her, I didn't care what she said. When she said, you worm, despicable little thing. What's a hymn? There's a hymn that says, would he devote that sacred head for such a worm as I? In the new hymn book, new Baptist hymn book, they've pushed that out, for such a one as I. And yet Jesus could say, I'm a worm and no man.

I'm helpless, I'm powerless, thy billows have gone over me. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. Read from the 13th chapter in John to the 17th, which is five chapters.

I think if you count, you'll find he speaks about the world 39 times in those chapters. And he uses about 16 different prepositions about it. Read through the gospel of John, read through the first epistle, the second epistle, the third epistle.

He's against the world, the world, the world, the world all the time. Now the church and the world are running together. In those days you were going on to a head-on collision.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. I've told you so many times, I've crossed the Atlantic so many times, I've forgotten how many times, by boat mostly. You know, it's all right when the ship is in the water.

It's another thing when the water's in the ship. It's one thing when the church is in the world, that's a job, but when the world is in the church. Of all the sacrilegious things, I think, is these wretched passion plays that they have at this time.

There's one in town advertising, it's going to be different this way, we're going to have a whipping post, we're going to show the whip that beat Jesus up. Isn't that wonderful? Why in God's name do we need that entertainment? Why is the cross entertainment? It's the bloodiest, most horrible thing that ever happened. I'll tell you what, the churches are very much like the world.

I see advertising, this coming Sunday there's going to be a long film, a movie, whatever you call it, on TV, the death of Jesus, the crucifixion. The churches have these things, passion plays, Christmas plays. I'll tell you what they never have, they never have a prayer about the judgment seat of Christ.

They didn't. This is the most sacred, awesome thing that ever happened. I've been in art galleries around the world, I like to see some certain types of art, and I've seen various interpretations of the crucifixion, the suffering of Jesus.

But you know, there's a sense in which nobody saw Jesus die. It was so terrible to God, he threw a curtain over it, the sun was darkened, the earth shook. In fact, even in Egyptian history, forget the name of the man now, there was a Greek and an Egyptian by the same name, and at the very hour when Jesus was

crucified, it says there was darkness over the earth, and he recorded it.

He says either God is angry, the world is shaking, either he's suffering or somebody he loves is suffering, and that was a heathen that said that. And yet we make so light of it. Oh sure, people get disturbed, they get more people to the altar when they make an altar call, after showing the passion play, everybody is disturbed emotionally.

Oh, he was torn, he was torn, forget it. In this sense, read Isaiah 53, it says his soul was made an offering for sin. Maybe the thieves suffered as much mentally and emotionally.

They were nailed to a tree, the crowd was yelling and scorning at them. But there's a mysterious thing that happened, and you understand now? I hope you do. When I say Jesus did not die on the cross, you say, what he just swore? No, no, he died in Gethsemane.

He said, Lord, I'll do it here, and he manifested what he'd done in Gethsemane on the cross. It was an open manifestation. He says, Lord, if it's possible, let this cup pass.

When I say that, I remember again when I was in Oldham, I was going down the street one day, I was pastor of the largest church in town, I was in my 20s. God had given revival, not because I was there. We had seven prayer meetings a week.

We went to factory gates and witnessed in the lunchtime. We had street meetings till past midnight in the town square, and God moved over the town. I was going past this door, a woman opened the door, said, hello.

I said, hello. She said, would you come in? I said, no, no. No, thank you.

It's five minutes to five, I'm due. I was living with a deacon, as a matter of fact, and his wife. I said, I have to be home for tea, as we say, supper, you would say.

I have to go. She said, that's not the reason. I said, it is.

No, it's not. You won't come in my house because I'm the poorest person that comes to your church. I didn't even know she came to the church.

She said, I sit on the back row because I don't have any money for the offering. I said, never ask you for money. Once she said, come in and have a cup of tea.

So I went. Good night. It's the filthiest house I've ever been in, in a civilized country anyhow.

In fact, going in at the door, there was a passage to the living room and she had books as high as this on either side of the passage from a junk shop nearby. She had a mania for collecting books. I went in the house, dirty, dark.

She said, there's a chair. So here's a chair. I sat there.

Here's the kitchen sink. And she said, we'll have some tea. And she had a stack of dishes in the sink that, good night, must have been there for months or years.

One of them had some bacon on that had been there for grown whiskers. And it was green. And she'd more penicillin in that sink than the guy had that discovered it.

She reached in and took a cup. And on the outside, boy, there was more outside than in it. And she picked up.

She said, well, you take some tea. And it was black as coal. And I don't like tea like that.

She poured that in. Do you take cream? Yeah, I don't have any. You take sugar? Yes, I don't have any.

So she poured out that dirty stuff in a dirty cup. Her fingernails were in mourning. Never saw dirtier fingernails.

And she passed the cup over to me. And she said sternly, drink it. Did you know what happened? As soon as she gave me that cup and said, drink it, my mind went back 2,000 years, two miles away from England, to a man in a garden.

And it had all the sin of the world, the purest person the world has ever had. And there's all the abomination of the world represented in that cup. And the father said, drink it.

He said, if it be possible, let this cup pass. But then you get the picture again in the 22nd chapter of 22nd Psalm of his loneliness in isolation. If you haven't had it, I want to tell you this.

Some of the toughest things in your life will be when you're alone. You can't share with a single person, unless it's your husband or wife. And people you thought you could depend on, somehow they just collapse.

They go down. Why? Because God is making you. He's not making them.

A lady called me today. She said, our family has been asked by the Lord to leave a certain church, a very popular church in Dallas. And she said, we know other people, and they've had to leave this church, and leave that, and leave the other.

What's God doing? I said, he's making you. Why don't we all get together? Because the first thing we do, we make a fellowship. And we call it the Church of the Holy Remnants or something, just to let people know how holy we were and unusual.

The next thing we do, we'd have a secretary. We'd have a treasurer. We'll be back at square one where we left.

And lots of these guys leave churches because they won't take orders. But as soon as they get free, they become the boss. They ought to have a church of bosses.

We see God is making us individually. And Jesus has to be deserted and forgotten, forsaken. But what an amazing thing he did there.

Look that up this week. Will you do that? Read from the 13th chapter of John through to the 17th. And notice, it's all the world.

The world, love, not the world. And right through his epistle, he realized this world is no friend to grace. The world system is very opposite to the system of Christ.

And we're living in a world that's got fierce and more fierce contention. Well, let's go now to Matthew 24. Here are the marks on the road for us.

Where are we now? Matthew 24, read from verse 3. As he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, tell us. He's not talking to the world. He's talking to a disciple.

Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming? And of the end of the age? Look at the warnings. Number one, verse four, take heed that no man deceive you. Was there ever any more deception than there is today? I'm told a famous man was in a big church in Dallas last Sunday.

And he said to the people, take your shoe off, put some money in the shoe. Now stand up. The place whereon you stand is holy ground.

This is a sweet offering to God. This is one of the biggest shops in the country. That's false teaching.

And yet, because you're a big man, everybody does it, like a lot of stupid goats. They take off their shoes and put some money in and stand up and feel holy. Well, God doesn't ask for that.

He doesn't even ask for your head, never mind your feet. He says, give me a heart. What did he say? Some give me thy head, no, some give me thy heart.

As a man thinketh in his head, no, as a man thinketh in his heart. You see, you've got it all wrong. We think it's brain power, but there's something beyond brain power.

As I've told you, you can take an x-ray and find my brain, but you can't find my mind. You can't find my will. Here's the mystery of the human personality.

As a man thinketh in his heart, the word of God says, out of the heart proceedeth. And you can legislate and do all the other things these men try to do, educate, legislate. It makes no difference.

There's only one way of the world being changed. That's by the individual. They used to tell us a story in England when we were children about a man that had a little boy, whoever he was, and he couldn't keep quiet when his daddy wanted him to be quiet.

You know, I lived in the bygone days, prehistoric days. Brother Farrar and I lived in those days. No TV, no radio even.

And only people well off had a piano or even a phonograph. But there were great days, better than this lunatic age in which we live now anyhow. But I'd better rush on with these, I won't get through them.

Tell us what shall be the sign of thy coming, of the end of the age. Teak he that no man deceive you. Then, verse 5, many shall come, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many.

What false Christs we have now, many of them, and yet people follow them. You see, they think if a thing is supernatural, they think it's spiritual. It is, but it's not of God.

You can have supernatural things that are fascinating. And they're very much like the real thing, but they're not the real thing. Teak he that no man deceive you.

Many shall come, saying, I am the Christ, and you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. Do you know right now there are 50 different wars going on in the world? It's incredible what's happening. You know, everybody wants to poke the finger at somebody else, don't they? I don't usually bring you material outside of the Bible, but here's some that's a cause for prayer, as well as, uh, I had another... Oh, thank

you, dear, sorry.

Thank you. I knew it was somewhere. The fellow that writes this is a pretty smart fellow, not because he's from England.

He's actually a French duke, but he lives in England. And this is what he says, and these are matters for prayer, not just, not politics. I'm not thinking of that.

He says that Gorbachev faces criticism. The old guard fear that he's making mistakes. He firmly denies that.

He says, number one, the West is degenerate and divided. Number two, Germany is ripe for total neutralization. France died in 1812, has never been and never recovered.

Africa is ripe for the taking. She has all the resources. She's the wealthiest nation in the world in raw materials.

Fifteen percent of any automobile that's driven in this nation or any other nation, the resources come from Africa. Fifteen percent of the resources in your car come from Africa. So what they're trying to do, they're trying to bottle up the, what's like, well, the Hermes, is it? Hermes Bay, that's between Iraq and Iran.

If they bottle that up, they turn off our industry. All the oil comes through there for America and for Japan as well. He says Africa, this is what Gorbachev says, Africa is ripe for the taking.

And the next thing, the Islamic card will give us the Gulf and the Canal. You see, the offering of Russia to Islam, that's why she's tying up with Iran so much, is that she'll give the, she'll give the Arabs Jerusalem. Because Jerusalem, of course, is a center of thinking for Christianity, for Jews, and for the Islamic people.

But nobody's willing to die for it except those crazy Islamic people, not that we have to fight in flesh and blood. The Vatican is riddled with financial scandals and theological disputes. Now I missed a vital part here, it's terrible.

Britain is, England is deeply infiltrated. Her institutions are in decay. The crown, the royal throne, is only a soap opera.

The Church of England no longer believes in its former doctrines. One third of the London clergy are sodomites, and many will die of AIDS. The inner cities are virtually controlled by thugs.

Think of a third of the Church of England ministers in sodomy. Many of them dying already.

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