

Careless before Catastrophe

by Mike Attwood

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing the seriousness of sin and the need for a deliverer, focusing on the story from the Book of Judges and the message of hope found in the Gospel. It highlights the consequences of sin, the deceptive nature of sin, and the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the deliverer from sin and death.

Scripture: John 3:16, Romans 6:23, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 10:13, James 1:15, Isaiah 57:21, Genesis 3:6, Psalm 34:17, 1 Timothy 2:5

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing the seriousness of sin and the need for a deliverer, focusing on the story from the Book of Judges and the message of hope found in the Gospel. It highlights the consequences of sin, the deceptive nature of sin, and the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ as the deliverer from sin and death.

Transcript

Well, good morning, everyone. It is an absolute joy to be with you and good to see more people here this time. Last time I was here a year ago, it was COVID that was keeping all of you on Zoom and not in person.

So I'm glad you're here. It's good to see you. There's so much in here to preach to people.

Thank you. So I'm just thankful for that. I'd like you to turn in your Bibles, please, to the Book of Judges.

The Book of Judges and Chapter 18. On Friday mornings, it's been my privilege to teach a Bible class. I've been doing it for two years.

So I'm going to be going through different parts of the Bible and writing for the Book of Judges. And one of the things that an old evangelist said many years ago, as he was training young men, how to be effective evangelists. And so what he would do is he would give them a chapter of the Bible and he'd say, now find a gospel message in that chapter.

And then he'd give them another chapter and he'd say, now find a gospel message in that. And they were in obvious months. So as I read this, we're going to be looking at the gospel this morning.

And it may not be obvious to you initially, but you'll see the gospel here. So, Judges 18, and I'm going to read just a few verses. Verse 7 to begin with, please.

Judges 18 and verse 7 says, Then the five men departed and came to Elish, and saw the people that were therein, how they dwelt careless, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and secure, and there was no magistrate in the land that might put shame in anything. And they were far from the Sidonians, and had no business with any. And then please, same chapter, verse 27 and verse 28.

And they took the things which Micah had made, and the things which he had, and came unto Elish, unto a people that were quiet and secure, and they smote them with the edge of a sword, and burnt the city with fire, and there was naught to liberate. Because it was far from Sidon, and they had no business with any man. And it was on the valley of Elias, by the river, and they burnt the city, and let no man in.

Now, if you're going to buy a ribbon, or a marker, or see a piece of paper, stick it in your Bible, in chapter 18, where we are. We're going to get right back there, but I need to read one more passage from James, please. James, in chapter 1. James chapter 1, I want you to read verse 15 through 17.

It says, Then when list hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin. In James 1.15. And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. To not burn, my beloved brethren, every good gift, and every good that giveth, is not burnt.

It comes down from the Father of light. There is no burn of the burnless, by the shadow of turning. And again, God, you're blessed.

That reading of this morning. James is gone as well, because he wouldn't have gone back and forth between the two. God, you're blessed to read on this morning.

Now, one thing I want to say, just at the beginning of this hour, I want to commend John, that he wrote about the gospel. I'm so thankful for that. I believe he went around and asked who I love dearly.

He said, if any one of those legs are missing, what happens if you get a three-legged shoe and you lose a leg? We're in a very precarious position, aren't we? He said that the assembly, there are three legs. One is a leg that talks about ministering to the heart of God in worship. That's part of the reason an assembly exists.

We just did that this morning. We had a wonderful time ministering to the heart of God. That was through our sin.

That's the sun. We did that this morning. Worship.

The other is ministering to one another in edification and body life. We need that too. So that's that ministry, that second leg.

And then the final leg is ministering to a lost and dying world. And that's the gospel. And I would suggest to you that many assemblies have lost that leg.

They've lost the gospel. They've lost the burden for the gospel. And we need to get it back.

So I would commend you for your concerns. Now, I want you to go back to the pictures. You don't have to understand all the backgrounds to this story.

Just the people of Greece were in the land of Canaan. So if you remember anything about the Bible, realize that the Canaanites, who were very enriched. Now, God was very patient.

He said to Abraham that the iniquity of the Amorites, the people of the land of Canaan, wasn't yet full. And he was going to give them time for their rigidity to vibrate to a full level. And then he was going to judge them.

And he was going to say 400 years. So God patiently waited 400 years, allowing their sin to reach its peak before judgment would fall. And God, the Israelites, took their judgment on these people of the land of Canaan.

And of course, you say, well, how is that good news? Well, in one sense, what it tells us is this. God, by his very nature, is infinitely holy. And we sometimes forget that.

And in this holiness, he equates sin with a passionate nature. Because sin is what it does to the human race. And sin is how devastating it is.

But now it wrecks lives, and wrecks families, and wrecks countries. And it just causes devastation and sin. And in this way of nature, you must judge sin.

You wouldn't be a just God if you just ignored sin, right? It would be unjust to allow it to continue. So in this holiness, you must deal with sin. Now, God had given a great witness to these nations.

And what he did with the nation of Israel, bringing them out of the land of Egypt and all the miracles. And some of the people of the land of Canaan remembered that, heard that, and turned to the Lord. One of them was a prostitute called Rahab the harlot.

So God's grace was available even for the people of this land. And he had given a great testimony to this greatness. So they all knew about that.

But they didn't know anything about it. They carried on in their sin and wickedness. So I want us to just think about the people of Resh.

We saw in verse 27 that they're about to be judged. It tells us what was going to happen. What was about to say that happened.

It tells us, again, verse 27, they took the things which Micah had made and the goods which he had. And they came to Resh. And the people of that land were quiet and secure.

And they smote them with the edge of a sword and burnt the city afire. And there was no deliverer. I want us to get this idea that here's Peter.

And God's judgment is about to fall on them. But they're oblivious. They don't realize.

They don't realize how close they are to the judgment of God. And I wonder if the people in this country realize. Do you realize how close God's judgment is? The Bible actually says, if you're not a Christian this morning, if you haven't trusted in the Lord Jesus, the Bible says about you that the wrath of God abides on you.

It's like it's hanging over your head. That's how close you are to the judgment of God. And so when people are blinded, they're about to be wiped out.

They don't get it. They're not aware of it. So notice verse 7, what they were like.

What was their condition? Even though judgment is about to fall, what was their condition? The first thing we learn is that they were a careless people. Verse 7 says, 595, came to wish and saw the people of Nevada, how they grunt, careless. Careless people.

Sounded a lot like North America right now, wasn't it? A careless people. Just people under the judgment of God. His wrath is about to burst on them.

And all they can think about is the next episode of their favorite show. Careless. Right? Just going about life.

There's a little anxiety about eternity. A little concern about their eternal destiny. Just carelessness everywhere.

I have to say this. Part of my job as a gospel teacher is to get you to realize you shouldn't be anxious about your eternal destiny. You shouldn't care about yourself.

You shouldn't care about what's going to happen to you one second after that. You should be concerned. And to be careless is a bad place to be in.

And suddenly our culture has lots of ways to continue to keep you in that drug state of carelessness. There's no idea of entertainment, amusements, right? We're a people that are amusing ourselves to death. What does amusement mean? Well, amusement means no thinking.

That means no. It means no thinking. This is our culture.

The reason there's no anxiety about your soul is because you're not thinking. And the reason you're not thinking is because you're being drugged by the media. And by the way, behind the media is the God of this world, who in a sense has blinded the minds of those that believe God.

And so you're in this blind state that means you're careless. No sense of anxiety about your soul or your eternal destiny. You're careless.

That's what a careless people are. They're not conscious of the fact that judgment was about to fall. And it says that after the man of Zygon was quiet and secure.

By the way, if you want to know what the Zygonians were like, one of the most treacherous people in the Bible was a Zygonian. His name was Jezebel. Remember the story of Jezebel? Her dad was one of the kings of the Zygonians and a high priest of the Zygonians.

And so the Zygonians were pretty wicked. Incredibly wicked people. They were careless.

After the man of Zygon was quiet and secure. It almost seems like it's a tranquil scene. When you think of quiet and secure, that sounds pretty nice, doesn't it? I remember the first time I came to America, I have to say all I'd ever seen of this country was what I'd seen on TV.

And as an unsaved person in my youth, I used to watch a lot of American detective shows. And the first thing about America is that shouldn't we get shot on the street corner every day? It's kind of like... And so we get a bit nervous coming to this country because all we've ever seen. This culture, and this base, you know, it kind of gives me the Antonin Kostovsky impression.

I should have mentioned earlier, I really hadn't known that. But that's what we watch. We watch that kind of stuff.

And so what's it like coming to this country? I remember in Wisconsin, where a man locks their doors, a woman locks their cars. We go to a restaurant and there's a sign on the wall that says, we encourage our patrons to give thanks to God for their food. And I thought, I'd be wild to.

I thought, this is not like... It's quiet and peaceful. But you know what? The people there in Wisconsin, in Wisconsin, they're talking to souls that are just as lost as people in those car shows. Just as lost, even though it was quiet and peaceful.

Because there's a sense of peace. Everything seems peaceful and tranquil and quiet in life. And yet, God's judgment is still waiting to be announced.

And everything can be as cool as the breeze in their lives. You know, none of us can control our next heartbeat. One second after death, that person will face the terror of eternity in the lake of fire.

And yet, it's all peaceful. Quiet. Secure.

That it's all a deception. You see, the Bible says, there is no peace, sayeth my God, for the wicked. And it says it twice.

It says it in Isaiah 38 and it says it again in Isaiah 57. There is no peace, sayeth my God, for the wicked. You might be deceived to think everything's fine and everything's cozy and everything's quiet and everything's secure.

But it's a deception. Because if you don't know Christ as your Savior, you're not safe. You're not secure.

And it's not going to be quiet for you. You're going to spend an eternity in a place of separation from God. A place of conscious torment for all eternity.

For all eternity. And so, there are careless people. There's this quietness, this quiet deception.

They're really deceiving people. And you can listen and you can hear two songs of them. There are wicked people.

You can notice it says, there's no magistrate in the land that might put them to shame in anything. So, basically, there's no magistrate that would shame them in their behavior. That would tell them what they're doing is wrong.

And so, it's a whole society. An ashamed society. I find that interesting, isn't it? Increasingly, our culture is a shameless society.

There's no shame in the law. You know, I can remember that if somebody had a child out of wedlock, there was a great shame attached to it. It passed on by.

It was a scandal. Actually, somebody got divorced. It was a scandal.

That shows how old I am. But I remember those days. Divorce was something scandalous.

And there was a shame about it. But now, instead of shame about sin, our society says, let's out of it. And they march down the streets.

And they proclaim to the world, I am absolutely flouted by the conversion. Isn't that where we're at? Just like the Siberians. Shameless.

And unfortunately, there's no magistrate that would do what the Bible says shouldn't be done to these kind of people. The Bible says it's sin. The Bible says, actually, people who are conducting themselves in that way in the Old Testament were to be stoned to death.

And the magistrates were to witness against them. Right? But now, no shame. And so, this is a shameless society.

They're involved in utter wickedness. And they're not even ashamed. Their consciences are so seared and so dull that they can sin and actually boast about it.

No shame. And the very tragedy about this particular chapter is, yes, judgment is about to fail. But verse 28 says this.

And there is no deliverer. That's tragic, isn't it? Isn't it tragic to be under the judgment of God? To be just seconds away from the soul of eternal justice and having a world full of deliverance. But that's why we're here this morning.

Because the one thing that I can tell you that's different to what I'm saying is, that for you, from the beginning to now, you've been careless about your sin. Even up to now, you've been shameless about your sin. I can tell you that I'm here with a message of hope.

And that message of hope centers on a deliverer. There is such a deliverer. How do I know that? Because he delivered me from my sin and my rebellion and my debauchery.

He saved me. And he can save you. From hell and from judgment.

Now, how is God going to do this? How is he going to do this? How is he going to provide this deliverer? Let's go now to James. Keep in mind what we've just seen in Judges. That passage now in James chapter 1. And we've seen this just now.

When Christ has been saved, it brings forth sin. And sin, when it's finished, brings forth death. But let me just kind of emphasize this again, please.

Sin, when it's finished, brings forth death. This is a divine principle. That sin, when it's finished, brings forth death.

Now, let me explain what I mean by sin, when it's finished, brings forth death. See, the interesting thing is that most of us, when we sin, never think about sin, when it's finished. We always think of it at the beginning.

But at the beginning, it always looks attractive. At the beginning, it looks attractive, but that doesn't appeal to you, does it? Sin, by its very nature, is attractive, isn't it? And so I want to give you an example of sin from the Bible itself. Of how attractive sin looks.

Actually, the Bible talks about the pleasures of sin. And then it says, for a season. It's only short term.

But the consequences are long term. Right? But in the short term, it's like it's for a season. Right? So there's pleasure in connecting with sin.

And it always looks good at the beginning. So we go back to the beginning. Go back to the garden of Eden.

And there was fruit on the tree. I'm not going to say what kind of fruit it was, because the Bible didn't say what kind of fruit. But I do know this, that it looked good.

In sin, it looks good to eat. But I'm sure it looked good. Now, for me, I'm going to have to do that.

But nevertheless, it did look good. It looked good. And there was kind of promise connected with it.

It said, if you eat it, it's going to make you wise. You're going to be wise. And then, it said that if you eat it, you're going to be like God.

Wow, that sounds appealing, doesn't it? And so, this fruit looks good. It has a good appeal to me. And I'm sure it's going to taste good.

So that's why everything about it says good, good, good, good. Except God says, not good. God says, the day you eat thereof, you will surely die.

Now, it's interesting, this. Adam and Eve came over and died that day, do you think? It says in the Bible, it's not true. No, it is true.

And see, what happens is this. Death is just taking your last breath. But that's not how the Bible defines death.

Death means separation. And there's three stages to it. The first stage is when sin is separated from God.

That's spiritual death. That's the most significant one, in a sense. Everything else comes out of that.

And so, that day, prior to them eating that food, and acting with direct disobedience against the commands of God, prior to that, they enjoyed intimate communion with God every single day. They had an intimate relationship with God. It was a wonderful relationship.

But the minute they ate that food, they died spiritually. Something inside of them died. And instead of looking forward to eating with God and walking with God, they ate something.

Isn't that interesting? Well, I said, look at that, that intimate relationship with God. And sin always does that. It always breaks that intimacy of fellowship with God and communion with God.

It's a terrible thing. They don't enjoy it anymore. They want to hide from it because they're guilty of it.

And so, it's a terrible thing. Well, then, eventually, there's a Genesis chapter 5, and there's a refrain once through that chapter about Adam and all his descendants, and it says this, Adam died. Adam died.

Adam died. Adam died. Adam died.

Adam died. Just keep going. Because sin, when it's finished, brings forth death.

So, that's physical death. That's spiritual death. That's physical death.

And then, there's a third aspect to death. And that is, if that person dies, dies without restoring that communion with God before they die, without getting right with God, it means they were forever separated from God for all eternity. And, of course, without turning back.

And so, sin when it's finished. And there's many other examples. It says, by one man ascended into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, but all ascended.

And so, clearly, there's this idea that death always brings separation. Separation spiritually from God. Separation physically, when the body separates from the soul and spirit, the body goes into the grave, soul and spirit, either goes into a place of eternal punishment, or it goes to God.

If that person is relecting on themselves to God. And then, that eternal separation. Some other examples of sin, which we did at the beginning, and then, always bringing forth death.

I would say David and Bathsheba. Anybody think that Bathsheba is a woman? I mean, it doesn't describe her in the text, but David had lots of wives. Like, remember, David had a woman.

He's got his own personal harem, really, right? And when he sees this woman, I bet she looked gorgeous. Absolutely beautiful. And he took her.

He thought, well, she was married to somebody else. And, as it happens, she got pregnant, and David tried the biggest cover-up in history. And it didn't work.

So, a lot of dying occurred, because of sin, right? David died, and then David's son, Alan, died, and David's son, Absalom died, and David lost his kingdom, and David lost his respect, and it was just a disaster. And you ask David, and you can say to him, I want to interview him, was it worth it, David? Like, how did it go, this sin thing? Did it work out? You ask anybody who has fallen into sin, and the repercussions and the consequences, was it worth it? We all say the same thing. You know, it was a disaster.

You see, sin, well, that's finished. What's a deception? Deception is, that's a deception. Sin, when it's finished, brings self-death.

None of these things happened with their own hands ever after. See, the Bible says sin is slavery. Sin is slavery.

It's bondage. It's hard bondage. It hurts good.

And so, James says, he says, get this right. Sin, when it's finished, brings self-death. Do not earn my beloved brethren.

Get it right. Understand this. Sin, when it's finished, brings self-death.

Don't be deceived. Sin, when it's finished, brings self-death. James says, so get this right.

Don't earn my beloved brethren. You know, it's almost like he changes his tune. It says something completely radical here.

In verse 17, he says, every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father in Christ, with whom is now dead, and is now in the shadow of the contrary. He asks himself, what's this got to do with anything he's been saying? Well, how does God deal with this problem of man separating from God because of sin? What's his solution? How's he going to deal with this? Well, he says, well, I've got a solution. I'm going to send a gift into the midst of this mess.

And what a gift it was. See, God so loved the world. In all of which, without less degradation, even though he hates the sin, he loves the sin.

And he wants him back. He wants a relationship with him, with you. He wants a relationship.

And so how do we deal with that? Well, he sent his son. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. The greatest gift that he could give was his perfectly righteous son, who had come into this world and who was the only person who didn't sin, who lived a perfect life.

In fact, the Bible says he knew no sin, he didn't know sin, neither was any guile found in his mouth. This was the perfect man. Ah, the perfect man, the Bible says.

Well, actually, it depends on what perfect man that ever makes this earth. What this imagines is. We're not mentioning this.

We said that sin, when it's finished, brings forth death. And it brings this dilemma. It means that we're in this sinless person that never lived.

Well, let me think about Charles. Let me think about him. Let's think about him dying.

Well, why did he die? Well, if he was sinless, if sin, when it's finished, brings forth death, then wouldn't this man who never sinned, who had never died, wouldn't he have to ask himself, why? Isn't this kind of breaking the first thing? You know, it's just, I mean, you said sin, when it's finished, you didn't sin. How did you die? Well, it was because of sin. Not his.

Yours. Well, see, when we say that sin, when it's finished, brings forth death, if you want to know what sin, when it's finished, looks like, I want you to take you to a place called Calvary. I want you to look at something.

It says this. His face is not of an animal. Well, is that because they didn't just give him a good greeting? Because a lot of people think his countenance is being odd because of the beating.

But what I'm saying about Jesus' face was not of an animal, is that he went through the wrath of God for sin. Not for this. He's sinless.

He's spotless. He's not just sinless. He's infinitely moving.

And yet, as our substitutes, he bore his own body on that tree, our sin, their sin, my sin. It was like this. God laid in Jesus the sin of the world and then punished him as if he was guilty of every one of them, as if

he committed it all.

God's falling wrath against sin was poured out on his son on that cross at Calvary. You want to know what sin, when it's finished, looks like? Look at heaven. Look at Calvary.

Look at that. So why? Why is this? Because God wants to forgive. He wants to show mercy to a people who are on the judgment that deserves death and deserves hell.

He wants to do that. But he can't just pretend it didn't happen. He can't just look away and say, I know you're a scoundrel, but you can come into my heaven.

He can't do that because people will turn around and accuse him of being unrighteous. God, how did that guy get into heaven? I knew about him. He's a lying scoundrel.

How would they let him in? God can say, I didn't let him in because his sin was taken care of. He was valued. He was punished.

Everything that man ever did was punished. But it was punished in the substitute for that Jesus. All our sin is on that tree.

So God is able to allow us to be forgiven, bring us back into that intimate relationship with him. We can still retain his justice, his righteousness and holiness because nobody can say that sin wasn't paid for because Jesus paid it all off. All to him I owe.

Sin had left the prisons of sin and rushed in without a soul. See the Lord Jesus. All our sin is on that man's tree.

And so unlike the people of Laish who had no deliverer, I'm here this morning to tell you there is a deliverer. That deliverer is Jesus Christ. He loved you enough to die and take the penalty for your sins.

But listen, you can no longer be careless about your sin. You have to realize how serious it is. You shouldn't be anxious about your soul because either he'll pay the penalty or you'll pay the penalty.

It must be paid. So you can either let him pay as less of his own and trust in his finisher or you can kill yourself and have it for all eternity. We can't afford to be careless.

And you can't allow yourself to be deceived into this quiet state of security if you don't have a secure savior. It's wonderful. I can tell you without hesitation, because I'm a good person.

But I know without a shadow of a doubt that if I die, I will go to heaven. I have absolute security and peace and quietness in my soul. It's not a deception.

But the Bible says, those who have a delinquent heart to them shall not perish but have pleasant possession everlasting life. So please don't be careless about your soul. Please don't have this deceptive sense of quiet and peace, or else you'll be restored to recognizing that you're right.

And in that time, you will flee to the earth. These people are going to live there for a long time. These people have a way.

There's two ways for them. There's one way to sell and there's another way to sell. But we're here to introduce you to everyone who can help you.

Can you help yourself? So even when we say good things inside us but they're delinquent, we can't do anything to save yourself. We need a complete deliverer. And God has provided such a deliverer.

And by the way, God showed us that he accepted that his son was our substitute. You know what he said? He says that he was saved and he was reburied and he was hung on a grave. He said that since his sins have not been paid for, he's still buried in the grave.

Because he says the wage of sin is death and he's still buried in and he's still reburied but he's alive. Jesus is alive because sin has been dealt with by Calvary. So can I urge you this morning that you never close your eyes to the author of the deliverer of the Savior saved from sin and death and crowned.

I pray that you will tell the Lord Jesus just that they'll be able to save you. And you know what the amazing thing is? It's not that they just have somebody they can call upon. It's that they have somebody they can just call out to and say help us or when there's somebody there to come to their aid, there is nobody.

Well, here's a great message this morning. The Bible says this. Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Isn't that beautiful? All you've got to do for the very life of your people if you've never been a sinner is simply say Lord, save me. I've observed judgment. I know I did but I need to be saved.

Lord, save me. And it says whosoever comes to them no matter how bad you might have been as much of a Jezebel it says whoever comes to me my eyes cast them out. He will save you.

He will save you. He will close the circle of sin give you a new start, a new beginning, a new start, a new life, a glorious future and a hope. So you who call me on the after of salvation because it might not be available for you to understand what I'm trying to say is we are going to the next verse.

This is not something to put off. You may not have tomorrow but many people who went to bed at night seem to wake up in the morning when they didn't while they did they woke up in the morning. So can I advise you please this is serious.

We're not playing games here. This is the most serious thing you can ever do which is closing the after of salvation. And for those of you who said oh, saved, I don't know how it really will go can I urge you to flee from sin as well because the ransom sin that is finished in Calvary so every sin that's paid for in Calvary will be lost.

I just want you to know that before you were saved a drunkard once asked him will there be the mind of God when you die on the cross? So please don't ask anything to this. Let's flee from sin. Let's live the new life.

Let's tell the world there's hope there's a deliverer. Yes, there's one deliverer. There's light in the deliverer and we know it because it's running through us.

There are many troubles after you. Let's help this. Let's pray.

Father we pray this morning never ever trusted the Lord Jesus and even being in a prison like this maybe when the Christians come since my guarantee doesn't come by one short breath but by sinning worse. So let us never ever close our eyes off of salvation. Let's pray and say let us never ever recall in the name of the Lord what they might do at this moment.

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be your name. Give us this day our daily bread. Give us this day
Give us this day our daily bread.

Give us this day our daily bread. Give us this day our daily bread. Give us this day our daily bread.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/-P5GJZV-n74.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/mike-attwood/careless-before-catastrophe/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net