

Truth Is Dangerous

by Paris Reidhead

Paris Reidhead's sermon emphasizes the perilous nature of truth and the urgent need for genuine repentance in the face of societal challenges.

Duration: 38:52

Scripture: Matthew 11:2-9, Matthew 11:16-19, Matthew 11:28-30, Matthew 23:37-39, Luke 10:13-15, Revelation 3:15-16

Topics: "Truth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by addressing the tendency of people to reject messages from God that they find costly or uncomfortable. He compares this behavior to that of children who refuse to play a game if it doesn't go their way. The speaker then turns to the story of John the Baptist and how Jesus reassured him that he was doing the Father's will. He emphasizes the importance of recognizing and understanding the true character of Jesus and his obedience to God. The speaker also highlights the need for Christians to have a strong spiritual impact in the world, especially in the face of current dangers and challenges.

Transcript

Matthew chapter 11. The portion has been read for you. You recall that it began with friends of John the Baptist, who was in prison, coming to the Lord Jesus Christ asking if this, one that John had announced to be the Lamb of God, was indeed the long-awaited Messiah? Or was there another to join him? Now I know there's been a great controversy by commentators down across the years as to whether or not John was doubting Christ.

And obviously there was some question in his mind. But may I suggest to you today that the reason why I think John sent these friends, John's ministry had been one of judgment. He had promised that unless the people repented, one coming after him with a fan in his hand would burn up the chaff.

Our Lord Jesus has begun his ministry. It began with the miracle of turning the water into wine. It continued with the healing of the sick, raising of the dead, cleansing of the lepers, ministries of grace and love and mercy and compassion.

And John, who's in prison, because his was the ministry of stern rebuke. For you know the reason he is in prison is that he indicted Herod to his face and condemned Herod's incestuous, immoral relationship. Herod, moved by the women of the household, had John put in prison.

Now John spoke the word of God and spoke the truth of God and promised judgment where it was due, expecting that Messiah would exercise that judgment immediately. In the Old Testament prophecies, the Annunciation concerning Christ, has his ministries of grace and mercy joined with judgment. And viewing the Old Testament at the time it was given, one would not realize that there would be a period as long as 1900, 2000 years between the first coming of Christ in mercy and the second coming of Christ in judgment.

And thus, John, sitting there in prison, knowing that he probably will not get out alive, prepared to say to his followers, he must increase and I must decrease, sends these representatives to Christ saying, are you the one that I was talking about? Are you actually going to have a ministry of judgment? Or is there someone else coming that will exercise this ministry? Our Lord said to these that asked, you go back to John and tell him what you've seen. Show him that you have actually with your own eyes seen the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, and the lepers cleanse, the deaf be made to hear, the dead raised up. You tell him this.

John will understand. John will know. And so this was the message.

I am doing now what I have come to do now. This is what he said to John. I'm doing now that which I've been sent to do now.

If I am doing now what I feel and know my Father's will is, will you not rest, John, in the fact that I will do when the Father's time comes all that he wants me to do? The blind do receive their sight, the deaf do hear, the lame are made to walk, lepers are cleansed, and the dead are raised up. Everything that the prophet spoke of me is being fulfilled. I am doing that which my Father instructed me to do, and John rests assuredly in this.

I will do all that's prophesied of me, but you must trust me. This is what he said. Blessed is he, in verse six, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

But that word offended is literally trapped, and it speaks of the broken stick which, when it is struck, causes the box to fall, and something to be trapped. And he said, there's a tendency for you to fail to see who I am, and to understand that I am doing exactly what the Father's told me to do in the manner that he told me to do it. And so you go and assure John that I've begun and I will complete, and don't let him worry.

I don't want him to be trapped or offended by what I'm doing. I'm doing those things that please the Father. Our Lord Jesus then turned to the multitude that were beside him, and he began to speak concerning John.

Here they are listening to him. They've been with him. He's spoken to them plainly, clearly.

But since the multitude had seen the representatives of John come to Christ and had heard his reply, he turns to them. For they were among the company that had gone out clear across the Jordan River into the wilderness to see John. Now, what did you go out to see? A reed shaken in the wind? There were many of these reeds around the shore of Galilee, and whichever way the wind would blow, so the reeds would bend.

He said, you didn't go out expecting to find someone that put his finger to the air and said, now, which way is the policy? What's good for me? Which is politic? What should I say now? Which is going to promote

me? He said, you didn't go out there to find someone that was interested in promoting himself. You didn't go out to the wilderness in order that you could hear someone that was seeking himself and was just trying to say the thing that would please the crowd. You'll never accuse John of having been a crowd pleaser.

Here was a man that got his message from God. He spoke to the Pharisees, whited sepulchers. He spoke to the soldiers, stop your extortion and your brutality.

He spoke to the people, and when Herod came in his eyes, he spoke to Herod. This wasn't a reed blowing in the wind. Here wasn't a person that was trying to build up himself at the expense of the consciences and the lives of the people.

Here was a prophet of God, not a reed shaken with the wind. He said, what did you go out to see? Did you go out to the wilderness? Did you make that long trip and spend the night sleeping in the desert in order that you could find someone there that had fine clothes, the velvets, the ermine that you'd find in the house of the king? No. They that wear soft clothing in king's house.

He wasn't speaking to be promoted and be rewarded. He wasn't pleasing the crowd in order that he could be enriched by it. Here wasn't a man that was using his gifts for his own advantage.

This man that you went across the river to see and sat there on the stones to listen to, was not a man that was exploiting his ministry for his own advantage. Here was someone whose purpose was only to speak for God. What did you go out to see? A prophet.

That's what. You went out to see one who spoke for God, but he's more than a prophet. He is the very one of whom the scriptures wrote saying, I send my messenger before thy face which shall prepare thy way before thee.

John was the one that was prophesied. He was the Elijah that was to come and prepare the way of the Messiah. This is the one you've heard, but what was your response to him? And he turns to the people, said this is what you said.

Why? He wears camel's hair, and he eats locusts, and he eats wild honey, and he doesn't speak the language of the court, and he isn't educated and doesn't have degrees behind his name, and he isn't recognized by the Pharisee Association. And why? Who's going to listen to a wild man out of the desert? No, no. This ascetic, this man with long hair and long beard and camel's hair and girt about with a sash, carrying a staff and a leather pouch in which he carries his meager food.

Who's going to listen to him? He is a devil. He's demon possessed. That's the trouble with him.

Now notice, John was God's messenger. God, John was God's servant. John was sent to prepare the way of the Lord.

But the people didn't consider what he said. They never went to the issue, is what he's saying true? Is this God's word? Is this what God wants said? Oh, no. They didn't like what was being said, and so they did as you would expect, as was done in the Old Testament.

They went to John, what he wore, what he ate, where he talked. And they attacked his person rather than considering his message. Then he said, I came.

And I came the way the Father intended me to come, wearing robes such as you wear, clothes such as you wear. I came going into your homes, eating, attending your wedding feasts. And what did you say about me? What did you have to say about me? Why, you said, uh, uh, this man's a glutton.

He's a wine driver, a friend of publicans and sinners. And the very thing that you said John should have been, in order to listen to what he said, I was. And the very thing that you demanded in John, you condemned in me.

And you never considered what John said, nor have you considered what I said. But because you have rejected the message and have been unwilling to face the consequence of rejecting the message, you have, said Christ to his hearers, condemned the messenger. Well, hasn't it been that way down the centuries? Wasn't it that way with Jeremiah and Isaiah? It's been that way always.

When the Pharisees found out that Jesus had something they didn't have and was talking about something that they ought to have and was setting up a system which would mean that what they had was nothing but wood, hay, and stubble, they had one of two alternatives. They either had to listen to what he said and ascertain whether or not it was true and then submit to it or else they had to condemn him and kill him. But the world wasn't big enough for him to live in it when what he would say would indict them.

And so they didn't come to grips with this message. Never. It was him.

Christ was the they criticized. He's a fool. He said that he could tear down that big temple and build it in three days.

Now, you know full well that this man is insane. That's the first charge they had. And then they said he's a blasphemer.

He's made himself equal with God. And look at him. Carpenter from Galilee.

And he says he's God. He's insane. He's devil-possessed.

That's what's the matter with him. Just completely. Can't believe a word he says.

And then he says he's a king. Well, if he's a king, we'll put these robes on and see what he does. We'll find out.

You see, they never once came to the fact that Jesus Christ said, except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. And that these people had not been born again. Except you repent, you'll perish.

They didn't come to the fact that the message that Christ gave was the message that cut the ground out from under them and all they were doing. And rather than face the message, they thought they could efface the messenger. And in so doing, they were fulfilling exactly what had happened at the very beginning of Christ's ministry and at the close of John's.

They rejected John because of peculiarities of his dress and his diet. And they rejected Christ because Christ was just the opposite of John. Now, I'm sure the Lord did that purposely.

He said, you know, you remind me of children in the open marketplace on other than market day. He said they get together and play their games. There's always somebody that wants to be leader, you know, with

a group of children.

And one of them says, well, now let's play. Let's play wedding and everybody will be joyful. And so we'll have the wedding dance.

Now I'll pipe and you dance. And so the little self-appointed leader starts to play on the flute and the song whistle and the rest of them forget all about her. And so after it's over, I piped and you didn't dance.

And then the little one's seeing the children. Well, well, if you don't want to play wedding, let's play funeral. And so we'll wail the way the hired women wail.

We'll do something to please you. If you don't want to be happy, let's be sad. And so the little self-appointed leader gets up there and starts to wail.

And after a while, he said, what's the matter with you children? I play for you to dance and you won't dance. And I play for you to wail and you won't wail. He said, that's what you've been.

You've been children that because you can't have it your way, you just reject it. Because it won't play the way you want to play. It won't have anything to do with it.

And this is what the Lord Jesus said to his generation. He said, you remind me of children. Now, our Lord has said that the tendency of hearts, when they hear something from God that they find is going to be costly, is to find some thing in the character of the one who brings the message so that they can escape the responsibility of it.

This is a pattern of human behavior. It's always done. And Christ said, this is the way that it's happened.

But he next turns to the company and he begins to indict Corison and Bethsaida. These are two cities which he loved and where many of his mighty works were done. And he said, John came preaching repentance and you didn't repent.

And I came doing works demonstrating the mercy and the grace and the love of God and you haven't repented. He said, every message that you've heard from John, you're going to give an account for on the day of judgment. Every work of mine that you've seen, you're going to give an account for on the day of judgment.

He didn't say anything about judgment to John's disciples because John would understand that if he was doing the first part of what was prophesied, he'd do the latter part. But how he turns to the people and said, I have done these works. I have performed these ministries of love which attest the Messiah and are the credentials of the Messiah.

John came preaching and you heard him and didn't do what he said. You picked flaws in him. I've come preaching and performing works which are my credentials.

You haven't heard what I've said or done what I have commanded. And so now, I want you to know this, that in the day when you individually, for Chorazin and Bethsaida were villages made up of people and they would never stand as a village before God, it would be the individuals. He said, when you that have lived in Chorazin and have lived at Bethsaida come before the point of judgment, every word that John said is going to be brought back to you.

Every work that I have done, every ministry that you've seen, every word of entreaty that you've heard. In other words, all that's been presented to you is going to be raised up against you in the day of judgment. He turned then to Capernaum, this city which he loved and in which he spent more time enduring his ministry than any other city.

People that were gracious to him in many respects, the ones that followed him, ones that beheld so many of his great mighty works. And he made the statement which only God could make. No one but God could say what would have happened if what did happen hadn't happened.

And he said, if the works which have been done in you, Capernaum, had been done in Sodom, they would have repented and Sodom would be here until this day. Now, Capernaum is going to be brought down to hell. We know that the city of Capernaum is just more or less of an archaeological ruins now, at least that which was in the day of Christ.

But the city would never as a city be called into judgment. It will be the people, the people that were there witnessing to Christ's miracles and listening to Christ's words. For every man is going to give an account of what he has done with the truth that he's had.

This is the danger of truth. This is the reason why my heart often is filled with a sense of great grief, because every time God's word is spoken, it's a savor of life to life or of death to death. You're either better or worse for having heard the word of God.

You're never the same. If you've made up your mind that you are not going to be any other than you are, and you're not going to obey any more truth than you now have, you're not going on any further, the wisest thing you could do would be to put your Bible on the shelf and never open it and never come to church again, never have any contact with it, because every time you read the Bible and hear a message and you hear truth that you do not obey, you are far worse for it, because something has happened in your character, something has happened in your mind and in your spirit that has pressed you and driven you further away from God. Now truth is one of the most dangerous things in the world, for it's either a savor of life to life or of death to death.

No man can be neutral toward truth, for if you don't walk in it, you reject it, and the moment that it's rejected, then it has become a seal to your character. It has been more or less like the air blowing on the cement that's fallen into the form. Truth is exceedingly dangerous.

For instance, we live today in days of great jeopardy and danger. You are aware of the fact, are you not, that with the consolidation of Cuba as a communist state, that just 90 miles from Florida is a state which is now the beachhead for international communism. You know full well that there is a determined effort that right here in our own United States, that Khrushchev had the temerity to say that our children and perhaps our grandchildren would live under communism.

You know from what you're hearing and what you've learned about this thing, that this nation is in mortal jeopardy, and the only possible thing that can save us is a return to vital New Testament Christianity. Nothing else. Nothing else.

If this church were to go on for the next 40 years as it's been for the past 40 years, it would make virtually no contribution to preserving our country from the holocaust that hangs over it like the sword of Damocles. Because during these past 40 years since the death of Dr. Simpson, this church on this corner has seen

the rise of communism in every country where it served, its missionary outreach. And I submit to you that what we have today is hardly worth preserving.

Unless God's people will break before him and repent of their sins and forsake their evil ways and come before God, we're not worth saving. And the thing worth preserving, playing church, piping while someone dances, isn't enough. Beloved, these are days when the end of the ages have come upon us.

We're going to have to face whether or not we're prepared to meet the challenge of the 20th century. And if we insist on going on as we have in the past, then I submit to you that we will be like pawns on the chess board that are quickly captured and put aside, and our place will be given to others more worthy. We can't do business as usual.

The days we live in call for the kind of Christian character that animated this church 75 years ago. Unless we're prepared to hear that the truth that we've heard, that we've not obeyed and walked in, has become the condemnation in the indictment, and to face up to it, then I insist upon this truth, we will go on as we've gone in the past. And when I speak of this church, I'm not speaking of us as a little nebulous or small item.

I'm speaking of fundamental evangelical Christianity in America. Speaking of all we represent, that what we have has deteriorated in its spiritual quality, its spiritual impact, and its spiritual effect during the past 40 years. And that the continuation of what we now possess is going to have no great significance in the kind of world we're going into.

The most crucial days in the history of America are the next 10 years. You know that. Now, are you going to be a Christian on the pattern which you've been in the past? Or seeing the marching of Nebuchadnezzar's army and the red scourge that God has loosed in the world, are you going to say such days as these demand a kind of response to the truth of God that I, as an individual, have not been prepared to give? Now, this is what we're facing.

We have a message. If, dear heart, this little society we call the alliance in this church were to ever lose its hold on God and its life and franchise, I submit to you, as best I know this book, the only thing we could do would be to start over exactly what Dr. Simpson started here 78 years ago. Because I believe that his vision and burden was of God, that it was New Testament Christianity.

Beloved, Chorazin and Bethsaida saw Christ, but they were satisfied with the status quo. And Capernaum saw Christ and they were satisfied with the status quo. And within 40 years after Christ spoke, Capernaum had been turned into a desolation.

Now, beloved, we are responsible to truth and we must walk in it. And if we've chosen not to walk in it and we're not going to bend and not going to bow and not going to meet God in his terms, then for our own soul's sake, let's not add condemnation by reading any more of the Bible or attending any more preaching. If we're not going to be the kind of people the Bible says, then why add guilt? But as I look at you today and as I know some of you well for these five years and longer, I don't feel that that's your response.

I don't feel that anyone that is before me has said, I'm not going to be any different. I won't bend. I won't bow.

I won't break. Contrary, I think everyone has said, I will sometime. Sometime.

I will. Sometime. But sometime is maybe just long enough.

Today, now, listen to Christ. After he's given this indictment, he turns to the same people and he says, come. Every imperative mood is immediate.

When Christ said, come, he meant come right now. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Judgment is coming.

Capernaum is going to be judged. Chorazin and Bethsaida are going to be judged. But now listen, you as an individual, said Christ, can respond and not be involved in Chorazin and Bethsaida.

It depends upon you. Come, come, come. Isn't it strange that just as Christ had spoken with judgment hanging over these cities, he turned to the inhabitants of the cities and he said, you, on the basis of your need, on the basis of the recognition of the burden of your sin and your guilt and your impenitence and your uncleanness and your lack of spiritual vitality and your weakness, whatever you are, if you're burdened and if you're heavy laden, come to me.

You come. This is the whole thing, come. Isn't it marvelous that in spite of the fact they'd listened to John and hadn't bowed to John, they'd listened to Christ and hadn't bowed to Christ, and they were in Chorazin and Bethsaida and Capernaum.

Christ said, my arms are outstretched. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me.

For I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, my burden is light. As you look out and see the world as it is, the danger of it is, what's Christ asking? What's he asking of you? It's simple.

This isn't an invitation to sinners only. It's that. And if you're here today without Christ, this is the Lord Jesus inviting you to him.

The yoke that he carried was the cross on which he died for you, shedding his blood in your place, instead dying your death. And if you'll come and see that that yoke that he bore was your cross, you'll find rest from the conscience that's torn with the sense of your guilt and sin. So if I'm speaking to someone here that does not have peace with God, let me assure you that there is forgiveness and pardon.

But I'm speaking to some Christian that's burdened with trait and personality. Through all the years of your life, you've been beset by attitudes, strife and bitterness in your mind. You've been burdened with jealousy, perhaps, whispering or backbiting, unclean thoughts.

I don't know what it's been. But you're a Christian. You hate sin.

You love God. In all your life, you've carried this weight and this burden. The Lord Jesus looks at you and he says, come to me and I'll give you rest.

I'll deliver you from yourself. You don't have to carry the dead weight of yourself. I'll give you victory.

I'll give you victory. And then if I speak to someone that's afraid of the future, and your heart failing you for fear, he says, come unto me. No use for you to carry that burden of weight and grief.

I'll give you rest. You see, the reason why people are destroyed, the reason why Capernaum, Chorus, and Bethsaida is destroyed is because they won't come. They won't bend.

They won't bow. Now, is there any reason for America to go down? No. He speaks to every heart.

Come, bend, bow, break, confess your sin, take my victory, take my cleansing, take my power, take my life. I'm enough. Is there any reason why a church should lose its candlestick in its ministry and testimony? No.

Come, come unto me. I'll give you rest. I'll pardon.

I'll forgive. I'll cleanse. Is there any reason why a home should be broken? Unhappiness and grief should come? No.

Come unto me. I'll give you rest. It doesn't make any difference what your need is.

Christ is the answer. And so he stands there, and he stands at us, and he looks at us today, and he says, listen, I have a ministry for you. I have a work for you.

You come, you'll find my yoke is easy, my burden is light, if you'll just meet me on my terms. If you'll come, and you'll bend, and you'll bow. So on the one hand is indictment, and the other is a threat of judgment that will certainly be carried out.

But then he says, come, come. I believe that the Spirit of God is still saying to us, come, come in confession, come in brokenness, come in humility, come in submission, come in faith, come in love, come, and I'll bless you, and I'll restore the years the locusts have eaten, and I'll give you back your first love, and I'll give you back power and the presence of Christ, and I'll make you everything you ought to be if you'll just come. Come, come.

And he looked at Jerusalem, oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem. How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings. And you would not, you would not come unto me, all ye that labor in your heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

That's his message to us as an individual, as a church, as a nation. And he looks at America that's been blessed as no other nation in history, and I can hear him as he looks over the parapet of glory, oh America, America. How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathers her chickens, must he say, and ye would not.

If he does, America will go the way Jerusalem went. Let us pray. Thy son is not abandoned his ministry of judgment, our father.

We know that he shall be revealed with his angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on all them that know not God and obey not the gospel. And our hearts go out to thee, for here is a church more favored than any other church on this continent, that's had more truth and more light and more teaching than any other church that we know of on this continent. And yet too much is given from them, much is required.

Oh father, to let little foxes tear down the vines and eat up the grapes, year after year and decade after decade. And it's come to us now to see whether thou has the people that will bend, hear thee sweet in treaty of thy son come unto me, all ye that labor under heavy laden. Oh God, move upon us, deacons, elders, Sunday school teachers, members and friends.

Such days as these demand the kind of obedience and brokenness and submission and service and love that our Lord Jesus asks for and deserves and hasn't received in the measure that is his. We pray, father,

today that we may hear his invitation, his entreaty. Come upon us, oh come upon us, God of grace, come upon us.

Until everyone shall know the plague of his own heart, till everyone shall break before thee, there shall be confession, forsaking of sin, meeting thee. So as Dawkins bless us, Lord, how we pray for thee to work in each of our lives, in our homes, in the church, in our country, our land. We must have revival, Lord.

We must have revival or we perish. We must have a return to thee or we perish. We're not excited, Lord.

We're just sure and certain that unless we're worth preserving, thou would sully thy character to preserve us. When thou didst protect the salt that's lost its saving power, then thou didst become partaker with them of their sins. We know that we can't be blessed unless we're blessable.

And so God, we hear thy entreaty now, echoed again, come unto me, all ye that labor under heavy laden, I'll give you rest. I'll give you rest. I'll cleanse you, purge you, empower you, bless you.

I'll give you rest. May we do it. With our heads bowed and our eyes closed, waiting in the presence of God, what if revival rests with you? What if God sees your heart and life? And you are the one by your obedience, by your breaking, by your confession, cleansing, you are the one that will either bring or impede revival.

Are you willing? Are you willing? Are you willing to deal with the thing God has shown you in your life? Are you to bring revival? Are you willing to break? It's all up to you. Nobody but you. Revival can't come without you.

It rests in your hands. Listen to him. Come unto me, all ye that labor under heavy laden.

Would you do it to save your country? Would you do it to save the church? Would you do it to ensure the glory of Jesus Christ? Would you meet God on his terms? Father, we come to the table. We ought to come with clean hands and with pure hearts, to partake worthily. Oh, search us out today.

Search us out today. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/24/SID24878.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paris-reidhead/truth-is-dangerous/>

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