

The Crowd the Broad Road

by Peter Orasuk

The sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting Christ and not being part of the crowd that rejects Him, highlighting the dangers of doubt and dishonor.

Duration: 25:02

Scripture: Luke 23:16-22, Luke 23:25

Topics: "Broad Way"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the power of the word of God to touch people's hearts and provoke them to trust in Christ. He expresses his frustration with people who attend gospel meetings but leave without making a decision to follow Christ, assuming they will have another chance. The preacher then discusses a fictional story that illustrates the idea that if the world could find something or someone it feared or hated more than each other, it would unite against it. He relates this to the unity found at Calvary, where people from different backgrounds and beliefs came together to crucify Jesus. The sermon concludes by examining the crowd's denial, doubt, and dishonor of Christ, and highlights the importance of recognizing and responding to the truth of the gospel.

Transcript

Let's turn to the Gospel of Luke chapter 23. Luke's Gospel chapter 23. Read now verse 16.

16. I will therefore chastise him and release him. For necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.

And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man and release unto us Barabbas, who for a certain sedition made in the city and for murder was cast into prison. Pilate, therefore willing to release Jesus, spake to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.

And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him. I will therefore chastise him and let him go. And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified.

And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence, that it should be as they required. And he released unto them.

Him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired. But he delivered Jesus to their will. Now, further along in that same chapter, reading at verse thirty-three, And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him.

And the malefactors, one on the right hand and the other on the left, then said Jesus, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiments and cast lots. And the people stood beholding, and the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others, let him save himself, if he be Christ chosen of God.

And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek and Latin and Hebrew, This is the king of the Jews. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God? Seem thou in the same condemnation, and we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds. But this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. Now, that's all we're going to read. And God will bless the reading of this.

Where do we trust thoughts taken there from for the gospel? I want to look at the truth this evening for a little while of the crowd, the crowd. One of the things that stands out in the gospel of Luke, it is the gospel of the crowd. You'll find, for example, a Luke's gospel.

There's a reference, not necessarily to a parallel passage, but to the truth that is found in Matthew, chapter seven, concerning a broad road and those that would enter in. And you find the truth of the crowd and their destination in Luke 13. In Luke, chapter 18, looking at men like Bartimaeus and then Luke, chapter 19, looking at Zacchaeus, you'll find there are individuals and they had to get by the crowd.

And there is the thought of the crowd and its distraction. But when you look at this passage, the portion that we've looked at, you're going to find that Calvary was a place of the crowd. There was a crowd there.

Let me say this. The Bible teaches there are two roads, two roads. There's a broad road.

That's really the thought of a crowded road and the multitudes that go in there at to destruction. There is a narrow road and that narrow road is entered by trusting the person of Christ and it is entered for heaven. So the crowd and its destination is moving towards the wrath of God.

And we're living in a world that is manipulated, maneuvered by the crowd. I want to look at three things about this crowd. I want to look, first of all, at the crowd and its denial, the crowd and its denial of Christ.

Then I want to look at the crowd and its doubt. We're going to find that the crowd was marked by doubt. And finally, the ultimate characteristic of the crowd was this, the crowd and its dishonor, had dishonored the person of Christ, the crowd.

You know I think of the truth of denial. I don't expect everybody to remember this, but those who went possibly to school some years ago will remember a classic. I had to take it in Canada.

I'm not sure if it's part of the curriculum here, but most of our schooling does come from your part of the world. And the mannerism of schooling in Canada is very much the same. And I remember a classic we had to take in my twelfth grade.

That would be the last grade of school, high school. And it was called *The War of the Worlds*, *The War of the Worlds*. I won't go into the weary details of it, but it was basically a book written by a man that some esteemed to be somewhat of a visionary by the name of H.G. Wells.

And that man, using a very fictional basis, brought out a very large statement or theme. He depicted a world, much as the world we have today, that couldn't get along, where nation was fighting against nation, where you couldn't put two children together in a sandbox without fighting, let alone two nations together. And he brought out that through this imaginary force that was attacking the world, all the nations, all these nations that weren't getting along, forgot their differences and united.

And with all that they had available between them all, they somehow fought off this power. Now, I remember the theme of it was this, because he made this statement. He said this, if this world could find something or somebody it feared or hated more than it hates one another, it would unite against it or against him.

You know, when we look at the place called Calvary, Calvary is the place where men united, where Jew and Gentile forgot their religious differences, where wealthy men and poor men forgot their differences, where the crucified and the crucifier forgot their differences, where the military and the felon forgot their differences. And with one voice, one voice, there was this statement, away with them, crucify them, crucify them. We will not have this man to reign over us.

Going to fight today that in this world, it's not that people aren't saved or going to heaven because there's not a God that cares for the truth that God gave his beloved son to suffer for our sins at Calvary. But the world in large doesn't want anything to do with Christ. I mentioned it the other night.

It is no incident or coincidence that the person in the name of Christ is used as a swear word in every language of this world. And yet there are individuals who committed hideous crimes, hideous crimes. Never was there a man more tender, more compassionate, more purposeful towards humanity than the person of Christ.

And yet they come together. Herod and Pilate, they're made friends together. Jew and Gentile, they forget their differences and they stand in the same crowd with the same longing.

There's no national divisions anymore. There's just one voice, one voice. You know what that voice says? We don't want Christ.

We don't want Christ. That language wasn't only found at Calvary. That is the language of this world tonight.

You know, when it comes to it, sometimes we might think like this. Well, that was back in the over 2,000 years ago, around 2,000 years ago. And my, we're a lot more civilized than that now.

I wouldn't dare stand on the street corner and raise my fist to the heavens and say, no Christ for me. I'll join churches. I'll follow religious pursuits, but I will not respond to the provision of God.

No Christ for me. I wouldn't do that. Perhaps neither would you.

But let me say something. Whether you scream away with Him, I don't want Christ from the top of your lungs or whispered in the quiet recesses of your heart. It's the same language.

It's the language of the crowd. This crowd was marked by its denial. And I want to say tonight in this meeting, if you sit through this gospel meeting without trusting Christ, it is not because He doesn't want you.

For His own words were thus, come on to me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. And yet He could say in the gospel of Luke chapter 19, I would, but you would not. No Christ for me.

That's the language of the crowd. The crowd and its doubt, you know, it's an amazing thing. I used to visit a person in prison.

He was actually a part of my gang before God saved me. His name was Billy Mac, Billy McFarlane. Billy had a few killings to his name, and he's a pretty rough character.

And the last time he was going across to do a stretch, he would go across and do the habitual. He'd finally die right after he came out of prison of a massive brain aneurysm. But Billy called me in to see him.

And they brought me into the prison. I'd been to that prison myself. And of course, the guards knew me.

They knew that I'd gotten saved. I'd talked to each one of them. You know, the amazing thing was, they didn't even frisk me, didn't even search me.

And I sat behind that plexiglass that I'd often sat behind the other side of. And I remember what Billy said to me. He said, Billy, Billy said to me, he said, Peter, what happened? What happened? I said, what do you mean, Billy? Well, he said, you know, I professed to get saved.

You know, I professed to get saved, but it never worked for me. I want to say something right now. I think it's time to say this right now.

If the salvation that you professed to have won't keep you out of the world, it won't keep you out of hell. And I said to him, Billy, well, just tell me about it again. Tell me how it happened.

And so he said, well, you remember you and this other man, Nelson, were visiting me and there were a group of us sitting there. We get to listen to you preach. And I knew there was something to it because you got saved, Pete.

And he said, you remember mentioning about the great white throne and the thought of being in darkness forever. And I'd been in prison most of my adult life. And I thought I'm going to be shut up forever.

And he said, so I went into a little back closet, a little back closet. I said, I got down on my knees and I said this, oh God, if I'm really that bad a sinner and if I'm really on my way to hell and if Christ really died for me to save me right now, and he said, I just sort of went through a mind and thought of a verse he that whosoever should call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. And I said, that's it.

I'm saved. But he said, Peter, it never worked. Had never worked.

Had never gave me new desires, nor what it wasn't real. Had never gave me desires for the things of God. It never delivered me from the life that I was living.

It was an empty dead thing. You said, Peter, what happened? What went wrong? I didn't answer right away. And it was one of those times I was glad I didn't.

I went home that night and I laid down on my bed and about two o'clock in the morning, going over my mind, what he had said, it just became so obvious. I picked it up right away. Listen to this.

If I'm really a sinner, God says all of sin and come short of the glory of God. He wasn't convinced he was a sinner. If I'm really on the way to hell, the Lord Jesus said this, if you believe not that I am, he shall die in your sins.

And where I am, you cannot come. The alternative being hell. He wasn't convinced where he was going.

And death, Christ died for me. And the word of God says, behold, the Lamb of God that take away the sin of the world, for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. There's no way.

The Bible says that Christ died for every man. There's no way. Do you see what Mark has experienced? If, if, if go with me to the cross, listen to the Romans.

So the first of all, the priests, if thou art the Christ, save thyself. They doubted his person. Listen to the Roman soldiers.

If thou art the king of the Jews, save thyself. They doubted his power. Listen to the thief on the cross.

If thou art the Christ, save thyself on us. They doubted his purpose. If, if, if any one of those statements without an if would have been a statement of faith.

Thou art the Son of God. Thou art the Christ. Thou art the king of the Jews.

Save us. Every one of those statements, but that little word if, a tiny two letter word, makes all the difference. You know, the wonderful thing is this.

When that thief that's on the cross, the one that responds to him, turns around. Here's what he says. Lord, there's no if there.

He didn't doubt his person. Remember me. He didn't doubt his purpose.

When thou comest into thy kingdom, he didn't doubt his power. God has never left his Son without testimony. And even in the midst of all that confusion, in a world that questions everything that God says, there is a statement of faith.

In this meeting tonight, you know, when I'm looking at you, some of you, I've never seen you folks before, but I want to be very straight with you. There is an if in your experience tonight. That's why you're not saved.

You're wondering this. Am I really that bad if I'm really a sinner? And the Bible says all have sinned. You say, but yeah, but if I'm really on my way to hell.

The Bible teaches that the majority of men are on the road to the broad road that leads to destruction through failing to respond to the provision of Christ. There's no if. And if Christ really died for me, you want to know if Christ really died for me.

Listen to this verse. There is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, not all but you, not most, not some, not a vast number, for all. That tells me this.

I can preach the gospel to every individual and none of this nonsense and saying you can tell them that God made a provision for them, but you can't say Christ died for them. That's ridiculous. In order to make a provision for the souls of every man, Christ must needs die for them.

God in his Word says this, believing the gospel, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture. There's no if there. Can it be tonight that you question the Word of God? I can see you questioning a preacher from Canada.

That wouldn't bother me at all. I can see you questioning a company of believers even. But to take God's Word and to say this, if, if, if, it's the language of a crowd on the road to hell.

If. They doubted him. You know, when it comes to the final point, I want to make this very brief because one of those things I have a difficulty preaching about.

I want to think of the crowd in its dishonor. You know, it says they did. They gambled.

They took his clothing and they gambled at the foot of the cross. Can I make an application to that tonight? Gambling at the foot of the cross. You know, oftentimes the term in evangelism, the foot of the cross is used for the thought of an individual being brought to the conclusion of the understanding that Christ died on that cross for me.

They are brought me to the foot of the cross. And I want to think of those that gambled at the foot of the cross. I want to tell you a very sad, sad circumstance.

Long before I was saved, I had a friend. His name was Freddie Luster. Freddie and I went to school together.

Freddie was really one of my backers in a lot of things that I did. We would call it in Canada a homie. That means one of the homeboys.

He eventually joined a motorcycle gang that was called the 13th Tribe and eventually became the Hells Angels, a chapter in Halifax. I can still remember Freddie loved motorcycles. He wasn't your average biker.

He wasn't your average gang member. He just loved motorcycles. And he would take that old Harley-Davidson all chopped down and all that chrome on it into his place.

And it was nothing to go to Freddie's place. And you saw the motorcycle right in the middle of the living room. And he polished it and he painted it and he took that engine apart and had it working and purring like a kitten.

He just loved motorcycles. But it got him in bad company. Before long, he started traveling with this motorcycle gang.

As it was, one evening, they had a party. I wasn't there. I only heard about it.

At that party, they had kind of reached the bottom of the barrel as trying to do things that really proved their machoism, how manly a person could be. Really, it was how ridiculous a person could be. And they decided to play a game called Russian Roulette.

To simply explain it to you, on this occasion, it was played with a Smith & Wesson .38, which is a small hand pistol, five-cylinder. And they would put one bullet in the chamber. You get five cylinders, one bullet in the chamber.

That was before you had what they call the clock and the vareta. And you just simply put it in and you spun it. And then you put it to your head.

And one man did it and just heard click. Empty chamber. Another man did it and heard click.

An empty chamber. And then they gave the gun to Freddy. He had an 80% chance of walking away.

He had a pretty good odds, certainly. And he spun the cylinder. And he put the gun to his head.

And he pulled the trigger. And he died three hours later in the Victoria General Hospital in Halifax of a massive brain contusion. You know what amazed me? You know what amazed me? All those bikers in that place.

The next day when the newspaper report came out, here's what it said. Man dies tragically, taking a chance he didn't have to take. Man dies tragically, taking a chance he didn't have to take.

Do you want to know something more dramatic or more drastic than that? Let me tell you this. It's when people sit in a gospel meeting and they listen to the gospel. And as it were, they're brought through the preaching of the cross to the very foot of the cross.

And the Word of God seems to be speaking to them. And God is touching their hearts, provoking them to trust Christ. I sometimes feel like, how dare you leave this meeting tonight in your sins when Christ has died? And yet they think like this.

I'll have another chance. Surely this is not my final opportunity. I will take a chance, that I will have another chance.

I cannot say from this platform, nor would I dare, that this is your last chance, young man, that this is your last chance. I wouldn't say it, but I'd say this. Sir, in this meeting tonight, let's get right down to where the tire hits the road.

Let's get beyond sermons. Let's get to right to person to person, heart to heart. What is this as your last chance? What if this is your only chance? And God has given His Son to die for our sins, my sins, and your sins at Calvary.

And the Word of God said, He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. And God is offering you His Son as your Savior. And you'll take a chance that you have another chance.

You know what you're doing? You're gambling at the foot of the cross. It's a great dishonor to God to walk out of a gospel meeting assuming this, that I won't trust Christ tonight, but eventually I will. You know what you're really saying? Later for God, later for Christ, I'll have another chance.

And you're gambling at the foot of the cross. This is not even part of my message, but I want to just ask you one question in this meeting tonight. One question.

What will you do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? Whether this is your first meeting or one of many, you trust Him tonight. You trust the Son of God that loved you and gave Himself for you. God bless His Word.

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