

Hell's Best Kept Secret (German)

by Ray Comfort

Ray Comfort's sermon emphasizes the necessity of understanding sin through God's law to appreciate the grace of salvation.

Duration: 55:52

Scripture: Psalm 51:6, Luke 10:25, John 3:18, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, 2 Corinthians 13:5

Topics: "Evangelism"

Description

In this sermon, evangelist Ray Comfort shares a teaching called 'Hell's Best Kept Secret.' He begins by illustrating the importance of understanding the Gospel through a story about two passengers on a plane. One passenger is skeptical about wearing a parachute, while the other understands the gravity of the situation and puts it on without hesitation. Comfort uses this analogy to emphasize the need for people to recognize the reality of sin and the consequences of not repenting. He urges listeners to share the Gospel with others, emphasizing that simply telling someone to put on the 'parachute' of salvation without explaining the need for it is ineffective.

Transcript

Christian services from all over the world have come together to develop the International Teaching Plan. These courses are being developed to help the community of Jesus in many countries, to enable Christians to understand their faith and to become servants of Jesus Christ. This course is called Personal Evangelization.

This is lesson one of this series. The speaker is evangelist Ray Comfort. My name is Ray Comfort.

I'm going to share a teaching with you called Hell's Best-Kept Secret. In the late 70s, God opened an itinerant ministry to me. And as a result, I found to my horror that up to 80% of those making a decision for Christ were falling away from the faith.

Let me bring up a date for you. In 1991, a major denomination was able to obtain 294,000 decisions for Christ. They could only find 14,000 in fellowship.

In other words, they couldn't account for 280,000 of their decisions. This is normal, modern evangelical results. I discovered this way back in the 70s.

So I made it a matter of prayer and began to study the gospel proclamations of men like Charles Spurgeon, John Wesley, and others that God greatly used down through the ages. I found I used a principle which is almost entirely neglected by modern evangelism. The Bible says that the law of the Lord is perfect.

Inverting the soul. We'll illustrate the function of God's law. Let's look for a moment at civil war.

Imagine if I said to you, I've got some good news for you. Someone has just paid a \$25,000 speeding fine on your behalf. You'd probably react by saying, that's not good news.

It doesn't make sense. I don't have a \$25,000 speeding fine. My good news wouldn't be good news, too.

It'd be foolishness. More than that, it would be offensive to you. Because I'm insinuating you've broken the law when you don't think you have.

But if I put it this way, it may make more sense. On the day of this meeting, the police, the law, crossed you at going 55 miles an hour. You're in an area specified for a blind children's convention.

You're in an area specified for a blind children's convention. You drove 50 miles in an area where blind children were going. There were 10 warning signs.

They said that 15 miles was the maximum speed. But you drove 55 miles. You've done something very dangerous.

The speeding fine is \$25,000. The law was about to take its course, when someone you don't even know, stepped in and paid the fine for you. You are very fortunate.

But if I tell you what you've done wrong first, then the good news of someone paying the fine for you makes sense. If I don't clearly bring instruction you've violated the law, then the good news will seem foolishness and offensive. If I clearly bring instruction you've violated the law, then that good news will become good news indeed.

Now in the same way, if I approach an impenitent sinner, someone who is not understanding his sin, and say, Jesus Christ died on the cross for you, it will be foolishness to him and offensive to him. Foolishness because it won't make sense. The Bible says that.

The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. And it will be offensive to him because I'm insinuating he's a sinner when he doesn't think he is. If I follow in the footsteps of Jesus, it may make more sense.

If I take up time to open up the divine law, to open up the ten commandments, and show the sinner precisely what he's done wrong, then when he becomes, as James says, convinced of the law as a transgressor, the good news will not be foolishness, it will not be offensive, it will be the power of God unto salvation. Now with those few thoughts in mind, by way of an introduction, let's look at Romans 3, verse 19. Romans 3, verse 19.

To see what it says about the law. Romans 3, verse 19. Now we know that whatsoever things the law says, it says them who are under the law.

That every mouth may be stopped and all the world, not just the Jews, all the world may become guilty before God. One function of God's law is to stop sinners' mouths and leave them guilty before God. The following verse, Romans 3, verse 20.

Therefore, by the deeds of the law, the shinniah flesh be justified in his sight. For by the law is the knowledge of sin. So God's law tells us what sin is.

1 John says sin is transgression of the law. Now let's go on to Romans 7, verse 7. Romans 7, verse 7 says, Paul speaking, what shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. No, I had not known sin, but by the law.

Paul says he didn't know what sin was until the law told him. And over in Galatians 3, 24 says these words. Galatians 3, 24.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. So the law acts as a schoolmaster to bring us to Jesus Christ that we might be justified through faith in his blood. The law doesn't help us, leaves us helpless.

It doesn't justify us, just leaves us guilty before the judgment bar of almighty God. Now the tragedy of modern evangelism is that around the turn of the century when it forsook the law and its capacity to drive sinners to Christ modern evangelism had to find another reason that failed to respond to the gospel. And the issue that modern evangelism chose was the issue of life enhancement.

The gospel degenerated into Jesus Christ will give you peace joy, love, and fulfillment. Now to illustrate the unscriptural nature of this very popular teaching I want you to listen very carefully because the essence of what I'm saying pivots on this next story. Two men were seated in a plane.

The first is given a parachute and told to put it on in order to improve his flight. He's a little skeptical at first because he can't see how wearing a parachute in a plane could possibly improve his flight. After a time he decides to experiment and the proof is true.

As he puts it on he notices the weight upon his shoulders. He finds he has difficulty in sitting upright. And when he consoles himself the fact he was told the parachute would improve the flight.

So he decides to give the thing a little time. As he waits he notices that some of the other passengers are laughing at him because he's wearing a parachute in a plane. He begins to feel somewhat humiliated as they begin to point and laugh at him.

He can stand it no longer. He slinks in his seat and throws the parachute to the floor. He's disappointed because as far as he was concerned he was told an outright lie.

The second man is given a parachute but listen to what he's told. He's told to put it on because in any moment he'd be jumping 25,000 feet out of the plane. He gratefully puts the parachute on.

He doesn't notice the weight upon his shoulders nor that he can't sit upright. Mind is confused with a thought of what would happen if he jumped without the parachute. Let's analyze the motive and the result of each passenger's experience.

The motive of putting the parachute on was solely to improve his flight. The result of his experience was that he was humiliated by the passengers. He was disillusioned and somewhat embittered against those

who gave him the parachute.

As far as he's concerned it will be a long time before anyone gets one of those things on his back again. The second man who put the parachute on solely to escape the jump to come because of his knowledge of what would happen to him without it he has a deep-rooted joy and peace in his heart knowing that he's saved from sure death. This knowledge gives him the ability to withstand the mockery of the other passengers.

His attitude toward those who gave him the parachute is one of heartfelt gratitude. But listen to what the modern gospel says. It says, put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

He'll give you love, joy, peace, fulfillment and lasting happiness. So the sinner responds in an experimental fashion and what does he get? The promise, temptation, tribulation and persecution. The other passengers mock him.

But what does he do? He takes off the Lord Jesus Christ. He's offended for the word's sake. He's humiliated for the word's sake.

He's disillusioned and somewhat embittered. And quite rightly so. He was promised peace, joy, love, fulfillment and lasting happiness.

And all he got was trials and humiliation. His bitterness is directed at those who gave him the so-called good news. His latter end becomes worse than the first.

Another inoculated and bitter backslider. Saints, instead of preaching that Jesus can improve the flight, we should be warning the passengers they're going to have to jump out of the plane. The Bible says that a man has to die once and then the judgment of God will come.

And when a sinner understands the horrific consequences of breaking God's law, then he will flee to the Savior, flee to escape the wrath that's to come. And when we're true and faithful witnesses, that's what we should be preaching. That's the wrath to come.

That God commands all men everywhere to repent because he's appointed a day in which he'll judge the world in righteousness. It's a picture of not happiness, but righteousness. It doesn't matter how happy a sinner is, how much he's enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season.

Without the righteousness of Christ, he'll perish in the day of wrath. Scripture says, richest profit not on the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death. Peace and joy are legitimate fruits of salvation, but it's not legitimate to use these fruits as a drawcard for salvation.

If we continue to do so, sinners will respond with an impure motive, lacking repentance. Now can you remember why the second passenger had joy and peace? It was because he knew that parachute was going to save him from sure death. And as a believer, I too have peace and joy in believing because I know that the righteousness of Christ is going to deliver me from the wrath that's to come.

Now that thought in mind, let's take a close look at an incident on board the plane. We have a brand new stewardess. She's carrying a tray of boiling hot coffee.

It's her first day, and she wants to leave an impression on the passengers. And she certainly does. Because as she's walking down the aisle, she trips over someone's foot and slops that boiling hot coffee

all over the lap of our second passenger.

What will be his reaction when the coffee hits his shank? Does he go, that's hot? Oh yeah, he feels the pain. But then does he rip the parachute from his shoulders and throw it to the floor and say, the stupid parachute? No. Why should he? He didn't put the parachute on for a better flight.

He put it on to save him from the jump to come. If anything, the hot coffee then causes a cling tight to the parachute and he'll look forward to the jump. If you and I put on the Lord Jesus Christ for the right motive, to flee from the wrath that's to come, and tribulation strikes, and the flight gets bumpy, we will lose our joy and peace.

Why should we? We didn't come to Jesus for a happy lifestyle. We came to flee from the wrath that's to come. And if anything, tribulation drives the true believer closer to the Savior.

Sadly, we have multitudes of professing Christians who lose their joy and peace when the flight gets bumpy. Why? Because they're the product of modern evangelism. And they came lacking repentance without which you cannot be saved.

You see, there's no way I'm going to take a cure unless I first admit I've got the disease. I can't take a cure if I don't believe I've got the disease. But the law convinces me I'm diseased.

So they'll accept the gospel. Now, biblical evangelism is always law to the proud and grace to the humble. Never will you see Jesus giving the gospel, the cross, the grace of our God to a proud, arrogant, self-righteous person.

Now, with the law, he breaks the hard heart and with the gospel, he heals the broken heart. Why? Because he always did those things that pleased the Father. God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble.

Everyone who is proud of heart is an abomination to the Lord. Jesus told us for whom the gospel is for. He said, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has appointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, the brokenhearted, the captives, and the blind.

Now, they're spiritual statements. The poor means those who are poor in spirit. The brokenhearted are the contrite ones, those that mourn.

The captives are those of whom Satan has taken captive. And the blind are those whom the God of this world has blinded. Only the sick need a physician.

And only those who are convinced of the disease will accept the cure. Now, Luke 10, verse 25, we see Jesus doing this, giving the law to the proud. Now, let me paraphrase this somewhat for you.

In Luke 10, 25, a certain lawyer stood up and he tempted Jesus. Here we have a professing expert in God's law, standing up and tempting the Son of God. He was proud, arrogant, and self-righteous.

So Jesus gave him the law. He said, what is written in the law? What is your reading of it? And he said, you shall love your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

And then Jesus said, this do, and you shall live. And then the Bible says, but he willing to justify himself, said to Jesus, who is my next? The living Bible brings out more clearly the law on that man. The man who was to justify his lack of love for some kinds of people.

So he said to Jesus, which neighbors? See, he didn't mind Jews, he didn't like Samaritans. So Jesus told him the story of what we call the good Samaritan. He was not good at all.

He merely obeyed the basic requirements of God's law. And the effect of the essence of the law, the spirituality of the law, of what the law demanded in truth, was to stop that man's mouth. He didn't say another word, because he didn't love his neighbor to that degree.

Remember, the law was given to stop every mouth and leave the whole world guilty before God. We see a similar thing in Luke 18, verse 18. We won't turn to it for the sake of time, but the rich young ruler said he had kept the commandments.

So Jesus used the first of the ten commandments. I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before me.

To show this man that his God was his money. You cannot serve God and mammon. So we see the law of the proud.

And then we see grace being given to the humble. In the case of Nicodemus, who was a humble Jew, who acknowledged the deity of the Son of God. He was a teacher in Israel.

So he obviously knew the law. And the law was the schoolmaster to bring this godly Jew to Christ. Same was the case of Nathanael in John 1. He was an Israelite, brought up under the law.

He was an Israelite indeed. Not just in word, but there was no deceit in his heart. And the law was the schoolmaster to bring this godly Jew to Christ.

Same with the Jews on the day of Pentecost. These were devout Jews. Every nation of heaven.

They drank and slept God's law. The law was the schoolmaster to bring 3,000 to Christ. 1 Timothy 1, verse 8, which we can turn to.

Tells us once again what God's law is used for. 1 Timothy 1, verse 8 says, But we know that the law is good if it is used lawfully for the purpose for which it was designed. What was the law designed for? The law was not made for the righteous, but for sinners.

It even lists the sinners. Homosexuals. Fornicators.

If you want to bring a homosexual to Christ, give him the 10 commandments. Show him that he is sinning against God. Decide his perversion.

If you want to bring a Muslim to Christ, Muslims accept Moses as a prophet. Give them the law of Moses and strip them of their self-righteousness. Show them that God requires truth in the inward parts.

The Bible is filled with examples of the law doing its work in evangelism. Think of the woman caught in the act of adultery. The law called for her blood.

Her only avenue was to fling herself at the feet of Jesus. And that's the function of God's law. Paul is called to be shut up under the law.

You can't condemn the sinners. They are already condemned. He that believes not is condemned already, Scripture says.

Normally in this teaching I go through the 10 commandments. But it may be more practical for you if I share with you how I share my faith. I'm a strong believer in following the example of Jesus, given to us in John chapter 4. When Jesus approached the woman at the well, he spoke in the natural realm first.

So that's what I do. I go up to someone and say, Hi, how are you doing? What do you do for a job? And then I say, Did you get one of these? Maybe I'll give them a gospel tract. And then I carry in my pocket pennies with the 10 commandments pressed into them.

But you don't really need one of these. All you need is something Christian. And when they say it's Christian, you just say, Do you think you've kept the 10 commandments? And this is usually what happens.

Oh, pretty much. I haven't killed anyone. I say, Have you ever told a lie? He says, Yeah.

One or two. I say, What does that make you? He says, A sinner. I say, More specifically, doesn't it make you a liar? He says, Oh, I'm not a liar.

I say, Well, how many lies do you have to tell to be a liar? He says, 10. And then suddenly a bell rings. One lie makes you a liar, isn't that right? He says, Yeah.

I say, Have you ever stolen something? He says, No. I say, Come on, you've just told me you're a liar. He says, Never stolen something, even if it's small.

I say, Yeah. I say, What does that make you? He says, A thief. I say, Do you know, Jesus said, If you look at a woman and lust after her, you commit adultery with her in your heart.

I say, Have you ever done that? He says, Yeah, plenty of times. I say, From your own admission, you're a lying, thieving, adulterer at heart. And you have to face God on Judgment Day.

And we've only looked at 3 of the 10 commandments. But if you hate someone, you commit murder in your heart. And then you go through the commandments.

They leave us all guilty. And the wonderful thing that happens, is that the work of the law is written in their hearts. He says, Romans 2, verse 15.

He says, The conscience bears witness. Conscience means knowledge. Con means with.

And science is knowledge. So whenever he lied, or stolen, or lusted, he's known in his heart, but he's done wrong. So on the day of judgment, he will be without excuse.

So the law brings the knowledge of sin. So the law brings the knowledge of sin. You may identify with this, some of you ladies.

You dust your tables down in the morning. It's a clean table. Then you draw back the curtains.

And let in the early morning sunlight. What do you see on the table? Dust. What do you see in the air? Dust.

Did the light create the dust? Oh no, the light merely exposed the dust. And when you and I take the time to draw back the curtains of the Holy of Holies, and let the light of God's law shine upon the sinner's heart, then the light of God's law comes into the heart of the sinner. Then the sinner can see himself in the truth.

The law is a lamp. And the law is light. That's why Paul says, by the commandment, sin became exceedingly sinful.

In other words, the law showed him how sin is in its true light. And someone who has this knowledge, can now understand that God is angry at them, that His wrath abides upon them. They can see their weight in the balance of eternal justice.

And found wanting. They can therefore understand why Jesus had to die. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.

God commended His love toward us, and the while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. We broke the law, He paid the fine, and the while we repent and accept what He did on the cross, we will be freed from the wrath of God. Charles Spurgeon, an Englishman, a great preacher from 100 years ago, said they will never accept grace until they tremble for a holy and just law.

They'll never take the cure unless they first convince they have the disease. The law works. It converts the soul.

It makes a man a new creature in Christ. He puts his hand to the plow, and he doesn't look back because he's fit for the kingdom. So why don't you find yourself a sinner and experiment on him? Jesus gave us this example.

Follow it. If someone comes to you and says, I'm just a terrible sinner. I've committed adultery.

I've got lust burning in my heart. I'm filled with jealousy and hatred. Give them grace.

But more than likely you'll find people saying, I'm really a good person. A lot of people are worse than me. They go about their own righteousness being ignorant of the righteousness which is of God.

So you must give them that light. God doesn't want you to get decisions. He wants people to be saved.

And for that they need repentance. And they will not repent if they don't know what sin is. So as I said, try it out.

But as you do, remember this one story. You're sitting on a plane, enjoying the flight. And suddenly you hear, this is your captain speaking.

I have an announcement to make. The tail section has just fallen off this plane. We're about to crash.

We're 25,000 feet in the air. There's a parachute under your seat. So we'd appreciate it if you put it on.

Thank you for your attention and thank you for flying with us. You put your parachute on and say, Boy, am I glad to be wearing a parachute. The guy next to you is watching a movie.

Say, excuse me, didn't you hear the captain? Put the parachute on. He turns to you and says, I really don't think the captain means it. I'm quite happy as I am, thanks.

Don't judge him. And say, please, put the parachute on. It'll be better than the movie.

It doesn't make sense. If you tell him to put the parachute on, he's going to put it on for a wrong motive. If you want to put it on and keep it on, tell him about the jump.

Excuse me, jump without a parachute. Splat. I'm sorry, I beg your pardon.

I said, if you jump without a parachute, law of gravity is as good as me. I see what you're saying. Thank you very much.

And as long as that man knows, as long as he has knowledge, that he passed through the door and takes the consequences of breaking the law of gravity, there's no way you're going to get that parachute off his back. Because his very life depends on it. If you look around, you'll find there are multitudes of passengers enjoying the flight.

They're enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season. Excuse me? Did you hear the command from the captain of our salvation? Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. I really don't think God means it.

I don't think God means it. I don't think God means it. God is love.

Besides, I'm quite happy as I am, thanks. Don't turn to him with zeal without knowledge and say, please, give your heart to Jesus. He'll give you peace, joy, love, fulfillment.

Fill the God-shaped vacuum in your heart. Give you marriage. Help your alcohol problem.

Take away your loneliness. Just give your heart to Jesus. No, you'll give him a wrong motive for his commitment.

Just say, God, give me courage. And tell him about the jump. Say, if you die without the Savior, it's appointed a man once to die.

And after this, the judgment. If you have lusted, you've committed adultery. If you've hated someone, you've committed murder.

If you're one liar, you're a liar. If you're one sinner, you're a sinner. If you've told a lie, you're a liar.

The day of wrath, the fist of eternal justice will come down upon you and grind you to pieces. God bless you. I'm not talking about hellfire preaching.

Hellfire preaching will produce fear-filled converts. Using God's law will produce tear-filled converts. This one comes merely to escape the fires of hell.

Because the law wasn't used to show him he deserves hell, he doesn't appreciate God's mercy. There's no gratitude in his heart. But this one comes telling he sinned against heaven and violated the law of a holy God.

On the day of justice, God was to lay out all his sins as evidence of his guilt. The almighty God in his holiness could pick him up as an unclean thing and cast him into hell. But instead he's given him heaven.

He demanded his love toward him. And what is he the sinner Christ died from? He falls on his knees in the blood-sodden soil of Calvary's cross and cries, O God, if you do that for me, I'll do anything for you. He says, I delight to do your will, O my God.

Your law is written upon my heart. And like the man who knew he had to pass through the door, to break the consequences, to break in the law of gravity, he will never take the parachute off because his very life depends on it. Because he knows he comes to the Savior.

Knowing he has to face the holy God on the day of wrath, he will never forsake the righteousness of God in Christ because his very life depends on it. Such converts become soul winners. Not pew warmers.

Laborers. Not layabouts. Assets.

For the local church. Father, we pray that we'd be as the marines and search the scriptures to see if these things are so. And that we'd examine ourselves to see if we're in the faith.

Father, if we're not, let us make our calling and election sure by crying out loud, forgive me, I'm a sinner. By exercising repentance towards God, we will turn to you, Lord Jesus Christ, and lay our faith in Jesus Christ. In his name we pray.

Amen.

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