

# The Spirit and the Bride Say Come

by R.G. Lee

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of the invitation to come to Christ, which is unique to Christianity and offers salvation and a better life.*

**Duration:** 31:47

**Scripture:** Isaiah 1:18, Matthew 11:28, Matthew 16:24, Matthew 19:21, Luke 14:17, John 7:37, Revelation 6:16

**Topics:** "Free Salvation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the urgency of accepting Jesus Christ as one's Savior. He warns that if someone were to die without accepting Christ, they would be considered a fool in the eyes of God. The preacher describes Jesus as the embodiment of God's truth, holiness, love, and power, and expresses disbelief that anyone would reject Him. He calls on the church to actively invite others to come to Christ and to live a life of devotion and service to Him.

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## Transcript

Come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely. We find that the word come appears many times in the Bible, and this precious invitation which we have in this verse tonight is like the ringing of the bells of heaven. Christ says, Come, the Spirit says, Come, the Church says, Come.

Let him that heareth say, Come, and let him that is athirst come. And they will find no drought in God's ever-flowing and abundant springs of grace. And whosoever will, come.

And he'll find himself included. Whosoever will. The clear, resonant note of the Bible is come.

This word come occurs about 1,800 or more times in God's blessed book. And this word come shone out in the dark, antediluvian darkness before the third king, when God said to Noah, Come, thou and all thy house into the earth. And 25 centuries ago, more than that now, it sounded forth in the marvelous preaching of that Old Testament evangelist Isaiah, in whose preaching was the growl of the Syrian wolf, God's instrument of judgment against his God-forsaking people, and the four grains of calvary and the thunders and lightnings of Mount Sinai.

O everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters. And he that hath no money, come ye. Buy and eat, ye come.

Buy wine and milk without money and without price. And that same marvelous prophet of God said, Come now, saith the Lord. Come now.

Let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. And though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Notice just a few times where the word come appears in the New Testament. Many shall come from the east and from the west. John the Baptist said, Art thou he that should come, or shall we look for another? Jesus said, Come, all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself. And Jesus said to the rich young ruler, Come, follow me. Jesus said, Come, for all things are now ready.

Watch ye, for ye know not which hour your Lord cometh. Come, ye brethren of my Father. Occupy till I come.

Ye will not come to me that ye might have life. Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.

I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you. Holy Father, I come to thee.

Notice with what marvelous significance those words are given. From that word come, and all these choruses of comes are like the gospel bells ringing. We hear them, the Spirit says, Come, the Church says, Come, the Christ says, Come.

Over yonder in Europe some of the bells which they have in so many places in Europe ring only on great occasions, but the bells of heaven are ringing all the time, night and day. Night when the stars gleam, day when the sun shines, and when the storms roar, and when the shepherds whisper, when the war gongs boom and when peace reigns, these bells never cease. Men should never weary of their chiming, because they bring joy, they bring peace, and they bring hope.

I think of the only of comes which we find in God's blessed book and which we find when we study some of the false religions of the world. Christianity is the only religion in the world that says, Come. I said, the only religion.

Go seek through all the religions that this world does no one has ever known, ancient and modern, and see if you can find the word Come. You can't find it any more than you can find a hundred-ton chunk of ice in a teacup. It isn't there.

Begin with the religion of old Egypt, the oldest of all religions. And study carefully their rules of the dead, the book of the dead, as they call it. And you may learn about their rules of right living, and you may learn of their faith and immortality, but Come, this book of the dead, does not contain.

Hence their offering their tears upon the altars of their gods. Hence their religion of despair. Hence their future, a land of thrumbling silence, for they are more concerned about how their bodies shall be buried and where their souls shall abide.

And study the religion of the Greeks, that marvelous race of people. Paul said the Greeks were exceedingly devout, and Zeus was their supreme deity. His attributes were the eagle and the thunderbolt and the scepter.

His eyes flashed lightning, and with his thunderbolt he heard his foes down the mountainside. But he never said come, never, one time. Study the lives and the writings of the old Grecian philosophers.

Study the teaching of Plato, who founded the academy. And Epicurus, who left to posterity the strange maxim, Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die. And think of Zeno, who founded the school of the Stoics.

And Diogenes, who founded a philosophy steeped in gall. And Aristotle, who taught the inductive method of reasoning, which we college boys had such a difficult time with. And think of Socrates, the noblest of all, with a fatal hemlock at his lips, hoping for immortality.

But not one of them ever said come. They never invited anybody to Savior of pardon and love. And then study the religion of old ancient Rome.

Jupiter was their great god, and he never did say come. Did he? No, not one time. He was a force of human happiness rather than a blessing.

He was jealous of human happiness and not a promoter of human happiness. And never once in the religion of the Greeks of ancient Rome did Jupiter say come. Then you study Brahmanism, which is a very dominant religion in certain sections of the world.

See if you can find a man, a woman, ever invited to put off the earth and put on the heavenly, to come to a higher and better state. You may learn of the fabled Brahman issuing from the primeval egg and creating from his head the Brahman, and from his breast the soldiers, and from his loins the laboring classes, and from his feet the merchants, and thus from the ironclad cast of India, we find it has prevailed for more than thirty centuries and has cursed India with a thousand curses and made the cow more sacred than woman, more sacred than a man's wife, more sacred than a man's sister, more sacred than a man's mother. And think of the God of the Buddhists.

He is far from the struggles of humanity. He is impersonal and inactive, without eyes to see, without ears to hear, without a mouth to speak, without feet to walk, without any arms to save, and without a heart to pity. He gives no invitation.

He worships his worshipers. All his worshipers want no invitation to come to him, for they only fear him, Buddha. And consider Confucianism, if you please.

It has veneration for learning. It has reverence for the past. It has reverence for ancestors.

But it gives no invitation to salvation, to a great salvation. It has made a range of plodding, meticulous, heedless of eternity. And then meditate on Mohammedanism just a little bit.

It was founded by Mohammed the prophet, the camel driver of Mecca. Mohammedanism has come down the ages, banishing a crimson sword with blood and with a harem on one side and the bed of one slave driver on the other. It has written its history in war.

It has written its history in polygamy. It has written its history in slavery and destitution. It does not invite the weary to rest.

It does not invite the heavy laden to ease. It does not invite the suffering to come to the Savior for peace and pardon. It has no calm in anything that it says.

I do not say that there's not any particle of good in all these religions. I do not mean to say that at all. But the good in them is likened to only just a little bit of trace of gold in the quartz.

It is never found in paying quantities. It's fool's gold. It does not pay to separate it from the dross.

You may continue and search the whole catalog of all the religions, past and present, but only in Christianity will you find a God who invites men to come to him and to be saved and to be blessed and to be kept and to be guided. Here in Christianity differs from all other religions. Herein is the preeminence of Jesus Christ.

Herein our God is shown to be above all gods. They have no calm, these other religions. They have no deliverance from sin and its consequences.

They have no future punishment for the wicked. They have no escape from the wrath that comes made known in unmistakable terms. They have no heaven for the faithful.

They have no door of entrance revealed unto man by which he may enter into the gates into that city about which so many beautiful things have been written and are written and are spoken. They know nothing of that city which has foundations whose maker and builder is God. The apples of all these religions are full of ashes.

The fires of all of them have no warmth. The bread of all of them is photographic bread, portrait bread. The pool of all of them are mirages.

The pools of all are mirages. Oh, how tragic it is and how glorious it is that Christianity has its calm. Now, notice the occasion of the first come.

The first come of Christianity was the coming of Christ. He came to seek and to save the lost. The lost were in Rome, where folks were hushed to sleep by the yellow, golden-looking tiber, asleep under the music of a tyrant's terrible voice.

They were lost in Athens, the intellectual center of the universe, drunk with the wine of skepticism. They were lost in Egypt, asleep with its head in the lap of the Sphinx. They were lost by the millions in China, for her eyes were upon the tombs of her ancestors.

They were lost in Persia, wearing upon her brow a funerary. They were lost in Jerusalem, the city of a thousand years of events and memories, but with evil God will guide them inside her walls. They were lost in every town.

They were lost in every village. They were lost in the countryside. They were lost in the big cities.

They were lost everywhere, men lost as Balaam by his love for gold, as King Saul by his jealousy and madness, as Haman by his self-will and envy, as Ahab and Jezebel by their covetousness and murderous plots as Achan by his dissolute stealing, as Belshazzar by his lust, as Ananias and Sapphira by their deception and lying, lost as the Pharisees and Sadducees and Herodians. They were lost everywhere. When Jesus came and nobody had said to them, Come, nobody had said, Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.

Plato couldn't say it. Aristotle couldn't say it. Heracles couldn't say it.

Zeno couldn't say it. Nobody could say it and say it truly. The lost soul in the Bible is described as being blind, described as being naked, and as a fallen somebody, described as leprous and alien and foreign and a prisoner and a captive and a debtor, and described as being dead.

And in this awful condition, the lost soul is unable to save itself and therefore needs an abiding Savior. Christ came to seek and to save. He said, I am come to seek and to save that which was lost.

That was Christ's mission. That was the grandest mission ever recorded about anybody. That was the grandest missionary Jesus was who ever came in the world.

And so we find that Jesus coming in this world was the one who gave the invitation, Come, who was loved by the Father. He had glory with the Father before ever a star dreamed and before this world was. He came to a world fallen and benighted.

As I so many times said, He came down as Heaven's bread for us, hunger as Heaven's water for us, thirst as Heaven's glory for us, shame as Heaven's grace for us, guilt as Heaven's light for us, darkness as Heaven's glorious garment for us, nakedness as Heaven's love for us, hatred as Heaven's life for us. He said, Come unto me and I will do what? Will give you rest if you're weary, will give you salvation if you trust. You must not forget that he came into a world of suffering and death, and his coming was not with regal pomp, his coming was not with kingly grandeur, his coming was not to ride in a chariot of gold, his coming was not to dwell in palaces, his coming was not to go up and down some halfpenway like Nero did with a thousand wagons behind his chariot, with his own chariot drawn by six perfectly white horses.

No coming of the Lord Jesus was like that. No stately palace but a stable received him, no princely counts but a pallet of straw sustained his infant head, no national feast or feast hailed his coming, but Paul expresses it poignantly when he says, God hath given him a name which is above every name, and at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, things in Heaven and things in Earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. And as Lord, he says, come unto me, some of you who are weary and heavy laden.

He didn't say it. He said, all ye. He said, if some rich folks come to me, I'll not cast them out.

If some intellectual comes to me, I'll not cast them out, though that's included. He said, him that cometh rich and poor, high and low, ignorant and intelligent, him that cometh to me, I will in no wise say no to. I'll never shut the door to them when they come.

Oh, and he said, I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. Some a man is not come to destroy, he said, but to save. I am come alike for the world.

And he says tonight, come ye unto me. Come and drink if you're thirsty for the things you need to have. Now, notice this.

Our obligation is to say, come. Every Sunday school class, we ought to be giving and inviting, come to people. Every brotherhood, we ought to give an inviting, come to folks.

The missionary society ought to give an inviting, come to people. Our training unions, our all, ought to give an inviting, come, come ye! And let's have something for them when they do come. It's the business of the church to say, come, and to influence others to come, to come to the light which is shining for us.

Jesus said, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. And Jesus is in the forefront of battle, and he says, follow me, and I am with you all the ways. One of the sad things is that so many live on playground instead of battleground, and they look upon life as shake time instead of wake time.

And too often when we do follow him, we follow him limpingly, we follow him complainingly, we follow him as strikers from the camp, as deserters from the army, as deserters from the post of duty. How tragic the truth and sad that statement is. When Nelson arrayed the English Navy in battle line to meet the combined Spanish and French navies, he stood on the flagship where the standard of Great Britain unfurled and cried out, England, this day, expects every man to do his duty.

And so Jesus, the captain of our salvation, stands on the bridge of the ship of Zion and gives command to everyone along the line to do his duty. Come after me. And they called his come over into Macedonia and help us.

Come to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the night. And the whole church should join in one great grand colossal concert and say, come, are there children in the church? Let their voices ring out in sweet harmonious chorus. Come.

Are there young men and young women in the church? Let them stand and plead in the prime and wealth of young life. Come ye. Are there strong men and women? Let them say, come ye, unto the master's service.

Are there older folks? Let them say also, come ye. It was bright day when I came to the Lord, and the sun set glory. Shall be round about my path at the last.

And so the healed ought to say, come. The pardoned ought to say, come. Let those who have been lifted up from the lowest depths say, come.

Let all who have had their face quenched with the waters of life say, come. Let all who hunger for righteousness say, come. Let us show the response to Christ's call.

That the clansmen of Roderick do showed in the years gone by when the call was to meet him at Lambeth Mead, and they met him there. What does that mean for us when Jesus says, come, follow me? It should mean obedience on our part. This is required of all who receive the blessing of coming.

When God says, come for all things are now ready, men should obey. When God says, come, let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they should be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they should be as wool, men should obey. And with some of you tonight, the question is, what am I going to do with a Christ who says, come? And if you do the wrong thing with him and keep on doing the wrong thing with him, someday he'll not say, come, to you.

He'll say, depart you. Go from me into everlasting hell, prepared for the devil. And you deny him when he says, come now.

There'll come a day sometime if you keep on at it when no longer will he say, come. And he'll say, depart from me, ye workers of iniquity. I never knew you.

When Christ says, him that cometh unto me, I'll in no wise cast out. We should not find the notes of that promise. Come after me, says Jesus.

And he says, whosoever will, let him come. Invitation includes all. To those who are far away in the jungles and mountains of sin, to those who are subjected to fearful temptations, is invitation.

To those who are crushed by burdens, is invitation. To those who have been betrayed by friends, is invitation. To those who have despised the good, is invitation.

To those who have long delayed the soul salvation, is invitation. Come ye to the fountain, come drink, and be satisfied. Old and young, rich and poor, learned and ignorant may come.

The morally good may come. The morally bad may come. The self-righteous may come.

The condemned of men may come. Those who are far from the kingdom may come. Those who are near the kingdom may come.

Those who are only kept out are those who refuse to accept the invitation. Those who are kept out are only those who refuse his invitation. Oh, what a wonderful Christ we have.

We're invited to come in faith. We're invited to come in repentance. We're requested to come in obedience.

We're commanded to repent. Your coming will bring joy to your own heart. I said this morning what I'm going to say again.

When you come to think of this marvelous Christ, on his brow placed the diadem of world creation, his hands swayed the scepter of universal authority, his majesty filled heaven with glory, his wrath filled hell with terror, his goodness filled earth with blessings, and Jesus is the verity of God's truth. He's the beauty of God's truth, and he's the beauty of God's holiness, and he's the purity of God's nature, and he's the wisdom of God's mind, and he's the reality of God's love, and he's the surety of God's promise, and he's the majesty of God's power, he's the authority of God's throne, he's the pity of God's heart, and he's the repository of God's fullness, and he's the legacy of God's will, and he's the ocean of God's full and flowing river of grace. Think of people rejecting one like that.

Think of people saying, No, no, I will not let him have sway over my life. I will not let him come in and be a guest with me. I'll say no to him.

Keep on saying no. Like some young folks that left the church laughing a Sunday night or so, laughing at me, laughing at the message. There were people who laughed at Noah, too, when they got down in the flood.

And there were people who laughed at Abraham's warning about Solomon Gomorrah, when they got burned like hog meat in a skillet. Laugh, you! Laugh, you fool, at God's truth! And this book says that sometimes God will laugh at you from the judgment thunder boom and the judgment lightning flash. And people will say, Mountain, fall on us and turn us from the wrath of the Lamb upon the throne.

Laugh, you fool! And someday God will laugh at you! That's what it says. Read the first chapter of the book of Proverbs. I don't know any bigger fool on this earth than the man who is a successful businessman or a successful professional man or a strong man physically in whom God has given an

attractive personality and who says no to Jesus.

I don't know any bigger fool than that. The man said, Oh, I've got so much profit. My bonds are too little for my cross.

I'll tear them down. And I'll build me bigger bonds. And I'll say to my soul, Soul, take thy knees.

Thou hast much good laid up for many years. What did God say to him? Thou fool, this night my soul shall be required of you. He said, Many years, my soul.

God said, Not even one night. I say again, Thou biggest fool I know. Though he be a graduate of all universities and know all scientific secrets and have all success in a material way, is the man who says no to the Lord Jesus.

If you're here tonight, I say it to you, sir. I say it to you, madam, you fool, if you keep on saying no to the Lord Jesus Christ. Soul, thou hast many goods, much good laid up for many years.

Take thy knees. God said, Thou fool, this night shall my soul be required. He's been walking up and down the burning pavements of hell through all his senses carrying the word of God.

Thou fool, thou fool. And where hell is in front of them, they turn to the ceaseless goods of the lost. He'll know through eternity what fool he was indeed who talked about many years and much good, and God said, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of it.

Oh, how people hold on to pewter and throw gold away when they say no to Jesus. How they hold on to garbage and eat garbage when God's banquet is spread, when they say no to it. How they say yes to change the slavery when God offers freedom when they say no to Jesus Christ.

I don't preach like this for fun. I preach it because I know that in this house tonight there are people who if God took them this minute would say, Thou fool, not many years, but this night shall thy soul be required of it. If you leave this house tonight without Christ as your Savior, you can't blame me.

I can stand before God Almighty and say, Lord God, I did the best I could down there in the Belgian church on the night of November 15, 1959 to get people to come, come to the light that's shining for them. They're going to sing. And I hope you'll take this message to heart and do what God would have you do.

And do what you would do if tonight God said to you, this night, this whole midnight, my soul shall be required of it. And if tonight you're one of these piddly around Christians living on the edges, trampling in the soil, eating the fop and foam of the world instead of sitting down at God's table, come and rededicate your life and say, I'm going to make it way more and measure more and shine more! If you're here tonight as a Baptist, you ought to have a church home! You have no business in Memphis without a church home. Come and bring your membership, humble statement, watch chair, promise of the letter, but come while we stand and while we sing.

Come, I wonder if we can sing that old song, Out of my bondage, sorry night, Jesus, I come, Jesus, I come, Jesus says, come to you and now you say, come! I come! Say it to Him while we stand. What's the number? All right, come while we sing. Out of my bondage, sorry night,

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