

4 Proofs of the Utter Severity

by Rolfe Barnard

The sermon emphasizes the utmost severity of God's holy law and the need for a Savior to rescue men and women from the consequences of sin.

Duration: 42:29

Scripture: Genesis 6:13-14, Psalm 11:5-7, Psalm 75:8, John 3:16, John 6:68, Acts 4:12, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:14-15, Ephesians 2:8-9, Hebrews 11:1

Topics: "Hell"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the need for faith and total commitment to God. He shares the example of Daniel Rowland, a preacher from the 18th century who experienced seven revivals in his lifetime. The preacher highlights the severity of sin and the importance of fearing God and obeying His laws. He also mentions the motive of fear as a means to keep people from hell. The sermon concludes with a reference to Noah and his obedience to God's command to build the ark, highlighting the importance of faith and obedience in one's generation.

Transcript

Psalms, chapter 11. The psalmist here has been advised, since conditions are so terrible, under the reign of King Saul, who had no moral principles, therefore the glory of the nation sunk mighty low. The psalmist was advised to flee to the mountains, since the foundations had been destroyed, and he answers that advice by saying in the Lord, put I my trust.

He said, why is it, how say ye to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain, for lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privately shoot at the upright in heart. If, and the word if there means sense in view of the fact that the foundations have been destroyed, what can the righteous do? Well, the answer is that the Lord is in his holy temple, that the Lord's throne is in heaven, that he hadn't gone off on a hunting expedition, that his eyes behold and his eyelids try the children of men. And he knows what's going on.

The Lord crieth, he testeth the righteous, but the wicked in him that loveth violence, his soul hateth. And upon the wicked he shall reign snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest. This shall be the portion of their cup.

For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth uphold the upright. The old time preachers had a way of saying that we are commanded to preach the gospel to all nations, but we're not commanded to preach the gospel first. And that the gospel cannot be preached properly except it be preached in its purity, but that it cannot be preached in its purity save as it's preached in its proper order.

The old time Lutheran preachers of this country many generations ago used to have this expression which was right, that the gospel is for the insecure and the law is for the secure. We invented us some Bible teachers in your day and mine who've done away with the great foundational truth that we must stand on if we expect anybody to be interested in the gospel. It is a fact that the first time any individual hears the gospel as gospel, he'll be saved.

The very first time a person hears the gospel as gospel, he'll be saved. Many people hear the facts of the gospel, but to them it is not good news. It is bad news.

It is uncomfortable news. And they shrink from it. But if in the goodness of God it ever be your privilege to hear what God says is good news, and it's good news to you, you'll close with it just like that.

Men will not ever hear the gospel as gospel. It'll never be sweet music to anybody's ears until men have found out what kind of folks they are. And there's just one book between the eternities that a man can look inside of with a prayer in his heart for the Spirit of God to show him himself.

Every mother brags about her children. Wouldn't it be wonderful if they were as nice as she thinks they are? And every father the like. The newspaper won't tell us the truth.

The radio won't tell us the truth. The schoolteachers forbidden to tell us the truth. And this generation's going to wake up in hell and the first time it'll ever face the truth about itself will be when it's too late.

The old-time preachers call this the depravity of the sinner. This generation denies that much happened in the fall. Now we inform that nothing actually did.

And, of course, most of our schools have long since discovered there was never anybody by the name of Adam, much less a woman by the name of Eve. And our Baptist schools have got us out of the embarrassing position that we're in the mess we're in because being in the loins of our parents, we sinned when they did. Nice to find out that that's all just a nice little story that it never actually happened, so we are told.

So we are told. But men will never pursue to find out if they have the right to claim an interest in the merits of the shed blood of the Lord Jesus until they are thoroughly convicted. Instead of being the nice little people we are told we are, that in reality we're people who've been totally ruined by sin.

Now, I wish you'd follow me as I be a little bit mechanical. It is to be a butcher of souls to try to wish the Lord Jesus off on people who do not have some sense of the awful strictness of God's holy law. Now, if people were nice people, they'd be a white horse for different colors.

But if people are people totally estranged from everything that's holy and are said to be of the character as to drink iniquity like water, if that kind of folks we are, if that kind of folks we are, we still are, we won't make out like we're awful pious and awful nice, but no, our religious flesh still smells as bad as it did before we were saved. If folks are the kind of folks the Bible pictures, and if God's holy law is as strict as the Bible says it is, men need more than sympathy or help, they need somebody to rescue them, and to

redeem them, and to rule them, and to guide them. The utter strictness of God's holy law.

I know of nothing that this generation needs to be constantly faced with more than what I'm talking about now. Isn't the kind of God we've got today the nicest little fellow you ever saw? He wouldn't hurt a flea, and he's got long whiskers, and he just says, well, I know that you raised old Billy Hale, but down deep in your heart you didn't mean it, and we'll forget about it. But oh no, the strictness of God's holy law.

He not only hasn't gone on a fishing trip, but his eyelids behold what men do, and he requires holiness in the inward parts, and that'll slay everybody. If it's a matter of a little outward conformity to some of our rules, especially if they do not fit too tightly, it'd be different, but he demands not only outward circumspect living, but inward. The motives of men are under the strict scrutiny of the thrice holy God.

You see, the whole outfit today is based on the fact that God got ashamed he is so holy, and he repealed his thrice holy law, and he abolished hell and judgment, and now we're trying to get people to accept Christ and the two things about him, they don't know a thing about him, and careless, for apart from getting men and women to come face to face with the terrible severity of God's holy law, nobody will be interested in whether his blood did any good or not. You've been trying to get people interested in Christ, how could they have any interest in him? They don't need a savior. Everybody's already done got religious.

One church's as good as another. One faith's as good as another. A man ought to do a few things, a big doughnut killing by the mountain ain't much, or rob a bank, less is the small.

But I tell you right now, nobody needs a savior. Oh, my soul, although I know I haven't got sense enough, a heart want enough to say it. If the law of God is a matter of God making this terrible fire and brimstone the portion of their cup, then under God men desperately need not a religious exercise, but a savior.

I want to offer tonight four proofs of the utter severity of God's holy law. If the penalty is not enforced, then social life cannot stand. In the time of the writing and expressing of this psalm, Israel had a key, no good, had no moral standards.

The glory of a nation is in the glory of its leadership. The glory of a home is in the law and order and the constituted authority of the home. The glory of a local church is in exactly the same place.

And in Saul's day, they had a man who was keen, who had no moral principles, who wasn't safe, for God's people. They advised a man like David to ski-daddle to the mountains because they were already wetting their bow and getting ready to shoot at the upright. Sounds like a picture of once-professing Christian America where the standards from top to bottom have been shot through and through with nothingness.

And as surely as it continues that way much longer, America as a nation will join the other nations who've already lined up in the junk heap of the bygone days. David was advised to flee because he lived in a land where law was not honored and the penalty was not enforced. But thank God there is a king higher than King Saul or the President of the United States.

And we read about him a moment ago. The Lord is in His holy temple. Boy, that isn't fatalism.

Bless God, that's hope. That's where He is. I wouldn't trust you as far as I could spit on you.

My only hope is in Him. I've been in this long enough, I know no man after the flesh. I have not fixed lay hands on any man suddenly.

Hey, for you'll be out here robbing banks tomorrow if the grace of God don't restrain you. But the Lord is in His holy temple. That's our hope.

That's our hope. The Lord's throne is in heaven and His eyelids cry the children of men and His law shall stand in all its rigor or the universe will collapse. If one person ever commits a sin that goes unpunished then the moon and the sun run together and the earth will burn up.

It can't be that any sin, little sin, big sin, middle size sin, nice sin, respectable sin, if it goes unpunished then the Lord will be through and we'll have no God. The penalty of breaking God's holy law, that's what sin is, is going to be enforced. The Lord knoweth how we're told in the scripture to preserve the godly from the hour of temptation and to reserve the ungodly under the day of judgment to be punished.

God's glory is in the enforcement and vindication and establishment of His holy character and that holy character is expressed in His holy law and thank God it shall stand. And that's the reason He gave it. And all sin is a horror but any sin, the least sin against the monarch of the universe and that is when you break God's law you slap Him as God and the penalty for that according to the Bible is thrice terrible.

Who shall not fear Thee? The book says, O Lord and glorify Thy name. Men don't fear Him but men don't know anything about the awful severity and strictness of the law today. How could there be anybody needing a Savior today? Since our old time preachers who've all gone on to glory we've had a generation of preachers Brethren, we'd better come to the mourners' beach! We've preached to people like they were nice people but they're not nice people.

They're lawbreakers. They're law-haters. They're God-despisers.

They're enemies. And we must suppress their enmity until some of them shall get a club and try to kill God or shall fall prostrate at His feet. Who shall not fear Thee? The Word of God says in the last book of the Bible O Lord and glorify Thy name for Thou only art holy for all nations shall, bless God they will too come and worship before Thee for Thy judgments are made manifest and they're going to be some of these days and what men and women do not believe now and we can't make them but under God we ought to hear the Word of God like O Lord did when the Scriptures say Nor being warned of God of things not yet seen He scared the living daylights out of them and the Scripture says He moved with fear He ran scared and He said judgment's coming boys How you know?

God said so God said so and He moved with fear and He prepared an ark and He did it for two reasons to condemn the world and to save His own Oh, nobody believed it nor did they but God brought it to pass and Noah served God in his own generation I like to hear these preachers talking about if you get filled with the Spirit what not how many bears you kill you know and they say if you don't win so many people you ain't filled with the Spirit and I ask them about old Noah Noah was a pretty fat preacher he did what God told him to do he served God in his generation he screamed for 120 years the boy's judgment's coming he did what God told him to do nobody believed him he wasn't filled with the Spirit he was taken out the seventh year no, no to be filled with the Spirit means to be equipped to do what God tells you to do Oh, hear me new affair I wish some of the holy fear and some of the holy awe that must have rattled old Noah's bones when he lived in a generation where he's the only human being between the eternities that believed judgment was coming he stuck to his last and kept on nailing in that old ark and every time the

hammer went down he says judgment's coming judgment's coming God told him he swore upon his own character that he'll not spare the guilty he's the God who has faithfully warned that the soul that sent him it shall die and he couldn't be persuaded he served God he moved with fear he moved with fear who shall not fear thee while a whole generation doesn't fear the Lord today because it does not believe and it does not believe largely because it's never heard of the severity of the holy law of God there's a second proof that I offer tonight for the severity of God's holy law and that's just a common everyday principle of life and it's this John Owen who Mr.

Strong said was the greatest of the old Puritans and surely he was I guess he is the first to see this truth that is to put it in print he said that no man listen to this no man ought to expect anything in the life to come that hadn't been begun in this life a lot of folks seem to think that all of a sudden they're going to die and death is just going to bring some terrible changes but the scriptures rather teach that men and women will do in eternity like they did here men and women will be in eternity like they are here that if the principle of holiness is begun here it'll continue there and if the principle of rebellion and lawlessness and everything else that's against holiness is begun and continued in this life it'll continue in the life to come the scriptures would say there is a

lot of hell on the road to hell and there's a lot of heaven on the road to heaven the scriptures would say that the Christian now who can't accept the holiness will continue to do so in the life to come but the man who runs after sin now will run after sin in the life to come that principle that's in you right now unless it's changed will continue as long as God lives through the reaches of eternity there is a statement in the word of God that is one of the most shocking things I've ever faced in the book of Thessalonians we ask that you run something like this to you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his angels of might in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ who shall

depend upon it shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power that word destruction is an awful word you had a highway wreck out here and two cars utterly destroyed but you go down to the junkyard there, there, they're just totally ruined and this word destruction doesn't mean to be annihilated but it does mean this that if sin is continued in a man's life it will ruin him it will absolutely destroy any human being who nestles it to his breast the first individual who escapes total ruin total despair total forsakenness by almighty God because the sin first one does that will put God out of business the law's penalty is going to be exacted and the penalty of God's holy wrath against sin is simply this that sin utterly totally

destroys men and women there are at least three men I think that the Holy Spirit in gracious mercy gives a picture of in the Old Testament to help us to see a little bit of the horrors and the severity of God's holy law ask if you will Cain running away screaming out my punishment is greater than I can bear he's in the ante room of hell he's entered hell already ask poor old Saul the son of Kish there in the cave of the witch of Indah in utter despair ask him what sin will do he's in the ante room of hell ask poor old Judas as he runs out to get him a rope and hang himself commit suicide ask him as he's there in the ante room of hell while he's still on this earth if it isn't true that sin unchecked sin unchecked totally destroys every man it touches oh instead of trying to get somebody

to make a decision for Christ in God's name why don't we begin to face people with the reason they need a Savior I'll tell you why you need a Savior the least little sin just let go on it's going to ruin you if the ruin don't show up in this life it'll show up in eternal hell I'll tell you if sin is not checked it'll destroy it'll destroy

there's just two reasons anybody on God's earth listen to me now there's just two reasons anybody on God's earth is still not saved one is they've never heard never heard anything that smells like the gospel the other is there's a rotten spot there's some place in your life but you signed a treaty of peace with sin and when you sign a treaty of peace with sin you commit soul suicide when you get to the place that you can sleep well in known sin you're in

for hell Amen you're in for hell oh that sin unchecked will destroy there's a third proof of the awful awful severity of God's holy law and that's the horrors of hell the horrors of hell I was in Boston, Massachusetts years ago and I noticed a young couple who made themselves acquainted with me and they were from Springfield, Massachusetts as I recall 176 miles I think it was away and then I happened to notice that they were in the services only every other night and one night I asked them I said why is it you're here only I didn't know how far it was to Springfield I said why is it you're here just every other night young man and his wife well they said brother preacher we work, both of us work public works 176 miles down here in the same distance back said we get off from work and we

don't eat meat in the supper and yeah we skied out as fast as we can the cops won't catch us and then we got to drive like mad to get back about time to get in bed time to go up to get to work and said we're just exhausted we can't come but every other night and I said well how on earth do you come then I wouldn't go that far to hear any preacher and they said we come to hear you say hell in the pulpit we never had heard it that's New England they've got to wear New England and Ohio they're trying to get men and women enemies of God lepers of sin lovers of pleasure lovers of self haters of holiness they're trying to get them to accept Jesus and skip the awful awful horrors of what the penalty of the law really is it's eternal hell eternal hell the horrors of hell the I was preaching in a

church that D.L.

Moody attended when he was a young fella and I took a poll one night and nobody in the congregation had ever heard a mention of hell until they heard me we're living in a generation where we're trying to cram Jesus down the throats of people that don't see any reason for a way of escape and we just well roll up our sleeves spit on our hands and be called crazy if we want to and just come back and burn this Bible up quit apologizing for it I can't understand it but under God if a man continues in sin he's going to experience the torments of hell according to the word of Jesus and if that's so you need a savior that's just bread and butter business, brother that ain't no nothing nice about that it's just sowbelly and beans and cornbread like we have down south yep my Lord told the truth when he said go away into everlasting life and these shall go away into everlasting destruction he lied before he told the truth there's no way to soften it there's no need to try to explain it God tells us it's so men are hated for everlasting destruction you need a savior you need somebody who can rescue perishing sinners you don't need a boost you need a substitute but ten million times more to be brought to hand to prove the awful severity of God's law and the fact the social order can't stand without it the fact that it's the principle of life that sin unchecked will damn you and destroy you the fact of the horrors of hell worse than all that the one inescapable everlasting proof that God's holy law is utterly severe in its penalty is the cross of Christ on a cross outside the city of Jerusalem there hanged a man one time the man Christ Jesus and out of the agony of some terrible, terrible thing that was laid upon him and I cannot even quote it without being ashamed of myself out of agony it wasn't put on by that he cries, my God my God you ever try to quote that?

I don't know how to quote it my God why? why should they love me so? I don't know how to answer that listen to this one, why? hast thou forsaken me? a man goes off and cries that's hell, brother and the

answer comes back S-I-N, sin for this book said he who knew no sin was made sin and the eternal God turned it back on his son utterly forsaken of God that's hell that's how severe God's law is it means to be utterly forsaken by almighty God there isn't any gospel unless that cry came from the lips of somebody taking somebody else's place and I have no hope of her eternal heaven except in being united by faith to that one whom this book says hung there in my place oh, men and women, you need to get desperate, you need a savior do you need to be united to that one who hung on that cross you need to get to the place that you can rightfully claim a saving interest in the merits of his life laid down in the stead of sin no experience, no feeling, nothing short of gaining the right to an interest in the merits of his shed blood, that's what you need and you need a power to change and that power flows from him as he sits on the throne by faith, which in its last analysis simply means total commitment and surrender you need to bow at his throne and claim his blood in your stead we are told of Daniel Rowland who died in 1790 and preached for 50 years in Wales he's the only man of whom I've ever read who experienced seven, what we call revivals in his lifetime seven different periods of his ministry it was an uncommon and extraordinary outpouring of the Holy Spirit and visitation of God to his people he believed the great truths of the word of God the helplessness of the sinner and the utter sufficiency of God and I want to close the message tonight with a typical invitation, this man of the 18th century used of God, he was around seven I've never been in one time of extraordinary revival and he saw seven of them and I just wanted to close, listen sinner while this man who saw God work he knew the terrible helplessness of sinners and their need for God to do for them what they couldn't do for themselves he preached and then he'd give an invitation one of them reads like this, I've written it down said Mr.

Rowland rise sinner he calls thee come to Lord say Lord here I am if I have no grace I come at thy word of grace if I cannot call thee father I can say that I'm fatherless for I forsake all others and if fatherless it is with thee that I may find mercy if I'm not a son thou canst make me a son oh is there blessing left for me bless me ye even me oh Lord I will not go from thee I cannot go for where can I go with thee are the words of eternal life I dare not say be just to me a saint and yet I do say I will say I must say be merciful to me a sinner and I say to you you need to get desperate you need to come into saving relationship with him you need a savior and thank God there is one I had an old colonel and I was a chaplain in the second world war he's an old hard drinking hard cussing

Episcopalian I used to try to witness to him he believed everything I said didn't do a very good on it he said preachers too late he said when I was a baby they sprinkled me and when I was twelve they confirmed me but it didn't take but he took a liking to me and I was under pressure and he'd fudge for me sometimes he called me one time said chaplain hurry up over to the office I want to talk to you and I went over and he told the adjutant and sergeant to excuse themselves and he said chaplain said I'm fudging I'm not supposed to do this but some got a company you know they've been out on bivouac and the alert just came in they got six hours to get ready and skedaddle they're going over where the bullets are flying he said there's a car out there if you want it said don't tell anybody but

said I kind of thought maybe go out like go out and preach to them over the leaves said a lot of them are going to get killed chaplain and so I skedaddle out there and told the captain that the colonel said I could have a service and boy my congregation I had three hundred and some odd I would have had more but that's all there were those boys scared didn't mean to tell me you weren't scared when you knew you were going out trying to where the bullets were flying dear human you were and I don't think there's anything to appeal to in an old raw bones from sin or but fear you can talk to him about loving the Lord he don't give a hoot whether it's a gut or not he don't love nobody but himself and God's just got one motive he can

appeal to keep anybody out of hell and that's the motive of

fear and so we got a colored boy to play the organ and a colored boy to heist the tunes and everybody sat on the grass and they weren't in a hurry they weren't in a big hurry and they listened and we'd sing what can wash away my sin nothing but the blood of Jesus but bless God it can down with the cross where my savior died down with the cross cleansing from sin I cry that to my heart was the blood of pride glory to his name we sang those old I didn't know nothing wasn't no use to sing about be nice to them folks they fixin' to get killed you know all I knew was to talk about one person a fellow that's on the throne got there by way of a bloody cross I never will know until I get to the judgment I saw many many many many many many many hundreds of soldiers make profession of faith and I

never did preach to them but one thing I know nothing else to preach and I hope some of them got saved and leave the dead but I know they're scared and I told them this that they're going to shed their blood and a lot of them did to fight for America and I wish for them when they went out and shed their blood dying for America they could get an interest in the one who shed his blood on a cross for sinners and I hope some of them did those boys going out they weren't going out to picnic they're going out to die I wish for a fellow died he could get an interest in what my lord did when he died if I had my way about it I'd put my arm around everybody and if I could I'd hold them until they sued for mercy you can't do it but you need a savior and I told those boys there's a hell for every

sinner out of Christ in the red but thank God there is a Christ for every sinner out of here praise the lord praise the lord do you have an interest in my savior's death on the cross have you been married to him where he is now sitting on the throne don't leave the building tonight without suing for his mercy please don't please don't my lord delighteth in mercy he'd rather save you than damn you he don't take any pleasure in the death of the wicked please become a caller on the name of the lord

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